



Research Report No. 5/2022

Traffic Policing – Road Deaths Tasmania

The report this month looks at the data for Road Deaths recorded in Tasmania using the figures published by the Department of State Growth, media releases from Tasmania Police and the data presented in the Australian Government monthly Bulletin, *Road Deaths Australia*.

In the current data from the Department of State Growth of the 'Calendar Year Progress to Date as of June 2022' for Serious Injuries and Fatalities, there have been 120 serious injuries (a decrease of 13.7% on the previous year) and 30 fatal crashes (an increase of 130.8% as of June 2022).¹

Since June, further fatalities have occurred on Tasmanian roads. According to the media release from Tasmania Police on 28 August 22, the number was 39 compared with 25 in the previous year.² A further fatal crash occurred on 14 September 22 but no formal update to the yearly death toll was reported by either the Police or in the media.³

The Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics (BITRE) publishes the monthly *Road Deaths Australia Bulletin* and from the comprehensive and up to date data presented in this publication, a timelier and more accurate picture of Tasmanian Road Deaths can be obtained.

In the most recent edition of this bulletin (released 14 September 22) for the month of August 2022, Tasmania had recorded four road deaths which was a 20 percent decrease on the previous year's August monthly figure of five deaths.⁴

The year to date (January 2022 – August 2022) data shows there have been 40 road deaths in Tasmania during this period, an increase of 60 percent from the 25 road deaths recorded for the same period the previous year (January 2021 – August 2021). The 60 percent change recorded by Tasmania is the highest percent change across all the states and is significantly higher than the national average change of 5.9 percent.⁵

¹ *Tasmanian Crash Statistics*, 30 June 2022,

https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/road_safety_and_rules/crash_statistics accessed 28/09/2022

² 'Police call for Information over triple fatal crash at Sandford' Media Release Tasmania Police 28/08/ 2022, <https://www.police.tas.gov.au/news-events/media-releases/police-call-for-information-over-triple-fatal-crash-at-sandford/> accessed 28/09/22

³ 'Fatal Motorcycle Crash – East Tamar Highway Rocherlea' Media Release Tasmania Police 17/09/22, <https://www.police.tas.gov.au/news-events/media-releases/fatal-motorcycle-crash-east-tamar-highway-rocherlea/> accessed 28/09/22

⁴ Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics 2022, *Road Deaths Australia* Bulletin, Table 1.1, pg2 https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/road_deaths_australia_monthly_bulletins accessed 28/09/22

⁵ Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics 2022, *Road Deaths Australia* Bulletin. Table 1.2, pg 2 https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/road_deaths_australia_monthly_bulletins accessed 28/09/22

The number of road deaths for the 12 months ending August 2022 show 50 deaths for Tasmania which is a 42.9 percent increase compared with 35 road deaths for the previous year ending August 2021. Again, this percent change is significantly higher than the nationally recorded average of 4.1 percent change.⁶

Tasmania also showed a marked increase in the annual deaths per 100 000 population category in which the state recorded in the 12 months ended August 2022, a rate of 8.8 deaths per 100 000, up 41.6 percent on the rate of 6.2 for the previous reporting period of 2021. This percent increase is significantly higher than the percent change recorded by other states, several of which (QLD, SA and WA) recorded a decreased rate.

The annual rate of 8.8 recorded by Tasmania is also the highest rate recorded across all states (with exception of the Northern Territory on 18.8) and is a significantly higher rate (95 percent higher) than the nationally recorded rate of 4.5 road deaths per 100 000 population.

In conclusion, the current road death figures for Tasmania show a deeply concerning situation for the immense cost on human lives, a toll that ripples across the whole community, especially for those directly affected families and the emergency workers who attend the crashes. The reality is that we can all do something to make our roads safer. The NSW government report that casual speeding is the biggest cause of deaths and serious injuries on their roads. If nothing else, Tasmanian drivers could honestly reflect if they are also *casual speeders*.

⁶ Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics 2022, *Road Deaths Australia* Bulletin, Table 1.3, pg 2 https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/road_deaths_australia_monthly_bulletins accessed 28/09/22