

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS
CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS STATISTICS, DECEMBER QUARTER, 1956

This summary contains an analysis of the Road Traffic Accidents (known to the Police) which occurred in public thoroughfares during the quarter ended 31st December, 1956 and which resulted in death or in bodily injury to any person to an extent requiring medical or surgical treatment, or in damage to property in excess of £10. It should be noted, however, that the comparability of the statistics between States, even on this basis, depends on the degree to which accidents so defined are, in fact, recorded by the Police. Under legislation passed in Tasmania on 10th August, 1954, it is no longer obligatory to report accidents involving only damage to property.

TABLE I - ACCIDENTS (KNOWN TO THE POLICE) AND CASUALTIES RESULTING THEREFROM

Period	N.S.W.	VIC.	Q'LD.	S.A.	W.A. (a)	TAS.	A.C.T.	TOTAL (b)
TOTAL ACCIDENTS REPORTED (c)								
Year - 1952-53	24,382	16,351	14,916	8,154	7,510	3,664	318	75,295
1953-54	29,514	16,314	17,875	10,320	8,979	3,957	265	87,224
1954-55	35,315	15,093	21,438	12,304	10,715	2,642	251	97,758
1955-56	38,823	14,781	25,557	12,530	11,312	2,259	376	105,638
December Qtr., 1955	10,296	3,581	6,884	3,413	2,898	578	93	27,743
March " 1956	9,143	3,851	6,104	2,976	2,513	469	99	25,155
June " 1956	10,202	3,679	6,159	2,722	2,955	608	102	26,427
September " 1956	9,122	3,649	6,793	3,086	2,785	568	93	26,096
December " 1956	10,418	3,855	7,492	3,336	2,744	531	86	28,462

ACCIDENTS INVOLVING CASUALTIES

Year - 1952-53	9,944	10,098	5,748	1,998	2,688	1,028	131	31,635
1953-54	11,691	10,537	6,349	2,742	3,079	982	143	35,523
1954-55	12,557	10,217	6,586	3,098	3,149	864	131	36,602
1955-56	12,917	10,606	7,116	2,886	3,211	874	156	37,766
December Qtr., 1955	3,542	2,582	1,967	737	814	209	39	9,890
March " 1956	3,033	2,697	1,701	718	747	192	42	9,130
June " 1956	3,240	2,779	1,717	616	811	267	43	9,473
September " 1956	3,036	2,665	1,816	615	727	212	47	9,118
December " 1956	3,647	2,706	2,017	770	751	186	45	10,122

PERSONS KILLED

Year - 1952-53	663	515	301	136	182	56	3	1,856
1953-54	728	569	278	153	175	67	6	1,976
1954-55	798	528	273	173	206	57	7	2,042
1955-56	808	582	298	167	185	72	7	2,119
December Qtr., 1955	225	112	71	43	50	18	3	522
March " 1956	196	133	71	36	49	19	-	504
June " 1956	208	185	78	42	44	22	2	581
September " 1956	189	157	93	42	38	22	3	544
December " 1956	208	131	81	49	51	14	2	536

PERSONS INJURED

Year - 1952-53	12,459	12,564	7,152	2,449	3,373	1,246	162	39,405
1953-54	14,660	13,351	7,933	3,420	3,935	1,156	174	44,629
1954-55	15,959	12,833	8,421	3,926	4,036	1,111	179	46,465
1955-56	17,047	13,483	9,170	3,709	4,098	1,046	220	48,773
December Qtr., 1955	4,651	3,408	2,515	1,010	1,071	245	58	12,959
March " 1956	3,927	3,384	2,236	951	988	238	53	11,777
June " 1956	4,560	3,475	2,202	774	1,001	307	60	12,379
September " 1956	3,807	3,454	2,324	804	937	245	56	11,627
December " 1956	4,765	3,478	2,616	958	963	263	59	13,102

(a) Figures have been collected on a basis comparable with that in other States from 1st January, 1953. Prior to that date, details for Western Australia related to all accidents which occurred in the Metropolitan Area, but only to those involving fatal or "near fatal" injury in the remainder of the State. (b) Excludes Northern Territory.

(c) See reference to Tasmanian legislation above.

TABLE II - TYPES OF ROAD USERS KILLED OR INJURED - AUSTRALIA

Types of Road Users	December Quarter, 1955					December Quarter, 1956				
	Males	Fe-males	Persons			Males	Fe-males	Persons		
			No.	Per Mill. of Popul-ation	Per 100,000 Motor Vehicles Reg'd.			No.	Per Mill. of Popul-ation	Per 100,000 Motor Vehicles Reg'd.
Drivers of Motor Vehicles	123	6	129	14	6	132	10	142	15	6
Motor Cyclists	53	-	53	6	3	69	1	70	7	3
Pedal Cyclists	22	1	23	2	1	19	4	23	2	1
Passengers (a)	121	61	182	20	8	81	54	135	14	6
Pedestrians	90	45	135	14	6	103	56	159	17	7
Other Classes(b)	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	6	1	..
Not Stated	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	..	..
Total:	409	113	522	56	24	411	125	536	56	23

PERSONS KILLEDPERSONS INJURED

Drivers of Motor Vehicles	2,998	329	3,327	358	152	3,262	576	3,838	403	164
Motor Cyclists	1,700	33	1,733	187	79	1,670	46	1,716	180	73
Pedal Cyclists	921	157	1,078	116	49	1,036	151	1,187	124	51
Passengers (a)	2,463	2,292	4,755	512	217	2,160	2,137	4,297	451	183
Pedestrians	1,331	707	2,038	220	93	1,199	740	1,939	203	83
Other Classes(b)	22	3	25	3	1	89	36	125	13	5
Not Stated	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total:	9,438	3,521	12,959	1,396	591	9,416	3,686	13,102	1,374	559

(a) All types including pillion riders.

(b) Includes tram drivers, riders of horses and drivers of horse-drawn vehicles.

TABLE III - FEATURES OF ROADWAYS ON WHICH ACCIDENTS OCCURRED
AUSTRALIA, DECEMBER QUARTER, 1956

Location	Total Accidents Reported	Accidents Involving Casualties	Persons Killed	Persons Injured
At Intersections:				
Controlled by Police ..	78	9	-	9
Controlled by Traffic Lights ..	459	143	-	174
Uncontrolled ..	9,493	3,386	118	4,380
Other than at Intersections:				
Straight Road ..	13,579	4,847	274	5,966
Bend or Curve - view open ..	2,741	1,065	80	1,607
Bend or Curve - view obscured ..	710	279	21	421
Bridge, Culvert or Causeway ..	480	124	11	171
Steep Hill ..	439	122	8	185
Top of Hill ..	164	42	4	59
Railway Level Crossing -				
(a) Guarded by gates ..	20	8	1	9
(b) Guarded by lights, flagmen or other mechanically operated signals ..	16	5	1	7
(c) Unguarded by (a) or (b) ..	136	57	14	74
Other Locations: ..	90	20	1	19
Location not stated: ..	57	15	3	21
Total:	28,462	10,122	536	13,102

TABLE IV : CLASSIFICATION OF ACCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES ACCORDING TO CAUSE
AUSTRALIA : DECEMBER QUARTER, 1956

Note : Classification according to cause of accident must be regarded as approximate only. Contributory causes and conflicting or incomplete evidence make precise classification difficult.

Causes of Road Accidents	Total Accidents Reported	Accidents Involving Casualties	Persons Killed	Persons Injured
<u>Drivers of Motor Vehicles (excluding Motor Cycles) responsible:</u>				
Excessive speed having regard to conditions	1,488	776	95	1,287
Failing to keep to the left	1,394	382	20	650
Failing to give right of way at intersection	4,191	1,171	25	1,733
Failing to make right hand turn with due care	871	244	8	301
Inexperience or infirmity of driver	357	124	7	179
Inattentive driving	4,481	1,101	67	1,489
Driver intoxicated	745	229	19	339
Reversing without care	870	56	1	61
Overtaking or following vehicle too closely	1,723	181	4	266
Driver asleep or drowsy	318	146	17	170
Disturbed by lights of an approaching vehicle	256	78	5	111
Failing to give or observe traffic signs/signals	1,560	361	12	466
Hit run drivers (not elsewhere classified)	232	63	2	66
Other causes	590	138	9	174
<u>TOTAL:</u>	19,076	5,050	291	7,292
<u>Riders of Motor Cycles responsible:</u>				
Excessive speed having regard to conditions	179	146	18	164
Failing to keep to the left	56	41	2	53
Failing to give right of way at intersection	260	182	7	214
Failing to make right hand turn with due care	24	16	2	20
Rider intoxicated	16	15	2	13
Inexperience with type of vehicle in use	87	70	2	80
Inattentive riding	376	272	10	311
Overtaking or following vehicle too closely	116	78	6	87
Failing to give or observe traffic signs/signals	130	90	4	98
Other causes	57	46	1	55
<u>TOTAL:</u>	1,301	956	54	1,095
<u>Pedal Cyclists responsible:</u>				
Failing to keep to the left	48	45	-	46
Failing to give right of way at intersection	96	91	1	91
Failing to make right hand turn with due care	38	37	1	42
Inattentive riding	306	296	12	299
Failing to give or observe traffic signs/signals	83	81	1	86
Other causes	134	128	3	139
<u>TOTAL:</u>	705	678	18	703
<u>Drivers of Animal-drawn Vehicles and Riders of Animals responsible:</u>				
	23	12	1	12
<u>Pedestrians responsible:</u>				
Crossing roadway without due care	965	964	67	924
Stepping off kerb without due care	18	18	1	17
Intoxicated	93	93	7	93
Children not under, or breaking away from, supervision	352	350	20	333
Boarding vehicle on wrong side or in motion	22	22	1	22
Infirmity or sudden illness	30	30	6	25
Other causes	41	41	6	37
<u>TOTAL:</u>	1,521	1,518	108	1,451
<u>Passengers responsible:</u>				
Alighting from vehicle in motion or on wrong side	47	45	1	45
Falling from, or riding improperly on, vehicle	84	83	3	82
Interfering with driver's control	20	9	2	12
Other causes	41	29	1	30
<u>TOTAL:</u>	192	166	7	169

TABLE IV - CLASSIFICATION OF ACCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES ACCORDING TO CAUSE
AUSTRALIA, DECEMBER QUARTER, 1956 (cont'd.)

Causes of Road Accidents	Total Accidents Reported	Accidents Involving Casualties	Persons Killed	Persons Injured
Vehicle Defects:				
Defective brakes ..	620	157	3	228
Defective steering ..	420	185	12	254
Defective tyres (i.e., blow-out) ..	418	164	6	252
Inadequate or incorrectly adjusted lights ..	164	99	11	114
Insecure or excessive loading ..	69	21	-	29
Other defects ..	313	120	5	149
Total:	2,004	746	37	1,026
Accidents Attributed to Animals:	570	104	1	127
Accidents Attributed to Road Conditions:				
Road surface loosely gravelled ..	674	233	3	330
Road surface wet and slippery ..	626	180	5	268
Road obstructions and other faults ..	434	161	2	214
Total:	1,734	574	10	812
Accidents Attributed to Weather: ..	211	53	2	71
Accidents Attributed to Parties not Involved:	977	224	1	285
Other Causes: ..	148	41	6	59
Grand Total:	28,462	10,122	536	13,102

TABLE V - CLASSES OF VEHICLES OR ROAD USERS INVOLVED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS
DECEMBER QUARTER, 1956

Nature of Accident	Total Accidents Reported	Accidents Involving Casualties	Persons Killed	Persons Injured
COLLISIONS:				
Motor Vehicle (other than Motor Cycle) with -				
Motor Vehicle (other than motor cycle) ..	14,696	2,638	85	4,056
Motor Cycle ..	1,860	1,230	50	1,400
Pedal Cycle ..	948	895	22	1,005
Tram ..	326	56	7	65
Railway Vehicle ..	81	34	27	47
Pedestrian ..	1,718	1,709	127	1,622
Animal or Animal-drawn Vehicle ..	545	52	7	63
Fixed Object (including parked vehicle) ..	2,400	543	31	795
Other ..	28	8	-	11
Motor Cycle with -				
Motor Cycle ..	52	41	3	70
Pedal Cycle ..	72	69	1	93
Tram ..	5	4	1	3
Railway Vehicle ..	9	7	2	5
Pedestrian ..	143	140	5	163
Animal or Animal-drawn Vehicle ..	72	64	2	73
Fixed Object (including parked vehicle) ..	89	69	6	74
Other ..	4	4	-	4
Total: Collisions involving motor vehicles:	23,048	7,563	376	9,549
Other Collisions involving -				
Pedal Cycle ..	113	106	5	119
Tram ..	76	69	4	74
Animal or Animal-drawn Vehicle ..	7	4	-	5
Other Vehicle ..	14	2	1	1
Total: Collisions:	23,258	7,744	386	9,748
NON-COLLISIONS:				
Vehicles Overturning or leaving roadway ..	4,878	2,174	143	3,144
Passenger Accidents ..	278	177	7	182
Other Accidents ..	48	27	-	28
Total: Non-Collisions:	5,204	2,378	150	3,354
GRAND TOTAL:	28,462	10,122	536	13,102