



**ROAD SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2019**

# **SOUTH AFRICA**

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*South Africa has made strides in reducing road crash fatalities since their peak in 2006. However, the numbers remain high. Notably, there was a decrease in road fatalities by 8% in 2018 (12 921) from 14 050 in 2017. The 12 921 road deaths were reported for a mortality rate of 22.4 per 100 000 inhabitants. The National Road Safety Strategy has been revised and the newly drafted strategy covers the period 2016-2030. The target to reduce fatalities by 50% has been extended to 2030.*

## Trends

According to latest data from the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), there were 12 921 reported road fatalities in 2018, resulting in an 8% decrease compared to 2017. In 2017, 14 050 road users lost their lives in road crashes a figure close to 2016 figure (14 071 fatalities).

The **longer-term trend for road fatalities** in South Africa has been upward. Between 1990 and 2000, the reported number of road fatalities fluctuated around 9 500 on average per annum. After 2000, the number increased significantly and reached a peak in 2006 with more than 15 000 fatalities reported. The country has since implemented a wide range of interventions which have produced positive results and a steady decline in fatal crashes between 2006 and 2013. However, the number of reported road deaths increased again in 2014, 2015 and 2016. Between 2000 and 2018, the number of road deaths increased by 52%.

The number of **traffic deaths per 100 000 inhabitants** in South Africa increase by 18% between 2000 and 2018. In 2018, 22.4 traffic deaths per 100 000 inhabitants were recorded, compared to 19.9 in 1990. The mortality rate remains extremely high and has consistently been above 20 in recent years. By way of comparison, the average in the European Union is 4.9 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants in 2018.

The fatality risk measured as **traffic deaths per 10 000 registered vehicles** decreased by 26% between 2000 and 2018. This improvement mainly reflects the sharp increase in motorisation with the number of motor vehicles almost doubling during this period from 6 million units in 2000 to 11 million in 2018. In 2018, the fatality risk stood at 10.4 which is 20 times higher than in the best performing countries.

### Country Profile

**Population** in 2018: 57.7 million

**GDP per capita** in 2018: USD 6 345

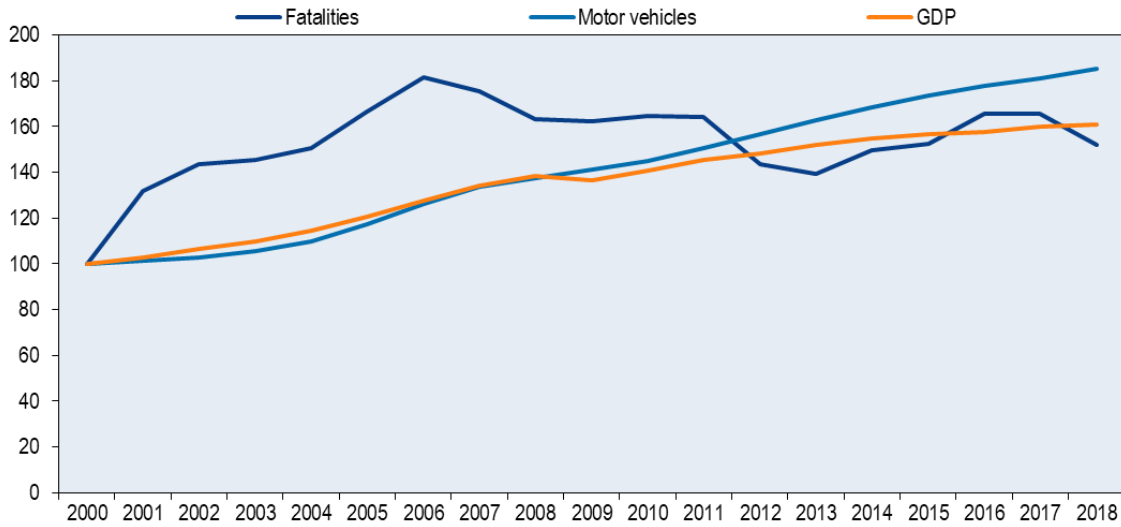
**Cost of road crashes:** 3.5% of GDP (2017)

**Road network:** 750 000 kilometres, including gravel roads (urban roads 43%; rural roads 44%; motorways 3%)

**Registered motor vehicles** in 2018: 11.2 million (cars 64%; goods vehicles 26%; motorcycles 3%, buses 3%)

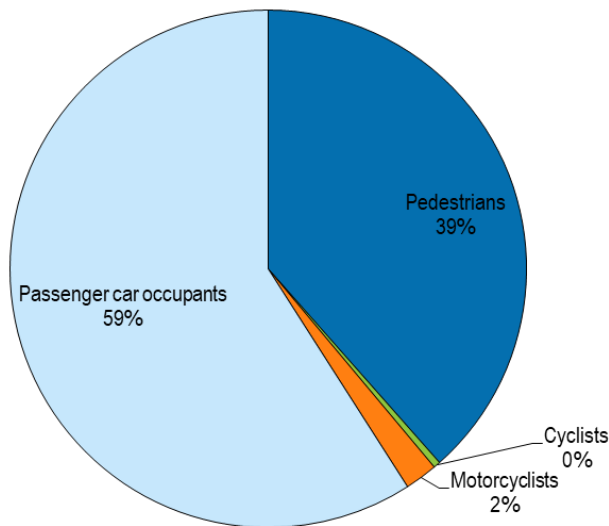
**Speed limits:** 60 km/h on urban roads; 100 km/h on rural roads; 120 km/h on motorways

**Figure 1. Road safety, vehicle stock and GDP trends**  
Index 2000 = 100



The picture for **fatalities by road user group** is characterised by a very high share of pedestrians among road casualties. In 2018, pedestrians accounted for 39% of reported fatalities and motorised vehicle passengers for 59%. The share of motorcyclists in total fatalities is of 2% which is relatively low compared to other countries with similar level of motorisation. This is due to the fact that motorcycles make up only 3% of all motorised vehicle fleet and are not used for daily commuting.

**Figure 2. Road fatalities by road user group in percentage of total, 2018**



**Road deaths by age group** in 2018 showed a very high share of children among road casualties. Children are very much affected by road crashes in South Africa and are particularly vulnerable as pedestrians.

## Economic costs of road crashes

The high number of road traffic crashes and their associated consequences have had a significant impact on South African society, which in turn continues to hamper socio-economic development and affects the well-being of all South Africans. This impact is measured in terms of human lives lost, "pain, grief and suffering", as well as an increasing cost to the economy.

In 2017 the total cost of road crashes amounted to an estimated ZAR 162.05 billion, or 3.5% of GDP (adjusted by the RTMC with CPI). In 2018 it amounted to an estimated ZAR 142.29 billion.

**Table 1. Costs of road crashes, 2017**

	Unit cost [ZAR]	Total cost [ZAR]
Fatalities	4 119 437	68.7 billion
Severe injuries	445 857	34.8 billion
Slight injuries	75 055	22.9 billion
Property damage	1 141	35.7 billion
<b>Total</b>		<b>162.05 billion</b>
<b>Total as % of GDP</b>		<b>3.5%</b>

Note: as of 10 September 2019, ZAR 1= USD 0.068

## Behaviour

The behaviour of road users is an important determinant of a country's road safety performance. **Human factors** are the main causes of road crashes. In South Africa, jay-walking by pedestrians is reported to be major issue, with a contribution of 24% to the total number of fatalities for 2018.

Speeding and inappropriate speed are also a major issue, as is "hit and run".

The table below summarises the main speed limits in South Africa.

**Table 2. Passenger car speed limits by road type, 2019**

	General speed limit
Urban roads	60 km/h
Rural roads	100 km/h
Motorways	120 km/h

**Driving under the influence of alcohol** is amongst other causes of road crashes in South Africa. Based on the 2018 figures, about 3.4% of fatal crashes occurred due intoxicated drivers, pedestrians and cyclists with liquor usage.

In South Africa, the maximum authorised blood alcohol content (BAC) is 0.5 g/l. There is a lower limit of 0.2 g/l for professional drivers of public transport and heavy goods vehicles. A crash is defined as alcohol-related when one of the participants has a BAC above the legal limit.

Data on the **role of drug use by road users** for road crashes in South Africa is unavailable. Driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs having a narcotic effect, or with an excessive amount of alcohol in the blood or breath is prohibited. Drug driving measures are not yet enforced.

An increasing problem for traffic safety in South Africa is **distraction**, for instance through the use of mobile phones while driving. The National Road Traffic Act states that no person shall drive a vehicle on a public road holding a cellular or a mobile telephone or any other communication device in one or both hands or with any other part of the body.

**Seat belt wearing** has been compulsory in South Africa since 2005 in front seats and rear seats for cars and minibuses registered after 1 January 2006. All new motor vehicles must be fitted with seat belts for all passengers. The driver is responsible for ensuring that infants are seated with an appropriate child restraint. The seat belt wearing rate is very low, estimated in 2010 at 4.5% for the drivers and 5% for front seat passengers. There has not been any more recent survey on the use of seatbelts.

The National Road Traffic Act, 1993 (No.93 of 1996) requires cyclists of all ages to wear **helmets**. This is compulsory for all cyclists. The regulation requires the use of "protective helmet that is properly fastened and fitted while riding a bicycle or being carried as a passenger".

## Road safety management and strategies

**Responsibility for the organisation of road safety** in South Africa lies with the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), established in 1999 and operational since April 2005, as the lead agency for Road Safety in South Africa. RTMC reports to the Department of Transport. Other major road agencies that also have a responsibility to contribute towards road safety are:

- Road Accident Fund (RAF);
- Road Traffic Infringements Agency (RTIA);
- South African National Roads Agency (SOC; Limited) (SANRAL);
- Cross-Border Roads Transport Agency (CBRTA).

In addition, the Department of Health, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, the Department of Roads and Public Works, the Department of Safety and

Security, the Provincial Traffic Authorities, Statistics South Africa, and the emergency medical services are important stakeholders.

The RTMC's shareholders include representatives from the three spheres of government, National, Provincial and Local. The Shareholder Committee consists of the Minister of Transport; every Member of Executive Committee responsible for road traffic services; and two representatives from South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

The Road Traffic Management strategy 1996-2000 focused on vulnerable road users (VRUs), quality of roads and vehicles. This succeeded in educating road users and laid a basis for the introduction of AARTO (Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences) and the establishment of the RTMC (Road Traffic Management Corporation).

The road safety strategy 2001-2005 focused on education and communication of road safety to VRUs. Emphasis was also put on drivers and vehicle fitness. This was done mainly through law enforcement initiatives. The period under review witnessed high police visibility through road blocks, alcohol testing and patrolling in hazardous areas. However, there was only partial implementation of the strategy and a weak monitoring and evaluation system.

The National Road Safety Strategy, introduced in 2006, prioritised road safety management, road environment, vehicle and driver fitness as well as creating institutions tasked with the responsibility of implementing the strategy. This strategy focuses on law enforcement, the role of government in coordination and improving the capacity of state institutions to deliver. There were successes with regards to law enforcement operations. However, there was again only partial implementation and skill shortage.

The current road safety strategy covers the period 2016-2030. The objective is to reduce fatalities and injuries by 50% from the 2010 baseline by 2030. The implementation of the strategy has been broken into the short, medium and long-term phases. In the short-term it is envisaged that a solid safety management will be established. Included in this phase is the building of credible institutions to improve road user behaviour. In the medium-term phase, the objective is to reduce crashes and injuries as well as their consequences to society. The objective of the long-term phase is to become one of the leading countries in road safety.

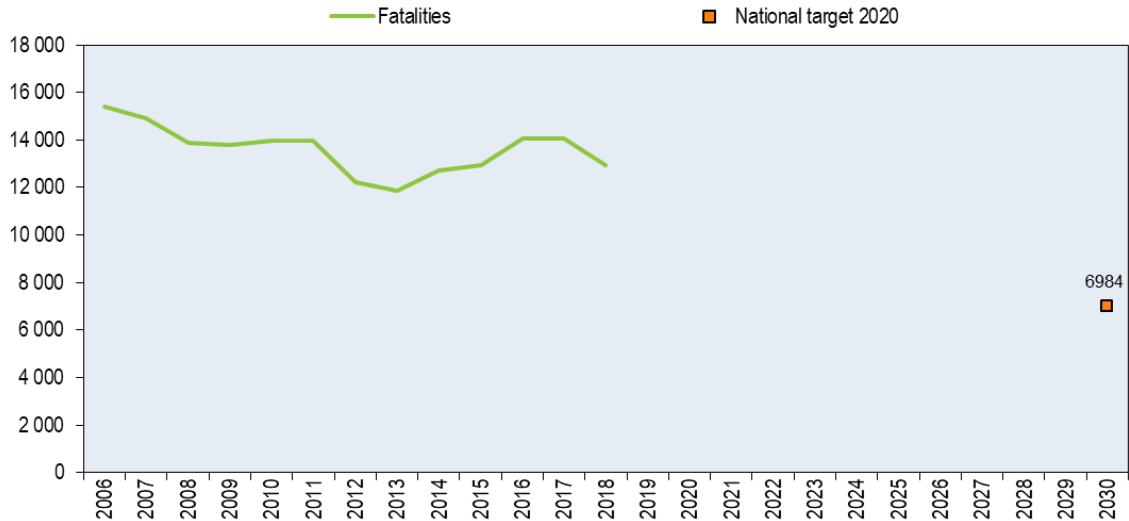
The National Road Safety Strategy was approved by the National Assembly. It places emphasis on the following priority areas:

- improved road traffic management;
- infrastructure improvements;
- vehicle standards;
- safety of Vulnerable Road Users;

- efficient and effective management of post-crash.

The NRSS 2016-2030 is monitored bi-annually by the Lead Agency Road Traffic Management Corporation.

**Figure 3. Trends in road fatalities towards national target**



## Measures

Several measures to improve road safety management have recently been put into place.

### Road safety management

- Actions are implemented to improve coordination and management, eliminate fraud and corruption, improve road safety data systems, ensure adequate funding and capacity and enhance the use of technology to protect road users.

### Road user behaviour

- Priorities focus on increasing the protection of vulnerable road users, strengthening enforcement and further involving communities in road safety.

### Vehicle safety

- Priorities focus on increasing vehicle safety standards and ensuring that vehicles on the road network are roadworthy.

### Safe infrastructure

- Road audits and safety assessments are regularly conducted to identify and address high risk locations.

## Definitions, methodology, data collection

- Road fatality: any person killed during or immediately after a crash, or death directly attributable to a crash within 30 days of such a crash.
- Seriously injured: any person sustaining injuries to such an extent that hospitalisation is required. Serious injuries include fractures, concussion, internal injuries, severe cuts and lacerations, severe shock, etc. which require medical treatment, hospitalisation and/or confinement to a bed.
- Slightly injured: any person sustaining minor cuts and bruises, sprains and light shock which may be treated at the scene of the crash or at home.

In South Africa, the police and traffic authorities collect motor vehicle crash data using Accident Report (AR) forms. The data collection procedure is conducted on behalf of the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), which has a legislative responsibility to report on the information.

Data is then sent to the RTMC which generates, consolidates, interprets, analyses and compiles State of Road Safety reports. Fatal crashes are reported within 24 hours using quick response forms. South Africa records fatalities in accordance with the 30-day international standard.

The Culpable Homicide Crash Observation Report (CHoCOR) forms are used to collect fatal crash data on a daily basis. The South African Police Service (SAPS) is the primary source of the fatal crash data. RTMC receives a list of all recorded fatal crashes from SAPS as well as the CHoCOR forms from the various police stations. RTMC then captures, processes and verifies the data in order to compile a consolidated report. There are continuous engagements with provinces to validate the integrity of the submitted information.

The management of road traffic information across the local, provincial and national authorities continues to be ineffective. Police records alone are usually inadequate for carrying out an analysis on the nature and consequences of serious injuries and other risk factors associated with crashes. To address this, initiatives are being undertaken to strengthen co-operation between the bodies involved in road traffic data, in an effort to move towards an integrated road traffic information management.

There is currently a process underway to expand the data sources by obtaining road crash information from other stakeholders.

Information included in this report corresponds to the consolidated set of the SAPS data.



## Resources

### Websites

Road Traffic Management Corporation: <http://www.rtmc.co.za/>

Department of Transport: <http://www.transport.gov.za/>

## Road safety and traffic data

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2018 % change over			
								2017	2010	2000	1990
<b>Reported safety data</b>											
Fatalities	11 157	8 494	13 967	12 944	14 071	14 050	12 921	-8.0%	-7.5%	52.1%	13.7%
Fatal crashes	9 174	6 679	10 837	10 613	11 676	11 437	10 564	-7.6%	-2.5%	58.2%	13.2%
Deaths per 100,000 population	30.3	19.0	27.9	23.6	25.2	24.9	22.4	-10.0%	-19.8%	17.9%	-35.5%
Deaths per 10,000 registered vehicles	24.2	14.0	15.3	11.1	11.8	11.5	10.4	-9.9%	-32.2%	-25.8%	-133.1%
<b>Traffic data</b>											
Registered vehicles (thousands)	4 616	6 074	9 134	10 550	10 785	11 012	11 252	2.2%	20.6%	81.3%	138.6%
Registered vehicles per 1,000 population	125	136	179	213	214	216	216	0.0%	20.3%	59.1%	72.1%