

Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: Quarterly Provisional Estimates Q1 2013

Statistical Release

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Department
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Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: Quarterly Provisional Estimates Q1 2013

This publication presents statistics on personal injury accidents in the year ending March 2013 on public roads (including footways) in Great Britain, which became known to the police within 30 days.

Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: Quarterly Provisional Estimates is a series providing estimates of personal injury road accidents and their casualties. These estimates are published to allow emerging trends to be monitored between the publications of annual figures. A note on methodology can be found at: <http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/road-accidents-and-safety/methodology-note-quarterly-estimates.pdf>.

Estimates are based on information reported to the Department for Transport 15 weeks after the end of the latest quarter. For this release figures are based on information available on 17th July 2013.

The key findings from the Quarterly Provisional Estimates Q1 2013 include:

- For reported road accidents in the year ending March 2013: 1,680 people were killed, a 10 per cent drop from 1,870 in the year ending March 2012. The number of people killed or seriously injured fell to 23,660, a 6 per cent decrease compared with the year to March 2012.
- Overall for year ending March 2013 there were 188,890 reported road casualties (slightly and seriously injured casualties, and fatalities), 7 per cent fewer than the 203,305 for the year ending March 2012.
- Total reported child casualties (ages 0-15) fell by 14 per cent to 16,460 for the year ending March 2013 from 19,131 for the previous year, with those killed or seriously injured down 12 per cent to 2,150.
- Motor vehicle traffic levels fell by 1 per cent compared with the 12 month period ending March 2012.
- Weather effects - notably much colder mean temperatures in Q1 2013 than in Q1 2012 - are likely to have contributed to large year on year falls in the numbers of pedal cyclist casualties (down 23 per cent) and motorcyclist casualties (down 27 per cent) during Q1 2013. Also, car occupant casualties in Q1 2013 were down 12 per cent year on year, but weather effects appear less significant for these road users.

1. A comparison of rolling years, by road user type and road type

- In the year ending March 2013 there were 1,680 **fatalities** in reported personal injury accidents, a 10 per cent drop from 1,870 in the year ending March 2012. The number of **killed or seriously injured (KSI) casualties** fell by 6 per cent, to 23,660, and the **total number of casualties** fell by 7 per cent to 188,890.
- A total of 8,780 **car users** were reported killed or seriously injured in the year ending March 2013, a fall of 4 per cent from the previous 12-month period.
- KSI casualties for the vulnerable road user groups – **pedestrians, pedal cyclists and motorcyclists** – showed overall decreases of 6, 4 and 12 per cent respectively compared with the year ending March 2012. These falls were largely due to significant decreases in casualties for all three road user groups in Q1 2013 relative to Q1 2012.
- There were also significant decreases in the number of **child casualties (aged 0-15)** which fell from 19,131 in the year ending March 2012, to 16,460 in the year ending March 2013, a fall of 14 per cent. The number of child KSIs also fell in the same period by 12 per cent to 2,150. The number of **child pedestrian casualties** who were killed or seriously injured fell by 11 per cent to 1,470 in the year ending March 2013.
- There were drops in the number of accidents on all **road types** in the year ending March 2013 relative to the year ending March 2012. The number of fatal and serious accidents fell by 8 per cent on **major roads (motorways and A roads)** and 5 per cent on **minor roads**. On roads with speed limits over 40 mph (non-built up) fatal and serious accidents fell by 9 per cent and on roads with speeds limits up to an including 40 mph (built-up) they fell by 5 per cent.
- There were **188,890 casualties** from **140,930 accidents** in the year ending March 2013 which represents a 7 per cent fall for both accidents and casualties compared with the year ending March 2012.

Table [RAS45001](#): Reported road casualties by severity: Great Britain year ending first quarter 2013

	Number/percentage change compared with previous 12 months and 2005-2009 average					
	2005-2009 average A	Apr-11 to Mar-12 B	Apr-12 to Mar-13 (P) C	Percentage change over 2005-2009 average (C-A)/A %	Percentage change over previous 12 months (C-B)/B %	Traffic ¹ percentage change over previous 12 months
ALL CASUALTIES						
Killed	2,816	1,870	1,680	-40	-10	-1.0
KSI ²	30,041	25,286	23,660	-21	-6	-1.0
Slightly injured	216,010	178,019	165,230	-24	-7	-1.0
All casualties	246,050	203,305	188,890	-23	-7	-1.0

P Provisional estimates

¹ Motor traffic (excludes pedal cycles)

² Killed or seriously injured

Chart RAS45012: Reported killed or seriously injured casualties compared with motor vehicle traffic (billion miles), rolling four quarter totals: GB Q1 2004 – Q1 2013

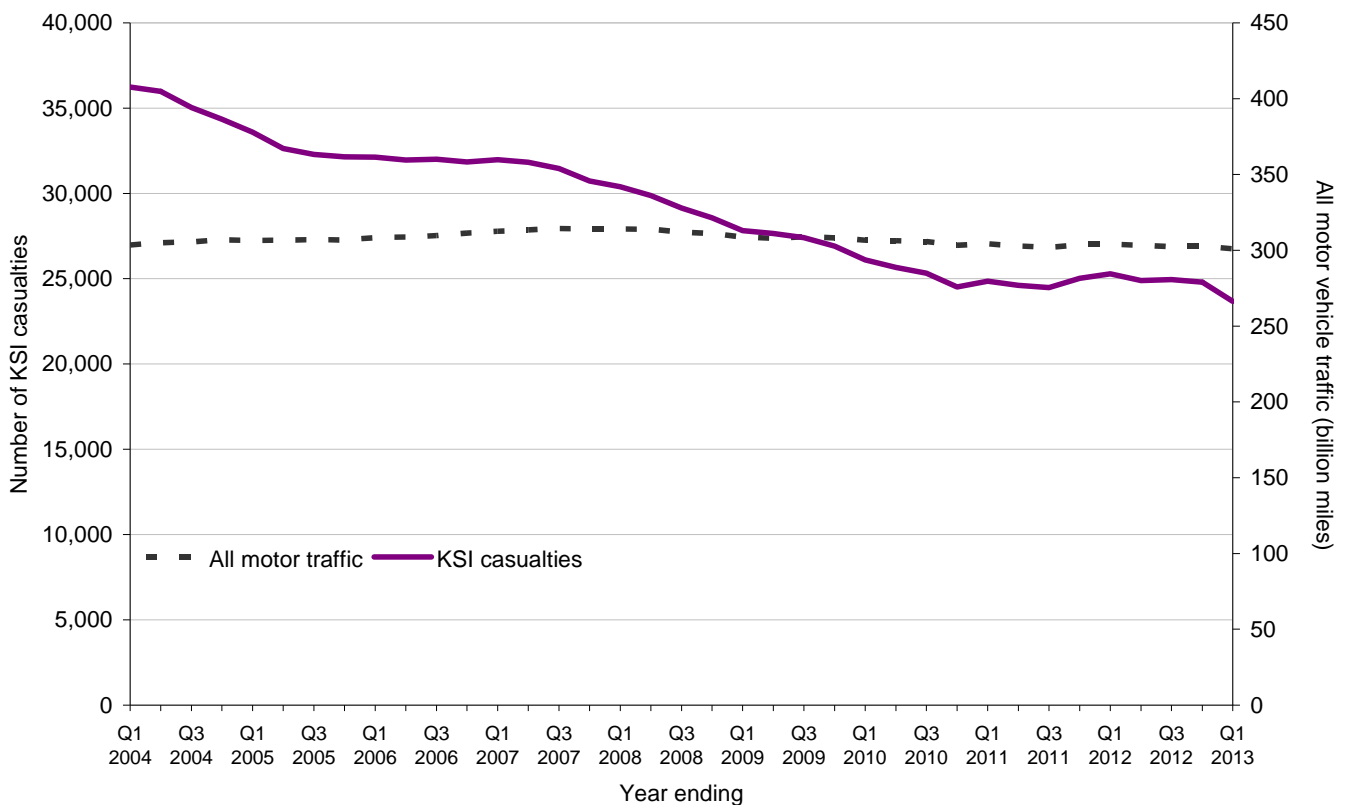
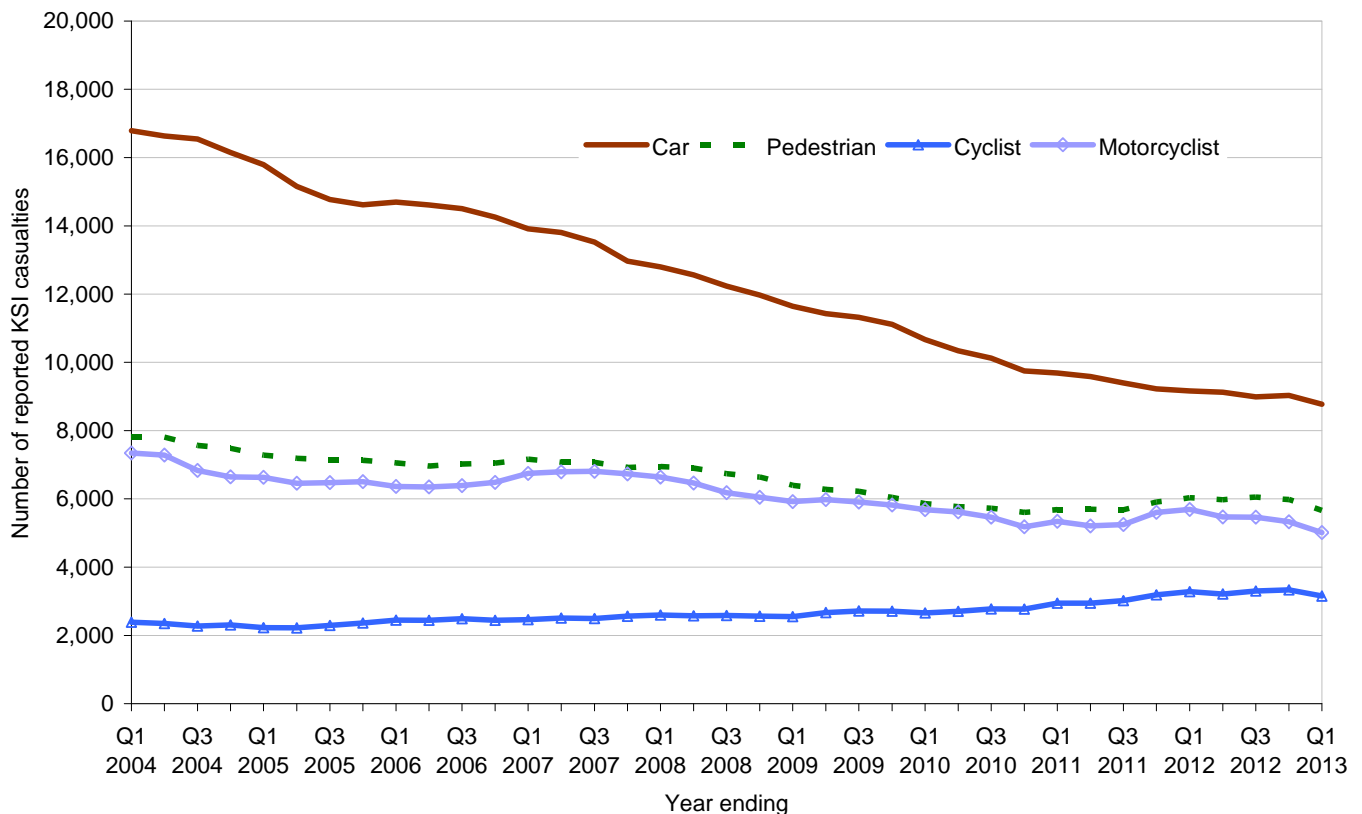


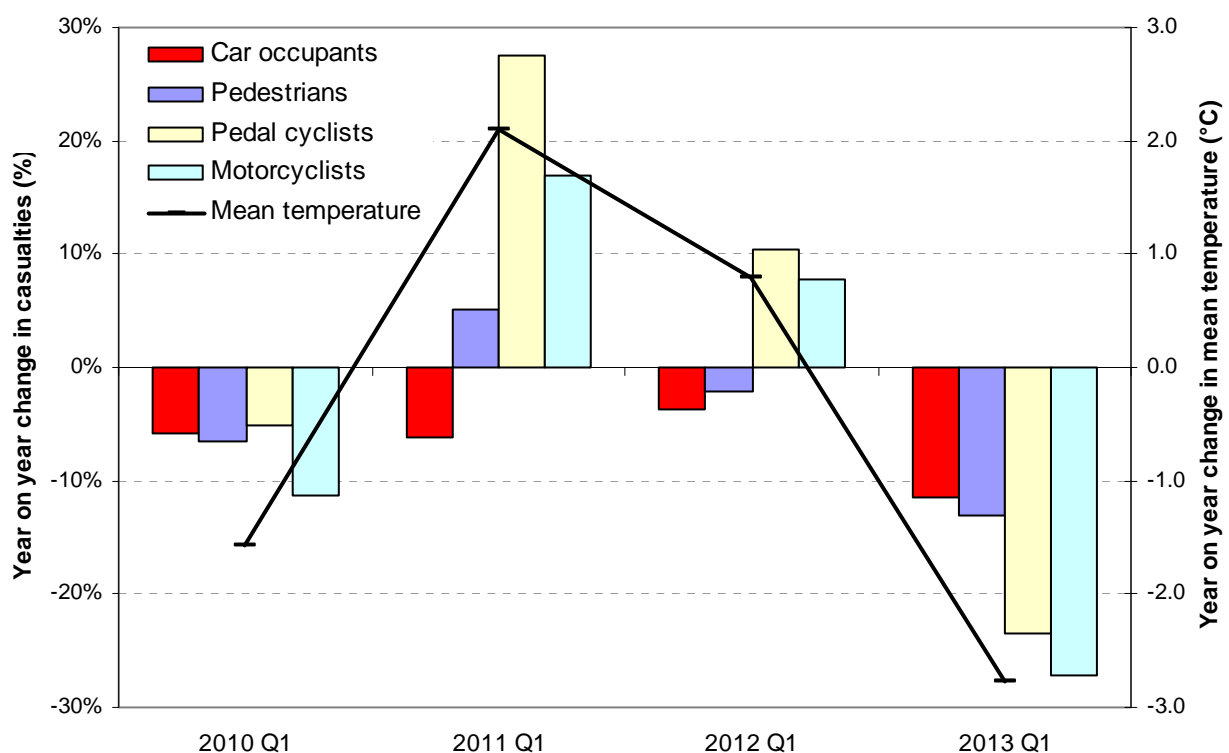
Chart RAS45013: Reported killed or seriously injured (KSI) road casualties by road user type, rolling four quarter totals: GB Q1 2004 – Q1 2013



2. A comparison of quarter 1 results 2012 and 2013

- Between January and March 2013 340 people were killed in reported road accidents, 18 per cent fewer than in the first quarter of 2012. Serious and slightly injured casualties fell by 19 and 14 per cent respectively. These figures resulted in an overall decrease in casualties of 15 per cent.
- There were decreases in the number of casualties for each of the different road user groups, with the largest falls being for vulnerable road users (motorcyclists, pedal cyclists and pedestrians) with falls in casualties of 27, 23 and 13 per cent respectively. There were similar large falls in KSI casualties, with decreases of 28 per cent for motorcyclists, 26 per cent for pedal cyclists and 20 per cent for pedestrians. Car user KSI casualties and total casualties both fell by 12 per cent over the same period.

Year on year percentage change in GB reported road casualties, and year on year absolute change in UK mean temperature: first quarters of years 2010 to 2013



- It is likely that these large falls were at least partly due to the large change in weather conditions between the first quarters of 2012 and 2013¹. The overall UK mean temperature during the first three months of 2013 was 2.8°C lower than in the first three months of 2012. This is a very large year-on-year change by historic standards – the largest such change in quarter 1 temperature for at least 30 years. Notably, the change meant that what was an above average mean temperature in quarter 1 2012 became a below average mean temperature in quarter 1 2013. It is therefore likely that the markedly colder weather in 2013 would have reduced the numbers of vulnerable road users (particularly pedal cyclists and motorcyclists) on the road, reducing their exposure to accidents.

¹ All weather data available from the Met Office at <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/summaries/datasets>

- The graph above illustrates the relationship between year-on-year changes in temperature and year-on-year changes in road casualty numbers for the main road user types, during quarter 1 in each of the last four years. It suggests that the relationship is strongest for pedal cyclists and motorcyclists, and as a result the large fall in casualties for these road user types in Q1 2013 is likely to have been significantly influenced by the low temperatures.
- However, the relationship between temperature and casualties is markedly weaker for car occupants. (This is a logical finding: cars are enclosed and therefore car occupants, unlike pedal cyclists and motorcyclists, are not personally exposed to cold weather during travel). The 12 per cent fall in car occupant casualties from Q1 2012 to Q1 2013 therefore seems far less likely to have been significantly influenced by the low temperatures
- Provisional estimates also show a decrease of 2.2 per cent in road traffic levels between the first quarters of 2012 and 2013. There were falls in traffic volumes for all motor vehicle types. Quarterly traffic estimates are not available for pedal cycles.
- All child road casualties fell by 20 per cent and child KSI casualties were estimated to have decreased by 22 per cent (from 561 in quarter 1 of 2012 to 440 in quarter 1 of 2013).

Statistics on the provisional number of casualties in personal injury road traffic accidents in the year ending March 2013 can be found on the [Road Accidents and Safety Statistics](#) page, section [RAS45](#).

The statistics will be revised in the quarterly releases due in November 2013 (including data for quarter 2 2013) and February 2014 (including data for quarter 3 2013). The final figures for 2013 will be published in Main Results 2013, due in June 2014.

3. Strengths and weaknesses of the data

- The quarterly figures are based on estimates. It should be noted that no single quarter's figures should be taken in isolation, especially if they appear to show a change in trend, as there are seasonal fluctuations particularly in the smaller categories of road user. The 2013 Q1 results are based on complete (January to March 2013) figures provided by 48 police authorities with partial data for remaining two authorities. Adjustments are made to take account of police authorities with missing data. Table RAS45011 provides a list of which police authorities are included in these figures.
- 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 and produced in 2011, 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, together with information on complementary sources of data on road accidents and casualties, are contained in the *Survey data on road traffic accidents* article of Reported Road Casualties Great Britain: 2010 Annual report, which can be found at:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120104201631/http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/road-accidents-and-safety-annual-report-2010/>.

- The estimates of the total number of road casualties in Great Britain for 2011 and 2012 will be published in the 2012 Annual Report, scheduled for release in September 2013.
- The data used as the basis for these statistics are therefore not a complete record of all personal injury road accidents, and this should be borne in mind when using and analysing the figures. However, police data on road accidents (STATS19), whilst not perfect, remain the most detailed, complete and reliable single source of information on road casualties covering the whole of Great Britain, in particular for monitoring trends over time.

4. Background notes

1. The Reported Road Casualties Great Britain Quarterly Provisional Estimates web page provides further detail of the key findings presented in this statistical release. The tables are available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-provisional-estimates-q3-2012>
2. 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
3. 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>
4. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards as set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. The first assessment report (report number 4) and letter confirming that the statistics have been designated as National Statistics are available at
<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html>. The statistics were reassessed during 2013 and the report, number 258, was published at the link above on the 25th July 2013. The Department will respond to the assessment in autumn 2013.
5. 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