



Department for Transport

# Reported road casualties in Great Britain: provisional estimates year ending June 2020

## About this release

This publication provides an estimate of the number of personal-injury road traffic accidents in Great Britain that were reported to the police for the year ending June 2020. It also includes the number of people killed or injured in these accidents and which road user group they were in. These figures are provisional as they might change following the end of year validation process.

## Definition

**Casualty:** A person killed or injured in an accident. Casualties are subdivided into killed, seriously injured and slightly injured.

**Rolling year:** a period of 12 months that begins and ends on a set day. In this publication the rolling year ending June 2020 represents the 12 months beginning on the 1st July 2019 and ending on the 30th June 2020.

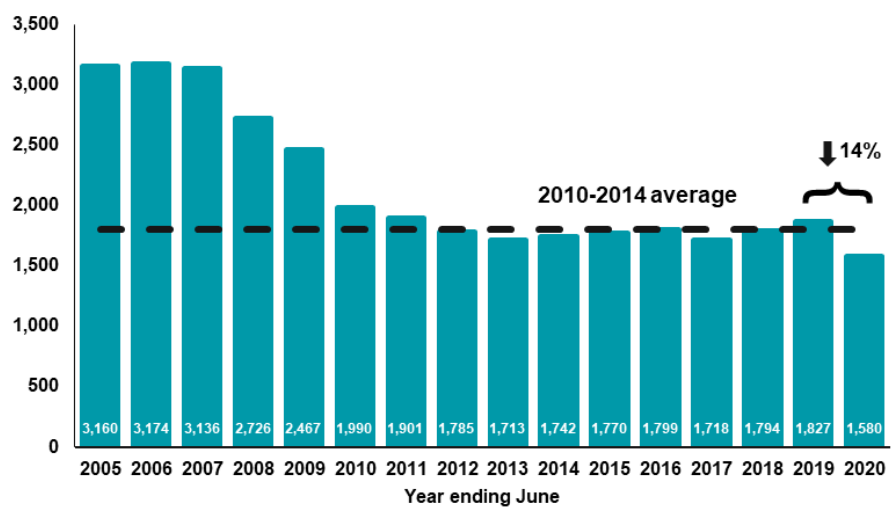
A full list of the definitions used in this release can be found [here](#).

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The recent trends in reported road casualties have been impacted by the national restrictions implemented from **March 2020 onwards following the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. More information can be found on page 2.**

**Chart 1: Road deaths, GB, rolling years ending June, 2005-2020**



- There were an estimated 1,580 **road deaths** in the year ending June 2020 which includes three months of the national lockdown. This is a **decrease** of 14% compared to the previous year. This change is **statistically significant at the 95% confidence level**.
- There were 131,220 **casualties of all severities** in the year ending June 2020, **down by 16%** from the previous year. This change is statistically significant.
- The overall **casualty rate per vehicle mile decreased by 2%** over the same period. The reduction in casualties is broadly in line with the reduction in traffic which decreased by 14% over this period.



## Overall results

These statistics include the period following the government's announcement of measures to limit the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

In early March 2020, the UK government set out its response to the coronavirus pandemic, including **restrictions on travel**. Coronavirus has had a wide impact on UK society and economic activity since March 2020.

As these figures are affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the UK, this should be considered when comparing them with previous time periods.

To help users understand the patterns better, we have included **additional tables showing figures by month**. At this level of disaggregation, these estimates should be treated with caution. While the broad trends are likely to be robust, it is likely that the estimated figures will be revised when final data becomes available.

### Rolling year ending June 2020 ([RAS45001](#))

- In the year ending June 2020, there were **1,580 reported road fatalities**, a 14% decrease from 1,827 in the previous year. This change is **statistically significant** at the 95% confidence level, with the largest reductions in the months following the COVID-19 lockdown (see [p5](#)).
- There were 24,470 **killed or seriously injured** casualties (KSIs) in reported road traffic accidents reported to the police, for the year ending June 2020. This is a statistically significant decrease of 11% compared to the year ending June 2019 (27,471).
- The **total number of casualties of all levels of severity decreased** by 16% to 131,220. This change is also **statistically significant** at the 95% confidence level.

### Statistical significance

The number of casualties can fluctuate from year to year and there is interest in knowing the extent to which these fluctuations represent an indication of a real underlying trend as opposed to random year-to-year variation.

A **statistically significant** change is one we can be sure is large enough that it can be considered as an indication of a real underlying trend.

A change that is **not statistically significant** is one that is likely to have come about by chance and therefore represents random year-to-year variation.

### Changes in systems for severity reporting

The time series for those killed or seriously injured have been affected by a large numbers of police forces changing their reporting systems in 2015 and 2016. The mid-year provisional estimates are not adjusted for severity reporting changes, and the figures in this release are as reported to the police.

Currently, severity adjustments are based on annual record level data. Adjustments were rolled out to the annual publication in 2020. The Department will review how these adjustments can be incorporated to the current mid-year estimation method.

Comparisons between the 2020 and 2019 provisional mid-year figures should be taken with caution as two police forces adopted injury based severity reporting systems in this time.

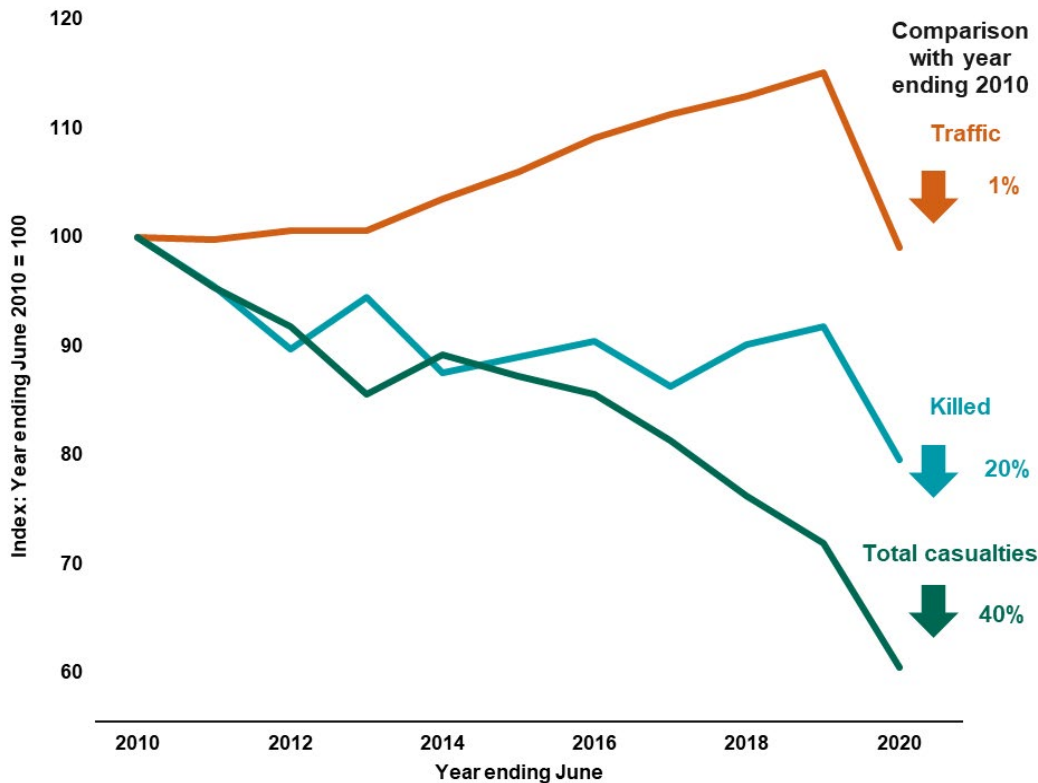
Please see the 2019 Reported Road Casualties publication for more details about the adjustments and adjusted figures: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2019>

### Uncertainty

The figures in this publication are estimates and are subject to revision in future releases. Provisional figures are rounded to the nearest 10. For more details see the [uncertainty section](#).

- Motor vehicle traffic decreased by 14% over the same twelve months. The **fatality rate per billion vehicle miles remained stable** at 5.1 and the overall **casualty rate per billion vehicle miles decreased** by 2% to 427 in the year ending June 2020.

**Chart 2: Fatalities, total casualties and traffic, GB, years ending June 2010 to 2020**



**Table RAS45001: Reported road casualties by severity, GB: year ending June 2020**

ALL CASUALTIES	Number/percentage change compared with previous 12 months			
	Jul-18 to Jun-19	Jul-19 to Jun-20 (P)	Percentage change	Statistically significant?
Killed	1,827	1,580	↓14%	***
KSI <sup>1</sup>	27,471	24,470	↓11%	***
Slightly injured	128,563	106,750	↓17%	***
<b>All casualties</b>	156,034	131,220	↓16%	***

P Provisional estimates

<sup>1</sup> Killed or seriously injured

\*\*\* statistically significant at 0.05 level

ns = non-significant

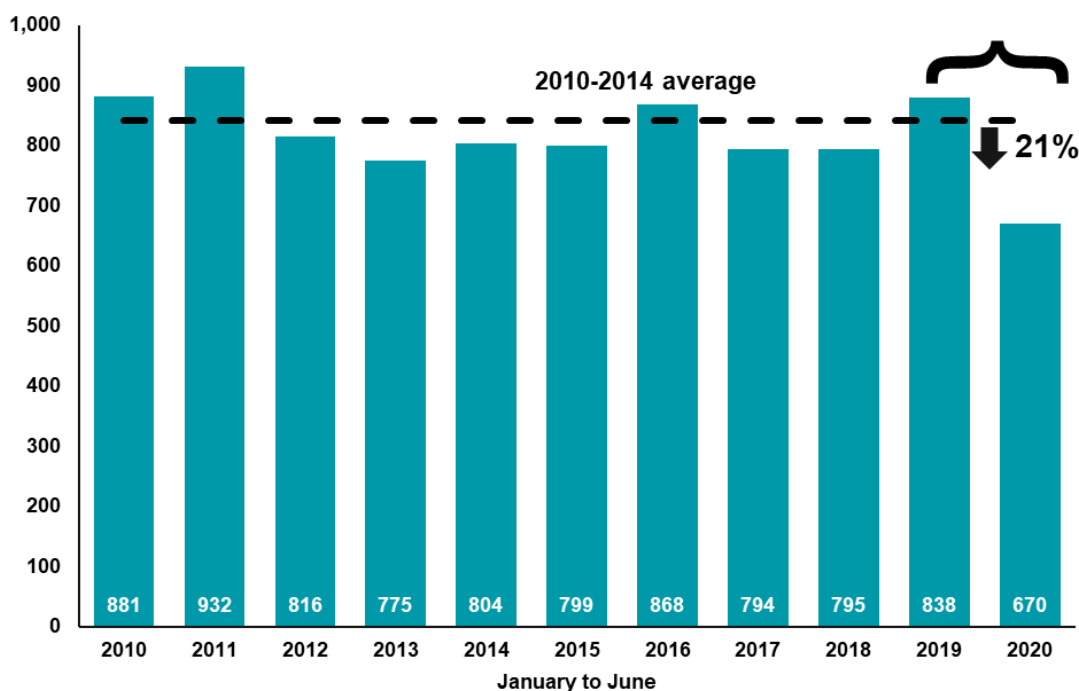
**Figures for Jan to June 2020 (RAS45002)**

- Half yearly casualty figures are prone to fluctuation as they are sensitive to changes in in-year data validation processes in different forces. In particular this year, the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on travel behaviour as well as the ability of some police forces to supply data.
- Therefore, the changes in half yearly casualty figures in this release should be **interpreted with**

**caution** and they may not be indicative of an ongoing trend.

- Between January and June 2020, an estimated 670 people were **killed in reported road accidents**. This is a decrease of 21% compared to the equivalent period of 2019 (838). This decrease is **statistically significant** at the 95% confidence level.
- There were **larger reductions in serious and slightly injured casualties** than fatalities, with total casualties 30% lower than in the first half of 2019 (as shown in the table).
- **Motor traffic levels decreased** by 30% compared to the equivalent period in 2019. The **fatality rate per billion vehicle miles increased** by 14% to 5.4 and the overall casualty rate remained consistent compared to January to June 2019.

**Chart 3: Road deaths: GB, January to June, 2010-2020**



**Table RAS45002: Reported road casualties by severity: GB, Jan to June 2020**

ALL CASUALTIES	Number/percentage change compared with half yearly figures last year			
	First half 2019	First half 2020 (P)	Percentage change	statistically significant?
Killed	838	670	↓21%	***
KSI 1	13,073	9,850	↓25%	***
Slightly injured	60,009	41,290	↓31%	***
All casualties	73,082	51,140	↓30%	***

P Provisional estimates (rounded to the nearest 10)

1 Killed or seriously injured

\*\*\* statistically significant at 0.05 level.

ns = non-significant

## Monthly trends

During the first half of 2020, the change in accidents and casualties compared to the previous year varies notably by month, with the largest reductions corresponding to the periods of COVID-19 lockdown.

### Casualties by month ([RAS45012](#))

- In January and February, the number of casualties remained broadly consistent with 2019.
- Considerable **reductions were observed for the months March to June** following the government's response to the coronavirus pandemic, with lockdown beginning during March 2020 (see [table](#)).
- The number of **casualties decreased most in April**, with a fall of 67% compared to 2019. Although the number of casualties then increased for May and June, figures were **considerably lower** than the equivalent months of the previous year (45% and 33% lower, respectively).
- This trend coincides with changes in traffic volumes. **Road traffic decreased** by 8% for January to March and 49% for April to June ([TRA25](#)) compared to 2019. An exploratory analysis suggested the impact of the coronavirus pandemic affected road traffic differently by road user type (further details can be found in the 2020 [Provisional Road Traffic Estimates](#)).
- The number of fatalities followed a similar pattern as casualties of all severities for the months following March. However, a **smaller reduction** was observed for fatalities than overall casualties for each month where travel restrictions were implemented.

**Table: Percentage change of all casualties and fatalities, compared to 2019, GB, January to June 2020**

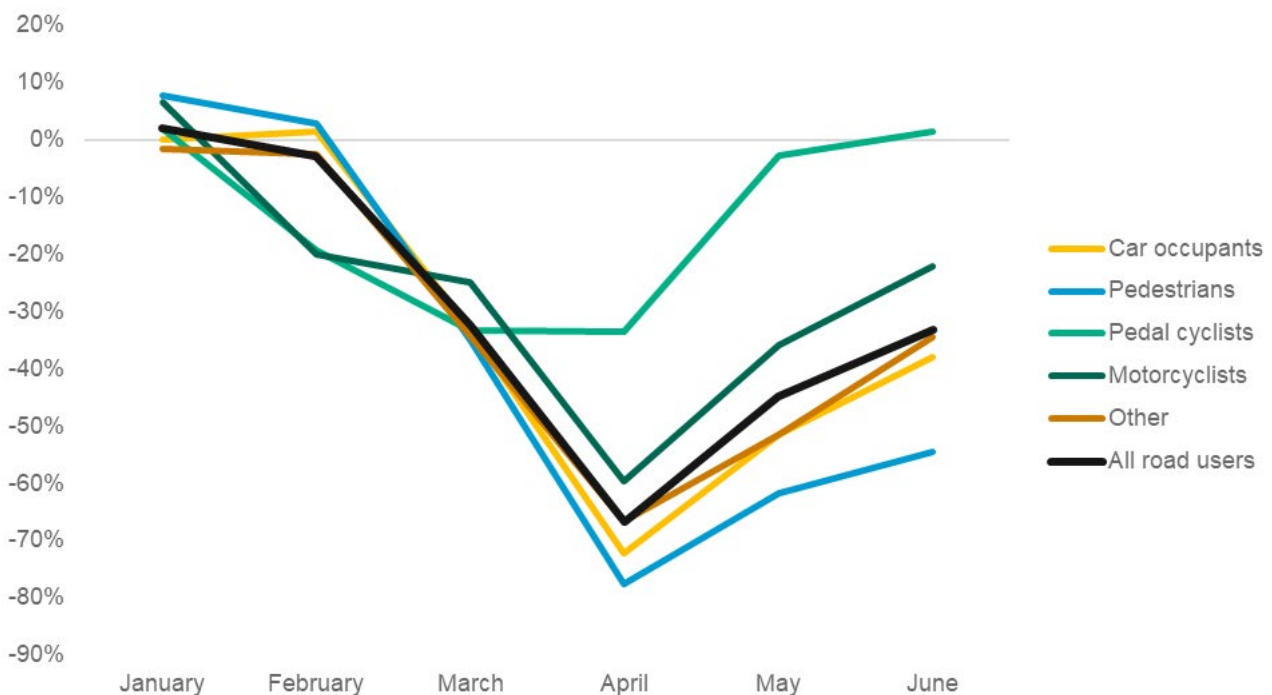
FATALITIES AND ALL CASUALTIES	Number/percentage change compared with same month in the previous year (P)					
	January	February	March	April	May	June
<b>Killed</b>						
Number	160	130	110	80	90	110
Percentage change	U7%	U10%	U20%	U48%	U30%	U9%
<b>All casualties</b>						
Number	12,310	11,030	8,190	3,930	7,040	8,650
Percentage change	D4%	U3%	U33%	U67%	U45%	U33%

P Provisional estimates (rounded to the nearest 10)

## Casualties by road user type ([RAS45012](#))

- Casualties by road user type followed a similar trend during the first 6 months of 2020, with the **lowest counts observed in April**. However, the size of **the reduction of casualties varied by road user type**.
- In general, for casualties of all severities, there was a **larger percentage reduction for pedestrians and a smaller reduction for pedal cyclists**, compared to other road user types over this period. Patterns for killed or seriously injured casualties show broadly similar patterns (see [table](#)).
- The Department's COVID-19 transport use statistics ([table](#)) suggest that there has been an **increase in pedal cyclist traffic volume** over the period following the COVID-19 restrictions, while motor vehicle traffic has reduced.
- A more detailed analysis of the trends, including a breakdown by road user type and severity, will be provided as part of the 2020 provisional annual statistics scheduled for publication in June 2021.

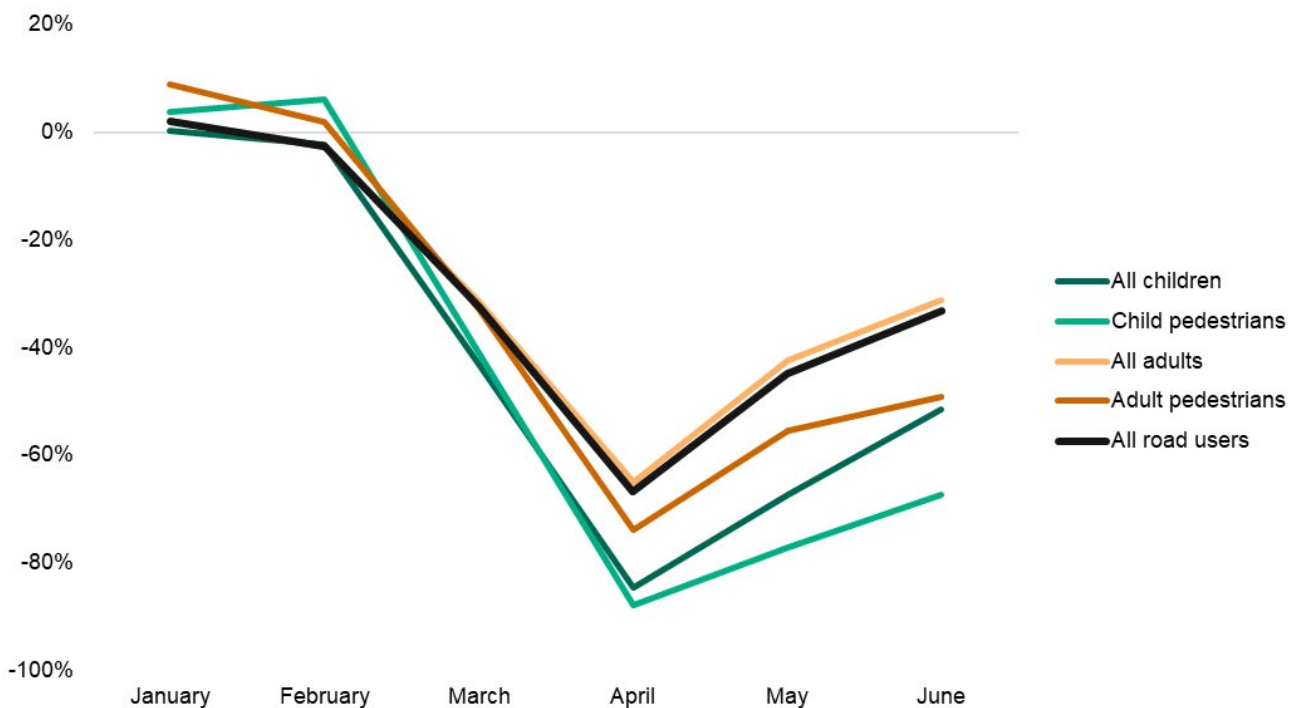
**Chart 4: Percentage change of all casualties, compared to 2019, by road user type, GB, January to June 2020**



## Casualties by age group (adults and children)

- Trends in adult and child casualties were similar during the first 6 months of 2020, with the lowest counts observed in April.
- In general, for casualties of all severities, there was a **larger percentage reduction for children** (aged 15 or under) and a **smaller reduction for adults** (aged 16 and over) during this period. Figures for killed or seriously injured casualties show broadly similar patterns.
- A more detailed breakdown by age group will be provided in the annual provisional results scheduled for publication in June 2021.

**Chart 5: Percentage change of all casualties, compared to equivalent month of 2019, by age, GB, January to June 2020**



## Casualties by police force area ([RAS45013](#))

- Most police forces areas show a broadly similar pattern, with of a **reduction in reported road casualties** from March to April with a gradual increase following the relaxation of travel restrictions in May and June.
- A table showing reported casualties by force and month has been included but should be **interpreted with caution**; differences in trends between forces may reflect completeness of data as well as genuine changes in the number of casualties.
- An estimation method based on police forces with complete data was used to impute figures for police forces with incomplete or missing data. Further detail is provided in the [uncertainty section](#).

## Accidents by road type ([RAS45010](#))

- For the first half of the year (January to June), there was a broadly similar percentage **reduction in accidents of all severities** by road type compared to 2019. However, there was a **smaller decrease in fatal accidents** on minor roads compared to major roads (11% and 24% lower, respectively).
- A more detailed breakdown by speed limit will be included in the provisional annual statistics, scheduled for publication in June 2021.

### Tables

- Reported road casualties by severity (estimates): Great Britain, rolling annual totals, mid-year, tables [RAS45001](#), [RAS45002](#) and rates in [RAS45006](#) and [RAS45007](#).
- Road traffic (vehicle miles) by vehicle type in Great Britain, quarterly from 1994, table [TRA2501](#).
- Reported road casualties by severity (estimates): Great Britain, mid-year and annual, table [RAS45003](#).
- Reported road casualties by road user type and month (estimates): Great Britain table [RAS45012](#).
- Reported road casualties by police force area and month (estimates): Great Britain table [RAS45013](#).



## Conclusion

Although there has been a decrease in casualties of all severities in the year ending June 2020, **these changes should be interpreted with caution. This reduction is likely to be related to the decrease in traffic volume and the coronavirus pandemic.**

The figures for January to June 2020 show variations in the reduction in casualties compared to the equivalent period of 2019 by road user type (with smaller reductions for pedal cyclists and larger reductions for pedestrians), and by severity (with smaller reductions for fatalities and seriously injured casualties than slightly injured casualties).

For these provisional mid-year estimates, only a relatively high level analysis is possible. More detail, including breakdowns by casualty age group and road speed limit, are scheduled for inclusion in the provisional annual results in June 2021.

At this stage, casualty rates have not been calculated for pedal cyclists and pedestrians due to the unavailability of data on cycling and walking during this period. Further detail will be provided in final annual statistics for 2020 scheduled for publication in September 2021, when more data should become available to allow calculation of rates.

As covered in the section on uncertainty, there are a number of police forces with data missing for periods of the year. The Department has used an estimation method, including imputation to deal with incomplete or missing data ([see our methodology note](#)). However, this also **creates uncertainty in these estimates**. Once the missing data from these forces become available later in the year it is likely that there will be revisions to the the figures for January to June 2020, though it is not anticipated that the broad trends will be affected.

### Next release

Following the proposal to reduce the frequency of provisional estimates, the next release will be Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain provisional annual results in June 2021. This will include more detail regarding the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on casualties. The next mid-year estimate will be published in November 2021.

### Further information

A full list of the definitions used in this publication can be found here: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/462818/reported-road-casualties-gb-notes-definitions.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/462818/reported-road-casualties-gb-notes-definitions.pdf).

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-](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-accidents-)

## Strengths and weaknesses of the data

- Comparison of road accident reports with death registrations shows 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 suggested by police accident data.
- 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 kept 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.
- Casualty rates are based on provisional casualty and traffic estimates and are subject to revision at the end of the year.
- Provisional traffic estimates do not include pedal cycling estimates. We have attempted to adjust for this in the figures by adding in approximately 1% extra vehicle miles. This ratio is based on the relationship between all motor vehicle traffic and pedal cycle traffic for 2017 to 2019.
- Serious and slight casualties should be interpreted with caution as these are provisional figures and changes in recording of injuries has not been taken into account. These figures are also subject to revision at the end of the year.

# Background to trends

## Uncertainty in the provisional estimates

- The provisional statistics are based on data supplied by police forces with some imputation to account for months that are either missing entirely or for which more records are expected later in the year.
- The midyear 2020 results are based on complete (January to June 2020) figures provided by 41 police authorities with partial data for six authorities. Data are incomplete for various months in 2020 for Avon and Somerset, Derbyshire, Gwent, Northamptonshire, South Wales and Wiltshire.
- No single midyear figures should be taken in isolation as an indication of long-term trend, as there are seasonal fluctuations particularly in the smaller categories of road users. Adjustments are made to take account of missing data. Table [RAS45011](#) provides a list of which police authorities are included in these figures. As described above, there is considerable uncertainty in the adjustments.
- The figures in this release are based on information available to DfT as at 6 January 2020.

## Background notes

- The provisional in-year reported road casualty statistics web page provides further detail of the key findings presented in this statistical release. The tables are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>.
- A note on methodology can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics-guidance>. This has been adapted for months impacted by the coronavirus pandemic when assessing incompleteness. When comparing number of accidents for each month and police force, the threshold of 50% was lowered as a higher reduction in accidents was expected.
- 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. Further information on the National Statistics designation of this statistical release can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics-guidance>.
- 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/publications/road-accident-and-safety-statistics-pre-release-access-list>.
- The latest annual road safety publication, Reported road casualties Great Britain, annual report: 2019, is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2019>.



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