

Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2011 Annual Report

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Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2011 Annual Report

The Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain (RRCGB) Annual Report: 2011 presents detailed statistics (headline figures were first published in June 2012) about the circumstances of personal injury accidents, including the types of vehicles involved, the resulting casualties and factors which may contribute to accidents. In addition to detailed tables there are six articles containing further analysis on specific road safety topics.

Most of the statistics in the report are based on information about accidents reported to the police. However, other sources such as mortality, survey and hospital data are also used as well as population and traffic data to provide a wider context.

The key findings from the RRCGB 2011 report include:

- In 2011, there were a total of 203,950 casualties of all severities in road accidents reported to the police, 2 per cent lower than in 2010. There were 1,901 people killed, a 3 per cent increase than in 2010 and 23,122 were seriously injured, up 2 per cent. Motor vehicle traffic increased slightly (0.2 per cent) over the same period.
- The number of fatalities fell for three types of road user, with a fall of 22 per cent for bus and coach occupants, 10 per cent for motor cyclists, 4 per cent for pedal cyclists. Pedestrian and Car occupants rose by 12 and 6 per cent respectively.
- In 2011, it is estimated 9,990 reported casualties (5 per cent of all road casualties) occurred when someone was driving whilst over the legal alcohol limit. The provisional number of people estimated to have been killed in drink drive accidents was 280 (15 per cent of all road fatalities).
- The rate per billion vehicle miles for total casualties in reported road accidents and the rate of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in 2011 were both 15 per cent lower than the 2005-09 average. For fatalities alone, the 2011 rate was 32 per cent lower than the average.
- *Failed to look properly* was again the most frequently reported contributory factor and was reported in 42 per cent of all accidents reported to the police in 2011.
- In 2011, the economic welfare cost of reported road accidents was estimated to be around £15.6 billion.



Reported Road Casualties Great Britain: 2011 Annual Report

Introduction

Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain Annual Report: 2011 presents detailed statistics about the circumstances of personal injury accidents, including the types of vehicles involved, the resulting casualties, and factors which may contribute to accidents happening. Most of the statistics in the publication are based on information about accidents reported to the police (using 'STATS 19' forms). However, other sources such as mortality, survey and hospital data are also used as well as population and traffic data to provide a wider context.

In addition to detailed tables there are six articles containing further analysis on specific road safety topics.

- an overview and trends in reported road casualties
- a valuation of road accidents and casualties
- drinking and driving
- contributory factors in accidents
- self-reported drink and drug driving
- hospital admissions data on road casualties

Not all non-fatal accidents are reported to the police. The regular annual article on survey data on road traffic accidents, which includes an overall estimate of total casualties, has not been updated this year because 2011 National Travel Survey data are not yet available. Our best current estimate is that the total number of road casualties in Great Britain, including those not reported to police, is within the range 660 thousand to 800 thousand with a central estimate of 730 thousand. The estimates will be updated in 2013.

This publication summarises key points from each article.

1. Overview and trends in reported road casualties

Summary

This article reviews the main trends in the number of reported road accident casualties in Great Britain in 2011 compared with recent years. Figures for the Strategic Framework for Road Safety¹. outcome indicators used to monitor progress on road safety are also included. Figures are primarily derived from information about accidents reported to the police. In 2011:

¹ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/strategic-framework-for-road-safety>

- There were a total of 203,950 casualties of all severities in road accidents reported to the police, 2 per cent lower than in 2010. 1,901 people were killed, 3 per cent higher than in 2010, 23,122 were seriously injured (up 2 per cent) and 178,927 were slightly injured (down 3 per cent). Motor vehicle traffic increased very slightly (0.2 per cent) over the same period.
- The number of fatalities rose for pedestrian and car occupants, by 12 and 6 per cent respectively compared to 2010 but fell for other types of road user. Motorcyclist fatalities fell by 10 per cent, pedal cyclists by 4 per cent and 22 per cent for bus and coach occupants.
- The number of fatalities was 32 per cent lower and killed or seriously injured casualties were 17 per cent lower than the 2005-2009 average. The rates per billion vehicle miles were 31 per cent and 15 per cent respectively lower than the 2005-2009 average.

Changes in comparison to the 2005-09 average

The average over the five-year period from 2005 to 2009 is used as a basis for comparison when considering road safety trends over a longer period and used as a baseline for the Outcomes Framework for the Strategic Framework for Road Safety

Compared with the 2005-2009 average, in 2011:

- The number of casualties in road accidents and the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) reported to the police in 2011 were both 17 per cent lower than the 2005-09 average. For fatalities alone, the 2011 figure was 32 per cent lower than in the 2005-09 base period.
- Reported child casualties (ages 0-15) in 2011 were 19 per cent lower than in the 2005-09 base period and the number of children killed or seriously injured was 21 per cent lower. For child fatalities alone, the 2011 figure was 53 per cent lower than in the 2005-09 base period.
- The rate per billion vehicle miles for total casualties in reported road accidents and the rate of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in 2011 were both 15 per cent lower than the 2005-09 average. For fatalities alone, the 2011 figure was 32 per cent lower than in the 2005-09 base period.

Figures for the Strategic Framework for Road Safety outcome indicators can be found at part 3 of this article (Table RAS41001). In addition a table summarising key figures and charts showing long term trends in road accident casualties compared with traffic can be found in the annex (RAS 40006).

The article "Overview and trends in reported road casualties" can be found at:
<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2011/rrcgb2011-01.pdf>

Related statistics (tables and charts) can be found at:
http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics?orderby=date&post_type=table&series=road-accidents-and-safety-series

Tables RAS30059-RAS30068, RAS40006. SFRS outcome indicators - Table RAS41001.

2. Valuation of road accidents and casualties

Summary

This article provides the latest Department for Transport (DfT) estimates on the values for prevention of road accidents and casualties for use in the appraisal of transport schemes. In addition, the estimate of the total value of road accidents in Great Britain in 2011 is also included.

Since 1993, the valuation of both fatal and non-fatal casualties has been based on a consistent willingness to pay (WTP) approach. This approach encompasses all aspects of the valuation of casualties, including the human costs, which reflect pain, grief, suffering; the direct economic costs of lost output and the medical costs associated with road accident injuries.

- The total value of prevention of reported road accidents in 2011 was estimated to be £15.6 billion. Prevention can be interpreted in two ways here: on the one hand, it is the benefit which would be obtained by prevention of road accidents from a cost benefit view point. On the other hand, it can be considered as the loss to society due to the current level of road accidents. This includes an estimate of damage only accident costs but does not take account of under-reporting of accidents.
- A number of assumptions have been made to produce a broad illustrative figure which suggests that allowing for accidents not reported to the police could increase the total value of prevention of road accidents to around £34.8 billion.

The methodology used to value the cost of accidents/casualties has been updated and is published in Transport Analysis Guidance – WebTAG unit 3.4.1².

The article “Valuation of road accidents ” can be found at:

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2011/rrcgb2011-02.pdf>

Related statistics (tables and charts) can be found at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics?orderby=date&post_type=table&series=road-accidents-and-safety-series

RAS60001-RAS6004

3. Drinking and Driving

Summary

This article presents statistics and an analysis of reported drinking and driving accidents and the casualties involved. Two sources of data – coroner’s data and STATS19 breath test data - are used to assess the extent of drink drive accidents in Great Britain.

² The Transport Analysis Guidance can be found using following link:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/webtag/documents/expert/unit3.4.1.php>

- It is estimated that in 2011, 9,990 reported casualties (5 per cent of all road casualties) occurred when someone was driving whilst over the legal alcohol limit.
- The provisional number of people estimated to have been killed in drink drive accidents was 280 in 2011 (15 per cent of all road fatalities), an increase of 30 fatalities (12 per cent) compared to final 2010 estimates.
- The provisional number of KSI (killed or seriously injured) casualties in 2011 was 1,570, 5 per cent higher than the final 2010 estimates.
- Provisional figures for the number of slight casualties in 2011 rose by 3 per cent since 2010, from 8,210 to 8,430.

The article "Drinking and driving" can be found at:

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2011/rrcgb2011-03.pdf>

Related statistics (tables and charts) can be found at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics?orderby=date&post_type=table&series=road-accidents-and-safety-series

Table numbers RAS51001-RAS51019.

4. Contributory factors to reported road accidents

Summary

This article describes the scope and limitations of the information on contributory factors collected as part of the national road accident reporting system (STATS19), and presents results from the sixth year of collection.

- *Failed to look properly* was again the most frequently reported contributory factor and was reported in 42 per cent of all accidents reported to the police in 2011. Four of the five most frequently reported contributory factors involved *driver or rider error or reaction*. For fatal accidents the most frequently reported contributory factor was *loss of control*, which was involved in 34 per cent of fatal accidents.
- For accidents where a pedestrian was injured or killed; *Pedestrian failed to look properly* was reported in 59 per cent of accidents, and *pedestrian careless, reckless or in a hurry* was reported in 25 per cent of accidents.
- *Exceeding the speed limit* was reported as a factor in 5 per cent of accidents, but these accidents involved 14 per cent of fatalities. At least one of *exceeding the speed limit* and *travelling too fast for the conditions* was reported in 12 per cent of all accidents and these accidents accounted for 25 per cent of all fatalities.
- Over 60 per cent of fatalities in reported road accidents had *driver or rider error or reaction* (which included *failing to look properly*, *loss of control* and *sudden braking*), reported as a contributory factor leading to the accident.

The contributory factors system has been developed to provide some insight into why and how road accidents occur. Contributory factors are designed to give the key actions and failures that led directly to the actual impact to aid investigation of how accidents might be prevented.

The factors are largely subjective, reflecting the opinion of the reporting police officer, and are not necessarily the result of extensive investigation. Some factors are less likely to be recorded since evidence may not be available after the event. While this information is valuable in helping

to identify ways of improving safety, care should be taken in its interpretation.

The article “Contributory factors to reported road accidents” can be found at:
<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2011/rrcgb2011-04.pdf>

Related statistics (tables and charts) can be found at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics?orderby=date&post_type=table&series=road-accidents-and-safety-series

Table numbers RAS50001-RAS50014.

5. Self-reported drink and drug driving: Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales

Summary

This article presents data on self-reported drink and drug driving from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)³. The CSEW has included questions asking people whether they have driven whilst over the legal alcohol limit, or under the influence of illegal drugs, since 2009. This article presents data from the 2009/10 and 2010/11 waves of the survey.

- In both 2009/10 and 2010/11, an estimated 8 per cent of adult drivers who had consumed alcohol in the last year reported driving at least once or twice within the last 12 months whilst they thought they were over the legal alcohol limit.
- In 2010/11, an estimated 19 per cent of adult drivers who had taken illegal drugs in the last year reported driving at least once or twice within the last 12 months whilst they thought they were affected by or under the influence of illegal drugs. This was similar to 2009/10, where an estimated 17 per cent reported driving at least once or twice within the last 12 months whilst under the influence of illegal drugs.

The article “Self-reported drink and drug driving: Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales” can be found at: <http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2011/rrcgb2011-05.pdf>

Related statistics (tables and charts) can be found at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics?orderby=date&post_type=table&series=road-accidents-and-safety-series

Table numbers RAS51101 – RAS51104.

6. Hospital admissions data on road casualties

Summary

³ Formerly known as the British Crime Survey (BCS). The BCS was renamed as the Crime Survey for England and Wales in March 2012. See: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/surveys/respondents/household/crime-survey-for-england---wales/index.html>

This article describes road casualties admitted to hospital contained in Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), comparing it with serious injuries reported to the police in the STATS19 system. Information contained in HES which is unavailable from STATS19 is also explored.

- In 2011 there were around 38.6 thousand recorded emergency admissions to hospitals in England resulting from road traffic accidents, compared to 20.1 thousand serious injuries reported in STATS19. Although police and hospital data are not directly comparable, this illustrates the incompleteness of the police data for non-fatal casualties.
- Comparison of trends shown by police and hospital data is difficult, and there are known factors affecting patterns shown by the hospital data. However, with caution, HES can provide a useful secondary source of trend data, providing further evidence of a fall in casualties in recent years.
- Over two third (68.8%) of road casualties admitted to hospital and linked to the STATS19 data (linked STATS19 and HES data for 2001-2010) have minor or moderate injuries (MAIS 1 or 2). The majority (54.2 per cent) of these road casualties suffered from a fracture as a primary injury. The most commonly injured primary body regions include head and leg.
- Using the linked STATS19 and HES data, the proportions of car occupants sustaining minor and moderate injuries (MAIS 1 & 2) were similar across all car age bands (newest and oldest), suggesting age of car isn't such a strong factor in resultant minor or moderate injuries. However, for more serious & critical injuries, figures indicate that the newest vehicles (0-4 years old) had lower proportions compared to older vehicles (15+ years old), suggesting the likelihood of sustaining a serious or critical injury is higher with older vehicles relative to newer vehicles.

The article "Hospital admissions data on road casualties" can be found at:

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2011/rrcgb2011-06.pdf>

Related statistics (tables and charts) can be found at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics?orderby=date&post_type=table&series=road-accidents-and-safety-series

Table numbers RAS55001-RAS55016.

Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain 2011: detailed tables

The annual report also includes detailed tables based on data reported to the police, areas covered are listed below, with relevant table numbers in brackets:

- accidents (RAS10002-RAS10015)
- drivers and vehicles involved (RAS20001-RAS20010)
- casualties (RAS30009-RAS30037, RAS30059-RAS30078)
- combined accidents, casualties, vehicles (RAS40001-RAS40007)
- area comparisons (RAS30038-RAS30058, RAS10014-RAS10015, RAS41002-RAS41004)
- international comparisons (RAS52001)
- inter modal comparisons (RAS53001)
- Strategic Framework for Road Safety outcome indicators (RAS41001-RAS41004)
- background data, traffic, population etc. (RAS90001-RAS90002)

A full list of tables in the road safety series and an index linking 2009 RRCGB report table numbers with 2011 RRCGB web tables can be found here

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/road-accidents-and-safety/Reported-road-casualties-gb-index-of-tables.xls>

Detailed tables can be found on Reported road casualties Great Britain – 2011 annual report web page at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics?orderby=date&post_type=table&series=road-accidents-and-safety-series

Strengths and weaknesses of the data

Comparisons of road accident reports with death registrations show that very few, if any, road accident fatalities are not reported to the police. However, it has long been known that a considerable proportion of non-fatal casualties are not known to the police, as hospital, survey and compensation claims data all indicate a higher number of casualties than police accident data would suggest.

Our current best estimate, derived primarily from National Travel Survey (NTS) data, is that the total number of road casualties in Great Britain each year, including those not reported to police, is within the range 660 thousand to 800 thousand with a central estimate of 730 thousand. A discussion of how this estimate has been derived and its limitations can be found in the RRCGB 2010 annual report at <http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2010/rrcgb2010-05.pdf>. The estimate will be updated next year after 2011 NTS data are published.

The police data are therefore not a complete record of all injury accidents and this should be borne in mind when using and analysing the data included in this publication. Police data on road accidents remain the most detailed, complete and reliable single source of information on road casualties covering the whole of Great Britain.

We also continue to look at other sources of data on road accidents. The RRCGB 2011 annual report contains an analysis of hospital data (article 6). Further information on complementary sources of data on road accidents and casualties, can be found in Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2008, 2009 and 2010 annual reports, which are available through:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/road-accidents-and-safety/>

Background notes

1. Further information about the Reported Road Casualties Great Britain Annual Report can be found at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2011>
2. On 17 December 2011, the United Kingdom Statistics Authority designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, signifying their compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.
Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:
 - meet identified user needs;
 - are well explained and readily accessible;
 - are produced according to sound methods, and
 - are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.
3. Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the pre-release access list at:
<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/road-accidents-and-safety/ reported-road-casualties-gb-prerelease.pdf>
4. Notes & Definitions used in STATS19, a copy of the form used to collect the data and instructions for completion can be found at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/road-accidents-and-safety/>
5. Specific notes to tables and definitions used in RRCGB 2011 can be found here: <http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2011/ rrcgb2011-notes-to-tables.pdf>
6. Reported accident and casualty data are also released at record level (subject to meeting confidentiality requirements) as part of the government's transparency agenda. These records can be accessed through on the data.gov website <http://data.gov.uk/dataset/road-accidents-safety-data>
7. Information on implementation of the recent review changes to STATS 19 and CRASH, the new electronic police accident reporting system can be found through the road accidents and safety web page: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/road-accidents-and-safety/>
8. The next release of road accidents and casualty data will be estimates for the second quarter of 2012 on 1 November 2012.

Key definitions

(a full list of definitions can be found at the link above)

Accident: Involves personal injury occurring on the public highway (including footways) in which at least one road vehicle or a vehicle in collision with a pedestrian is involved and which becomes known to the police within 30 days of its occurrence. Damage-only accidents, with no human casualties or accidents on private roads or car parks are not included. The data are collected by police at the scene of an accident or in some cases reported by a member of the public at a police station.

Casualty: A person killed or injured in an accident. Casualties are sub-divided into killed, seriously injured and slightly injured

Fatal accident: An accident in which at least one person is killed; other casualties (if any) may have serious or slightly injuries.

Killed: Human casualties who sustained injuries which caused death less than 30 days (before 1954, about two months) after the accident. Confirmed suicides are excluded.

Serious accident: One in which at least one person is seriously injured but no person (other than a confirmed suicide) is killed.

Serious injury: An injury for which a person is detained in hospital as an "in-patient", or any of the following injuries whether or not they are detained in hospital: fractures, concussion, internal injuries, crushings, burns (excluding friction burns), severe cuts, severe general shock requiring medical treatment and injuries causing death 30 or more days after the accident. An injured casualty is recorded as seriously or slightly injured by the police on the basis of information available within a short time of the accident. This generally will not reflect the results of a medical examination, but may be influenced according to whether the casualty is hospitalised or not. Hospitalisation procedures will vary regionally.

Slight accident: One in which at least one person is slightly injured but no person is killed or seriously injured.

Slight injury: An injury of a minor character such as a sprain (including neck whiplash injury), bruise or cut which are not judged to be severe, or slight shock requiring roadside attention. This definition includes injuries not requiring medical treatment.