



Department  
for Transport

# Introduction to the 2015 Annual Report

## About this report

The Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain (RRCGB) Annual Report: 2015 presents detailed statistics (headline figures were first published in June 2016) 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 three 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.

## Key findings:

- There were 1,730 **reported road deaths** in 2015, a decrease of 3 per cent compared with 2014. This is the second lowest annual total on record after 2013. There were 45 per cent fewer fatalities in 2015 than a decade earlier in 2006.
- The number of people **seriously injured** in reported road traffic accidents decreased by 3 per cent to 22,144 in 2015, compared with 2014.
- There was a total of **186,189 casualties of all severities** in 2015. This is around 4 per cent lower than in 2014 and the second lowest level on record.
- **Vehicle traffic levels** increased by 1.6 per cent between 2014 and 2015.
- In the last 30 years Great Britain's **population** has grown by 15 per cent (8.1 million people). Despite this growth in population, **road fatalities** have fallen by 68 per cent (3,655 deaths).
- There were an estimated 4,860 **clinically seriously injured (MAIS3+) casualties** in road traffic accidents in the UK in 2015. This has remained relatively unchanged over 1999 to 2015.
- The **total value of prevention of reported road accidents** in 2015 was estimated to be £15.3 billion - this includes an estimate of the cost of damage only accidents.

## Revisions to the 2015 figures

All the figures contained in the Annual Report and associated tables include some minor revisions to the 2015 figures.

## Introduction

The **Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2015 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 occurring. Most of the statistics in the publication are based on information about accidents reported to the police (using 'Stats19' forms). However, other sources such as mortality and survey data are also used as well as population and traffic data to provide a wider context.

The headline accident and casualty figures for 2015 were published in [June 2016](#). The majority of the tables included here provide more detailed breakdowns of these headline figures. However, there are number of tables containing fresh updates of data that do not come directly from the police records (for instance, death registrations, motoring offences and the valuation of prevention of accidents) and some tables that have been included for the first time ever (seriously injured casualties based on clinical data).

The report also contains three articles:

- An overview of reported road casualties in 2015. This is the original article that accompanied the Main Results release from June 2016. It has been revised to include the minor changes to the 2015 figures and has a few extra sections than the original.
- The first estimates for the number of people admitted to hospital in the UK with a clinical definition of a serious injury.
- An exploration of some of the factors which affect road casualty numbers.

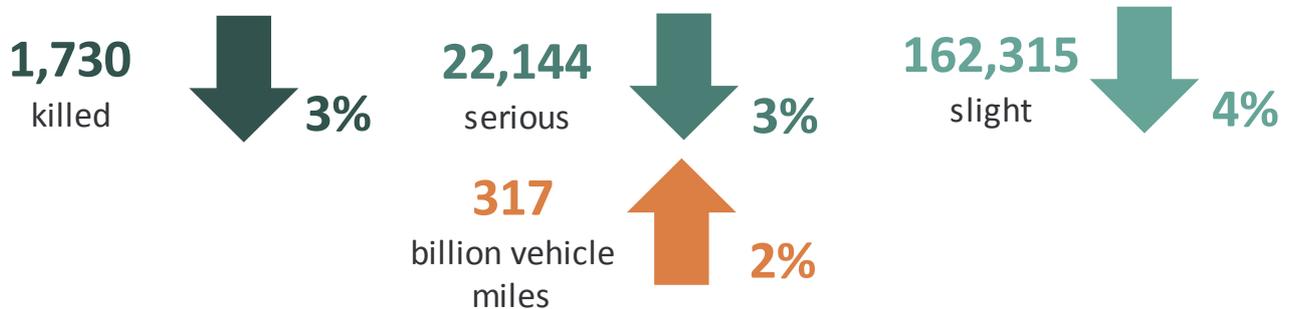
## Overview of reported casualties

- There were 1,730 **reported road deaths** in 2015, a decrease of 3 per cent compared with 2014.

**Fatalities in reported road accidents: GB, 2005-2015**



- The 1,730 **road deaths** in 2015 is the second lowest annual total on record after 2013. There were 45 per cent fewer fatalities in 2015 than a decade earlier in 2006.
- The number of people **seriously injured** in reported road traffic accidents decreased by 3 per cent to 22,144 in 2015, compared with 2014.
- There was a total of 186,189 **casualties of all severities** in reported road traffic accidents during 2015, returning to the long-running downward trend that was broken in 2014.
- A total of 140,056 **personal-injury road traffic accidents** were reported to the police in 2015. Of these accidents, 1,616 resulted in at least one fatality.
- **Vehicle traffic levels** increased by 1.6 per cent between 2014 and 2015.



- This article includes a specific section on the **statistical significance** of changes in casualty numbers. This is particularly useful as it can help users understand whether changes in casualty numbers are likely to be as a **result of chance** or owing to a **genuine change in road safety** on Britain's roads.

## Further information

The article giving an **overview and trends in reported road casualties** can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2015)

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

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics)

Tables [RAS30059-RAS30068](#), [RAS40006](#).

## Factors affecting reported road casualties

This article looks at a number of factors which influence road casualty numbers. It covers topics such as:

- **Population changes**, and particularly focussing on how the number of people in younger and older age groups have changed over time. In particular, it highlights that the population of Britain has grown by 15 per cent since 1986 whereas fatalities have fallen by 68 per cent in that time.
- The population of older people (aged 70 and older) has increased relatively rapidly over recent years. This carries implications for higher levels of casualties in this age group in the future.
- The number of people taking **driving tests** has changed over time. After a number of years of falling numbers of younger people taking the test, there has been an increase over the last three years. This could suggest that the challenges from having more younger drivers on the roads could increase.
- **Fuel prices and the economy**

Although it is clearly a factor, the article does not cover weather influences. This topic has been dealt with in detail over recent years. There was a specific article on the subject in the [2014 annual report](#).

### Further information

The article [Factors affecting reported road casualties](#) can be found [here](#).

### Weather and accidents

A table giving weather-adjusted casualty numbers (RAS30080) can be found [here](#).

## Estimating clinically seriously injured (MAIS3+) road casualties in the UK

Police-reported seriously injured casualties only tell part of the story about people who are hurt in road traffic accidents. **Hospital data** can be used to make clinical definitions of seriously injured casualties based on an **internationally recognised common scale: the Abbreviated Injury Scale** (AIS). This article provides the first estimate of the number of casualties in the UK with an injury scoring 3 or higher on this scale.

- In 2015, it is estimated there were around 4,860 people admitted to hospital in the UK with a MAIS of 3 or higher following a road traffic accident.
- The number of casualties with MAIS3+ has remained relatively static over recent years.

### Further information

The article [Estimating MAIS3+ casualties](#) can be found [here](#).

A new table giving MAIS3+ casualty numbers (RAS55050) can be found [here](#).

This section summarises topics which have not been included as an article.

### International comparisons

- In comparison with other countries, the **UK remains one of the world leaders in terms of road safety**, and its rate for child fatalities is well below the European average.

### Value of prevention of accidents

- The **total value of prevention of reported road accidents** in 2015 was estimated to be £15.3 billion - this includes an estimate of the cost of damage only accidents.
- The tables include an estimate for unreported casualties for the first time. These take the total to £35.55bn.
- Since the early 1990s, the casualty valuation has been based on a consistent **willingness to pay** (WTP) approach. For more details of the methodology, see the [2012 Annual Report](#).

### Survey data on road accidents

- It has long been known that police data do not provide a complete record of all personal injury accidents and casualties. 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 number of road casualties in Great Britain** annually, including those not reported to the police, is within the range 630 to 800 thousand with a central estimate of 710 thousand.
- For more details of the survey data methodology, see the [2012 Annual Report](#).

### Drinking and driving

- Final estimates for 2014 show that between 220 and 260 people were **killed** in accidents in Great Britain where at least one driver was **over the drink drive limit**, with a central estimate of 240 deaths.
- Due to the **uncertainty** in the estimates, fatalities should be regarded as having **remained unchanged since 2010**. The 2014 figures is the same as it was in 2013.

#### Detailed statistics

Detailed tables on international comparisons can be found in [RAS52001](#).

Detailed tables on accident and casualty costs can be found in [RAS60001-RAS6004](#).

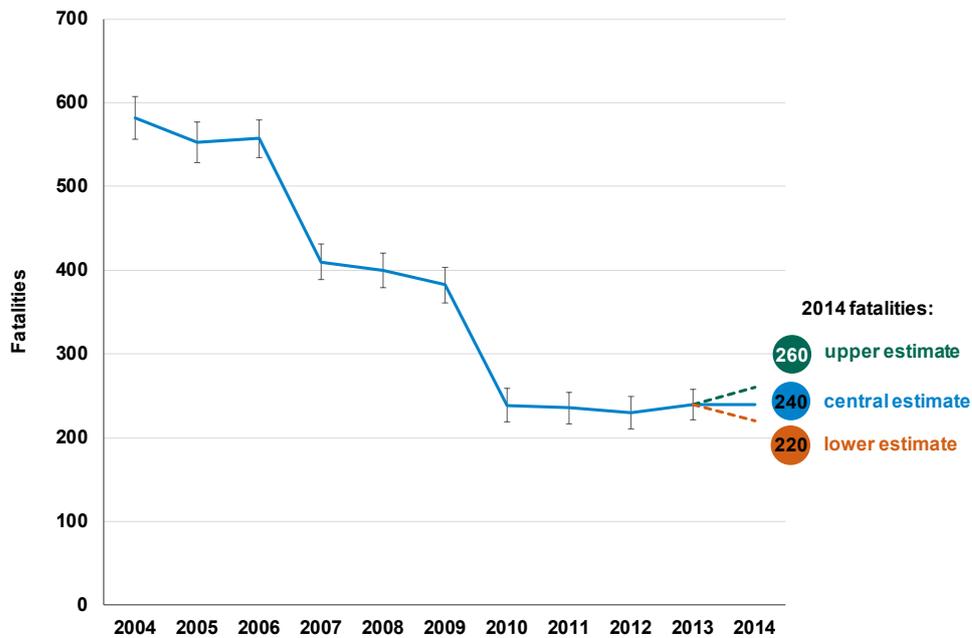
#### Detailed statistics

Detailed tables on survey data on road accidents can be found in [RAS54001-RAS54004](#).

#### Detailed statistics

Detailed tables on reported drink driving can be found in [RAS51001-RAS51104](#).

## Fatalities in reported drink drive accidents: GB, 2004-2014



- Around 13 per cent of all **deaths** in reported road traffic accidents in 2014 involved at least one driver **over the drink drive limit**.
- The number of **seriously injured** casualties in **drink drive accidents** decreased by 3 per cent from 1,100 in 2013 to 1,070 in 2014. This is a **statistically significant change**.
- The total number of casualties of all severities in drink drive accidents for 2014 was 8,210, down by less than 1 per cent on the 2013 figure remains at the lowest level on record.
- The **first provisional estimates** for **2015** suggest there were between 200 and 290 **deaths** in drink drive accidents.

## Self-report drink and drug driving: 2015/16

- The levels of drivers who have reported that they have driven either whilst over the alcohol limit and / or whilst under the influence of illegal drugs are drawn from questions asked in the Crime Survey for England and Wales.
- Around 7.6 per cent of drivers in 2015/16 said that they believed they had driven whilst over the legal alcohol limit at least once in the last 12 months. This proportion is up from 6.2 per cent in 2014/15.
- Around 0.6 per cent of drivers admitted to driving whilst under the influence of illegal drugs in the last 12 months. This figure has remained broadly unchanged since 2011/12.

### Detailed statistics

Detailed tables on self-reported drink driving can be found in [RAS51101-RAS51104](#).

## Quarterly estimates

Provisional estimates for the first quarter of 2016 were published on 4th August. They are available [here](#).

The Q1 estimates show that road deaths remained unchanged at 1,780 compared with the year ending March 2015. However, the estimate for number of people killed or seriously injured rose by 2 per cent to 24,610 in comparison with the previous 12 months.

Motor traffic volumes are estimated to have increased by 1.8 per cent between the two years.

Although KSI casualties rose between years ending March 2015 and 2016 it was not a statistically significant change. As a result, the trend in KSI casualties should be interpreted as being practically flat since the year ending March 2013.

Provisional estimates for the second quarter of 2016 will be released in early November 2016.

## 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 ([RAS10](#))
- drivers and vehicles involved ([RAS20](#))
- casualties ([RAS30](#))
- combined accidents, casualties, vehicles ([RAS40](#))
- area comparisons ([RAS30038-RAS30058](#), [RAS10014-RAS10015](#), [RAS41002-RAS41004](#))
- international comparisons ([RAS52](#))
- inter modal comparisons ([RAS53](#))
- Former Strategic Framework for Road Safety outcome indicators ([RAS41](#))
- reported drink driving ([RAS51](#))
- contributory factors ([RAS50](#))
- survey data on road accidents ([RAS54](#))
- hospital admissions as a result of road accidents ([RAS55](#)) (to be updated at a later date)
- accident and casualty costs ([RAS60](#))

A full list of tables in the road safety series and an index linking 2009 RRCGB report table numbers with 2015 RRCGB web tables can be found [here](#).

## 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 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 road casualties covering the whole of Great Britain.

## Notes

**1)** Further information about the Reported Road Casualties Great Britain Annual Report can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2015).

**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.

The statistics were reassessed in 2013 and confirmed as National Statistics. The report (number 258) was published on 25th July 2013 at: [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html).

- 3)** Details of Ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found here: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-accident-and-safety-statistics-pre-release-access-list](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-accident-and-safety-statistics-pre-release-access-list).
- 4)** A full list of the definitions used in this publication can be found here: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/48822/reported-road-casualties-gb-notes-definitions.pdf](http://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: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics-guidance).
- 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 the data.gov website: [data.gov.uk/dataset/road-accidents-safety-data](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 2016 on 3rd November 2016.