

# Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2012 Annual Report

## Statistical Release

26 September 2013



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# Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2012 Annual Report

The Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain (RRCGB) Annual Report: 2012 presents detailed statistics (headline figures were first published in June 2013) 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 four 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 2012 report include:

- In 2012, there were **a total of 195,723 casualties** of all severities in road accidents reported to the police, 4 per cent lower than in 2011. There were **1,754 people killed**, an 8 per cent decrease from 2011 and **23,039 were seriously injured**, down 0.4 per cent. Vehicle traffic levels remained broadly stable for the second year running, though there was a small fall of 0.4 per cent between 2011 and 2012.
- The number of fatalities fell for all road user types except pedal cyclists (up from 107 in 2011 to 118 in 2012) and bus and coach occupants. Pedestrian fatalities fell by 7 per cent, motorcycle fatalities fell by 9 per cent, car occupant fatalities fell by 9 per cent, and goods vehicle occupant fatalities remained the same as in 2011.
- Our best current estimate derived from NTS data is that the total of number of road casualties in Great Britain annually, including those not reported to the police, is within the range 630 thousand to 790 thousand with a central estimate of **710 thousand**. This is based on data for the five year period from 2008 to 2012
- The total value of prevention of reported road accidents in 2012 was estimated to be **£15.1 billion** - this includes an estimate of the cost of damage only accidents but does not allow for unreported injury accidents. This represents a decrease of £0.5 billion compared with the same estimate made in 2011.
- Provisional estimates for 2012 suggest that **280 people were killed** in **drink drive** accidents, an increase of around 17 per cent compared with 2011 and accounting for 16 per cent of all road deaths in Great Britain.



## Reported Road Casualties Great Britain: 2012 Annual Report

### Introduction

The Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2012 Annual Report 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 four 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
- an estimate of the total number of casualties in accidents, including those not reported to the police

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 2012 compared with recent years. Figures are primarily derived from information about accidents reported to the police. In 2012:

- There were a total of 195,723 casualties of all severities in road accidents reported to the police. This was 4 per cent lower than in 2011. Of these, 1,754 people were killed in 2012, down 8 per cent from 2011 and a new record low. There were 23,039 seriously injured casualties (down by less than 1 per cent from 2011, but up from 2010) and 170,930 slightly injured casualties.
- The number of fatalities in 2012 fell for all road user groups except pedal cyclists (up from 107 in 2011 to 118 in 2012) and bus and coach occupants. Pedestrian fatalities fell by 7 per cent, motorcycle fatalities fell by 9 per cent, car occupant fatalities fell by 9 per cent, and goods vehicle occupant fatalities remained the same as in 2011.

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## Changes in comparison with 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<sup>1</sup>.

Compared with the 2005-2009 average:

- The total number of fatalities in 2012 was 38 per cent lower than the 2005-09 average. The number of people killed or seriously injured was down by 17 per cent and the total number of casualties across all severities was down by 20 per cent.
- A total of 61 children (aged under 15 years old) were killed in reported road traffic accidents in 2012, up slightly from 60 in 2010, but down 52 per cent from the 2005-09 average.

Figures for the Strategic Framework for Road Safety outcome indicators can be found in table [RAS41001](#). In addition a table summarising key figures showing long term trends in road accident casualties compared with traffic is in table [RAS40006](#).

The article **Overview and trends in reported road casualties** can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2012>

Related statistics (tables and charts) can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

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 estimates of the values for prevention<sup>2</sup> of road accidents and casualties for use in the appraisal of transport schemes and gives an estimate of the total value of road accidents in Great Britain in 2012.

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 2012 was estimated to be **£15.1 billion** - this includes an estimate of the cost of damage only accidents but does not allow for unreported injury accidents. This represents a decrease of £0.5 billion

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-framework-for-road-safety>

<sup>2</sup> Prevention can be interpreted in two ways here: on the one hand it is the amount of money the Government should spend to likely prevent all road accidents. On the other hand it can be considered as the loss to society due to the current level of road accidents.

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compared with the same estimate made in 2011. This is proportional to the 4 per cent decrease in the number of accidents reported in 2011 compared with 2012.

- 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 **£34.3 billion**.

It is important to highlight that the values in this report have been based on the road accident data 2012, and computed at 2012 prices and values.

The article **Valuation of road accidents** can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2012>

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras60-average-value-of-preventing-road-accidents> in tables [RAS60001-RAS6004](#)

### 3. Drinking and Driving

#### Summary

This article presents statistics, and an analysis of, reported drinking and driving accidents in Great Britain and the casualties involved.

- Provisional estimates for 2012 suggest that 280 people were killed in drink drive accidents, an increase of around 17 per cent compared with 2011 and accounting for 16 per cent of all road deaths in Great Britain.
- There was a 5 per cent decrease in seriously injured drink drive casualties in 2012, to around 1,200 (5 per cent of all seriously injured road casualties).
- Final estimates for 2011 show that there were 220 fatal drink drive accidents in 2011, resulting in 240 deaths, unchanged from 2010 and jointly the lowest number of drink drive deaths since detailed reporting began in 1979.
- Amongst those killed in drink drive accidents in 2011, the majority (71 per cent) were drivers and riders over the legal alcohol limit. The remaining 29 per cent were other road users, involved in the accident but not necessarily over the legal limit themselves.
- Since 1979, when detailed reporting began, there has been an almost six-fold reduction in the number killed in drink drive accidents and a similar drop in seriously injured casualties.
- During 2012, 55,300 people in England and Wales were convicted of driving after consuming alcohol or taking drugs, broadly in line with the number for 2011.

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2012>

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras51-reported-drinking-and-driving> in tables RAS51001-RAS51019.

## 4. Survey data on road accidents

### Summary

This article provides an estimate of the total number of casualties from all road traffic accidents in Great Britain. This estimate includes accidents that were not reported to the police as well as the accidents which were recorded by the police.

- It has long been known that police data does not provide a complete record of all injury accidents and resulting casualties, as the estimates illustrate. To help address this, the National Travel Survey (NTS) has included questions asking people about their involvement in road accidents since 2007.
- Our best current estimate derived from the NTS data is that the total of number of road casualties in Great Britain annually, including those not reported to the police, is within the range 630 thousand to 790 thousand with a central estimate of **710 thousand**. This is based on data for the five year period from 2008 to 2012.
- Results of the NTS follow-up study suggest around 10 per cent of accidents reported by the respondents are outside the scope of STATS19. Adjustments were made to exclude these casualties from the above figures.
- The under reporting of road traffic accidents to the police should be borne in mind when using and analysing STATS19 data. However, STATS19 remains the most detailed, complete and reliable single source of information on road casualties covering the whole of Great Britain.

The article **Survey data on road accidents** can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2012>

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras54-survey-data> in tables RAS54001-RAS54004.

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## Changes in article coverage from 2011

There have been some changes in the articles included in the annual report this year from the 2011 annual report.

- a) The article on survey data on road accidents has been reintroduced after being omitted in 2011. It was not included in the 2011 annual report as the National Travel Survey data was not ready in time. Now the 2011 and 2012 NTS data are available, the estimate of all casualties from both reported and unreported road traffic accidents has been updated.
- b) The article using hospital episode statistics ([HES](#)) has been delayed. This is partially due to personnel changes and HES access and system changes. Secondly, the European Commission (EC) has commissioned some work into the standardisation of maximum abbreviated injury scale ([MAIS](#)) data, using hospital records. In order to ensure that we are adhering to an international agreed methodology, MAIS statistics are not being developed until the EC research is completed.

Once HES access has been regained and the EC research is completed, both of which are expected in autumn / winter 2013, we will update the hospital admissions table and produce a new article. We intend to include estimates of the total number of casualties from road traffic accidents with a score of MAIS3+.

- c) The data used for the self-reported drink and drug driving article were not available in time for this year's annual report. As with the hospital admissions article, this article will be released later in the year once it has been completed.
- d) As the proportions of accidents with each contributory factor do not change much from year to year, we have decided to remove this article this year. Our current expectation is to produce the article every two or three years allowing us to highlight what has changed. We seek any views users have on this proposal.

Despite not including the article, we have continued to maintain and update the contributory factor tables (tables [RAS50001 to RAS50015](#)).

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## Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain 2012: 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 ([RAS10001-RAS10015](#))
- drivers and vehicles involved ([RAS20001-RAS20010](#))
- casualties ([RAS30001-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](#))
- reported drink driving ([RAS51001-RAS51104](#))
- contributory factors ([RAS50001-RAS50015](#))
- survey data on road accidents ([RAS54001-RAS54004](#))
- hospital admissions as a result of road accidents ([RAS55001-RAS55016](#)) (to be updated at a later date)
- accident and casualty costs ([RAS60001-RAS6004](#))

A full list of tables in the road safety series and an index linking 2009 RRCGB report table numbers with 2012 RRCGB web tables can be found here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/road-accidents-and-safety-statistical-tables-index>

Detailed tables can be found on Reported road casualties Great Britain – 2012 annual report web page at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

### 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.

We have updated our estimate of the total number of road casualties in Great Britain, including those not reported to the police, in this year's **Survey data on road accidents** article and tables [RAS54001-RAS54004](#).

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

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road casualties covering the whole of Great Britain.

We also continue to look at other sources of data on road accidents. Although the RRCGB 2012 annual report does not contain any new analyses of hospital data, an article can be found in the 2011 annual report and in tables [RAS55001-RAS55016](#). This article and the tables will be updated later in 2013 or early 2014. Further information on complementary sources of data on road accidents and casualties, can be found in Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 annual reports, which are available through:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

## Background notes

1. Further information about the Reported Road Casualties Great Britain Annual Report can be found <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2012>.

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.

The statistics were reassessed in 2013 and the report (number 258) was published on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2013 <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html>. This assessment designated the statistics as National Statistics again, subject to a number of requirements. The Department will respond to the assessment in October 2013.

3. Details of Ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/48829/reported-road-casualties-gb-prerelease.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/48829/reported-road-casualties-gb-prerelease.pdf)

4. A full list of the definitions used in this publication can be found here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/48822/reported-road-casualties-gb-notes-definitions.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/48822/reported-road-casualties-gb-notes-definitions.pdf)

5. Further information on Reported Road Casualties Great Britain, including information about the variables collected on the STATS19 form, historical publications and factsheets, can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/transport-statistics-notes-and-guidance-road-accident-and-safety>

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. The next release of road accidents and casualty data will be estimates for the second quarter of 2013 on 7 November 2013.

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## 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.