



BENCHMARKING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

MARCH QUARTER 2023



Australian
Automobile
Association

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Key changes

Key changes since December 2022

Quarterly road fatalities increased by 3.7 per cent from the December 2022 quarter to the March 2023 quarter.

In the 12 months to March 2023, road deaths increased by 5.9 per cent compared to the previous corresponding period (1,204 deaths compared to 1,137 deaths in the 12 months to March 2022).

The data still indicate that Australia is not on track to achieve either the National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS) target for reduction in overall deaths, or deaths of children.

It is not possible to track the progress of serious injuries, road deaths in city CBD areas, road deaths on national highways or on high-speed roads due to a lack of data availability.

Strategy targets

	Previous	Current
National deaths	Red	Red
National serious injuries	Black	Black
Children (seven years and under) deaths	Red	Red
City CBD area deaths	Black	Black
National highway and high-speed road deaths	Black	Black

Analytical key

Green

On track to meet or exceed NRSS target. The reduction in road crash deaths is equal to or greater than the rate required to achieve NRSS target.

Amber

Currently ahead of (notional) target but a faster rate of improvement is required to achieve NRSS target by 2030.

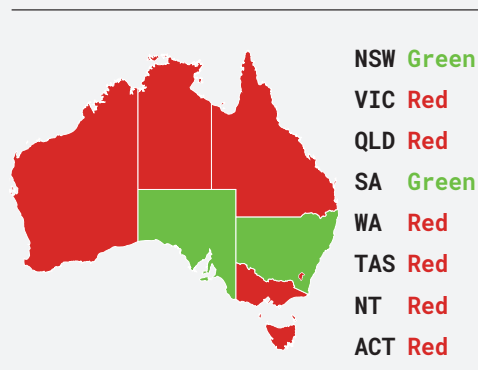
Red

Road crash deaths are above the notional NRSS target.

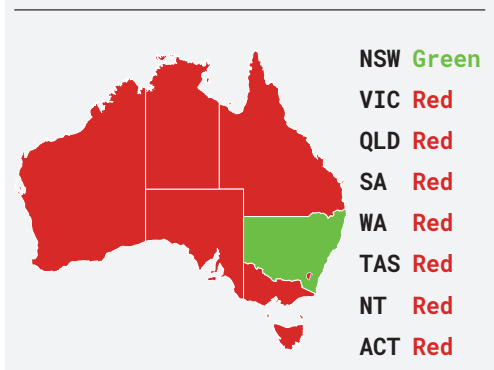
Black

NRSS target progress cannot be measured due to a lack of data availability.

Previous: Jurisdictional status



Current: Jurisdictional status



User groups

User groups	Previous	Current
Drivers	Red	Red
Passengers	Red	Red
Pedestrians	Red	Red
Motorcyclists	Red	Red
Cyclists	Amber	Red

The data indicate that only NSW is on track to achieve a 50 per cent reduction in road deaths by 2030.

Australia's road deaths: March 2023

Safety strategy off-track, action needed

Australia's trajectory to meet the National Road Safety Strategy targets of halving road deaths through the decade to 2030 and reducing serious injuries by 30 per cent is badly off course.

The national road toll is now 19 per cent higher than it needs to be at this stage if the Strategy was 'on track' to meet its targeted pro rata reduction (1,011 deaths).

In the 12 months to 31 March 2023, 1,204 people died on Australian roads—a 5.9 per cent increase from 1,137 in the previous corresponding period to March 2022.

Australia lacks the information and insights needed to tackle this crisis. There is still no national data on crash causes, serious injuries, road quality, or details on the people and vehicles involved.

This means we still cannot measure national serious injuries. Nor do we know incidences of deaths in city CBD areas, or on national highways and high-speed roads that cover 80% of travel across the transport network. These are both NRSS targets. Only two of the Strategy's five key performance indicators—total national deaths and deaths of young children—can be accurately measured.

Meanwhile, the overall national picture is worsening. Total deaths to 31 March 2023 were significantly higher than in the corresponding periods in the two years immediately before COVID-19 curbed national mobility. In the year to March 2020, 1,143 people died on Australian roads, and in the 12 months to March 2019 there were 1,155 deaths.

In 2021 all Australian governments agreed to the current 10-year NRSS. Without collective action, it will fail just as its predecessor did. It makes no sense to set targets, and yet not collect or report the data needed to measure progress or prevent future trauma.

The AAA strongly endorses the Strategy's targets. But road deaths are rising, and governments are reluctant to report the data needed to measure most of these targets. This means our current plan looks more like a wish-list than a credible strategy.

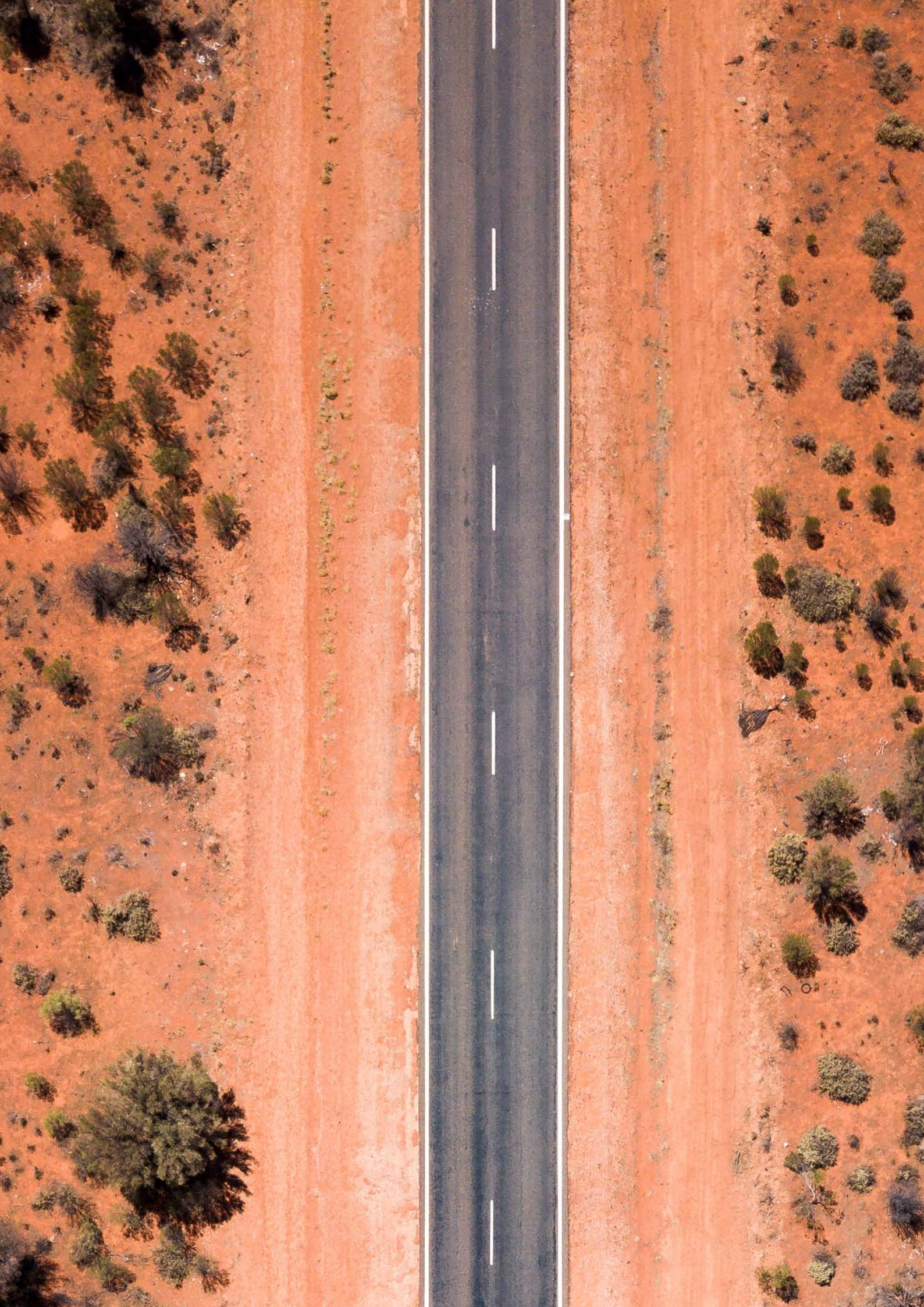
The 2023-24 Commonwealth Budget has allocated money towards enhancing road safety data collection. The AAA looks forward to understanding how this money will be spent, what data will be collected, and whether it will be made public in a timely manner.

The AAA continues to urge the Australian Government to make transport funding to states and territories conditional on greater transparency of state-held road crash data.



Michael Bradley

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Section One

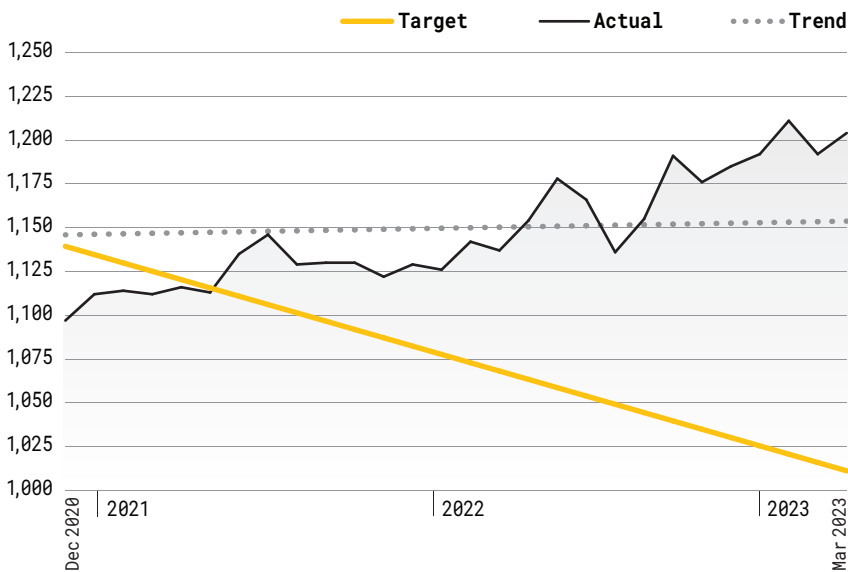
National overview

The NRSS, endorsed by the federal, state and territory governments, aims to reduce road deaths by 50 per cent and serious injuries by 30 per cent by 2030, compared to the baseline, which is the average of road deaths between 2018 and 2020. Trendlines shown in graphs throughout this report were calculated using data on fatalities from December 2018 onwards.

The NRSS also aims, by 2030, to achieve zero deaths of children aged seven years and under, zero deaths in city CBD areas and zero deaths on all national highways and on high-speed roads covering 80 per cent of travel across the network.

National deaths per annum

RED

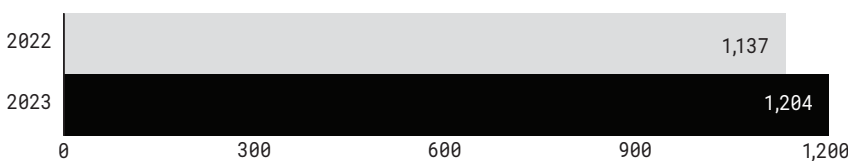


In the 12 months ended March 2023, 1,204 people died on Australian roads—an increase of 5.7 per cent against the NRSS baseline.

Compared with December 2020, when the strategy began, 12-month road deaths have increased by 9.8 per cent.

This represents 193 more road deaths than the pro rata target of 1,011.

Comparative performance: Road deaths in the past 12 months



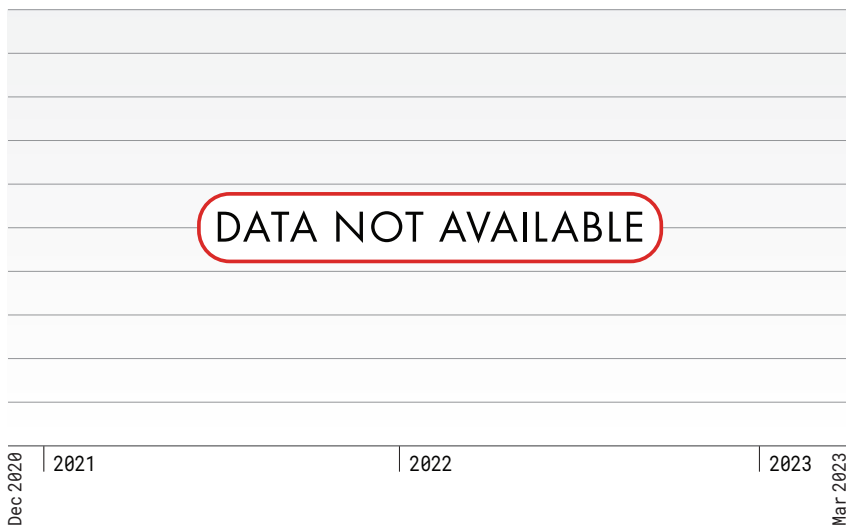
National road deaths for the 12 months ending March 2023 were 5.9 per cent higher than in the previous corresponding period.

Section One

National overview

National serious injuries per annum

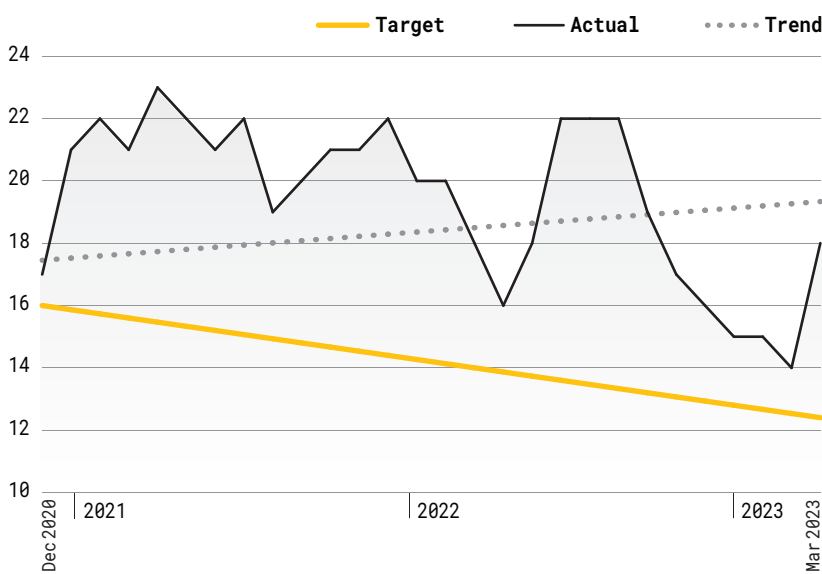
BLACK



It is not possible to track the progress of serious injuries due to a lack of data availability.

Children (seven years and under) deaths per annum

RED



In the 12 months ended March 2023, 18 children (seven years and under) died on Australian roads.

This is unchanged from the previous corresponding period.

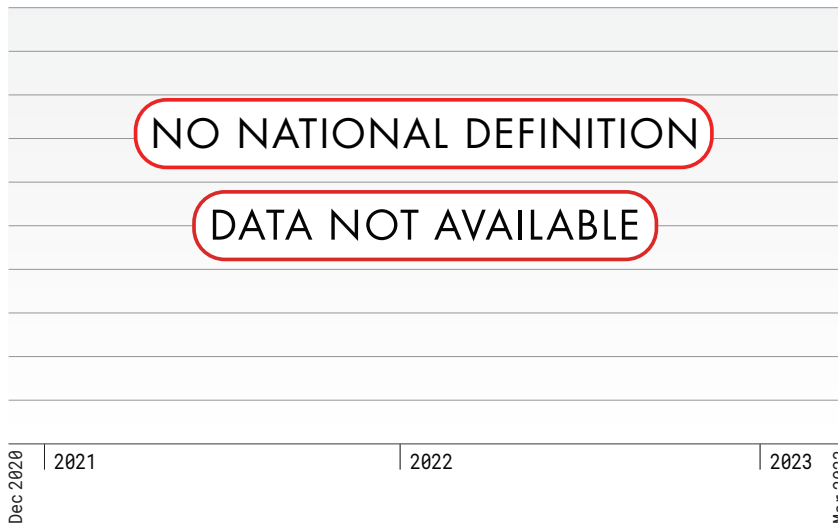
Compared with the NRSS baseline, deaths have increased by 12.5 per cent.

This represents 6 more road deaths of young children than the pro rata target of 12.

Section One

City CBD area deaths per annum

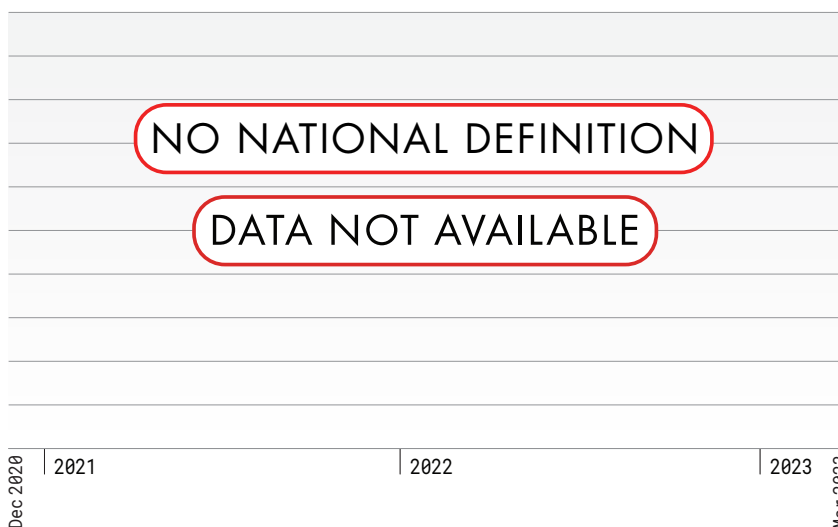
BLACK



It is not possible to track the progress of road deaths in CBD areas due to a lack of data availability and lack of national definition of city CBD areas.

National highway and high-speed road deaths per annum

BLACK



It is not possible to track the progress of road deaths on all national highways and high-speed roads covering 80 per cent of travel across the network due to a lack of data availability and lack of national definition of national highways and high-speed roads.

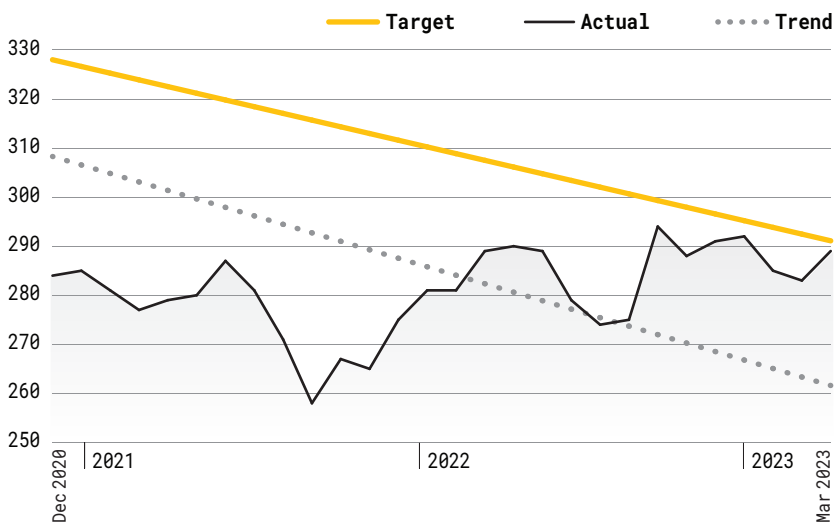
Section Two

Analysis: States and territories

Whilst the NRSS has no specific target reductions for individual states and territories, the progress of jurisdictions in achieving a 50 per cent reduction in road deaths by 2030 is measured in line with the headline NRSS target.

New South Wales deaths per annum

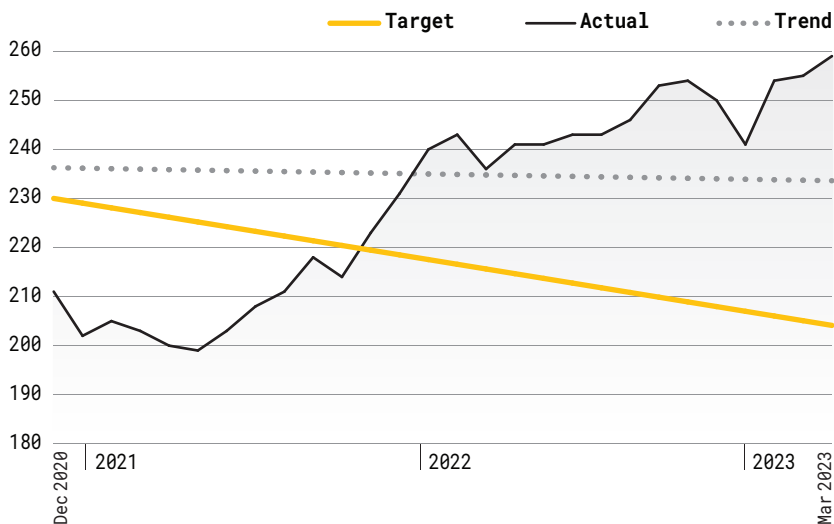
GREEN



- In the 12 months ending March 2023, 289 people died on New South Wales' roads.
- This is unchanged from the previous corresponding period.
- This represents 2 fewer road deaths than the pro rata target of 291.

Victoria deaths per annum

RED

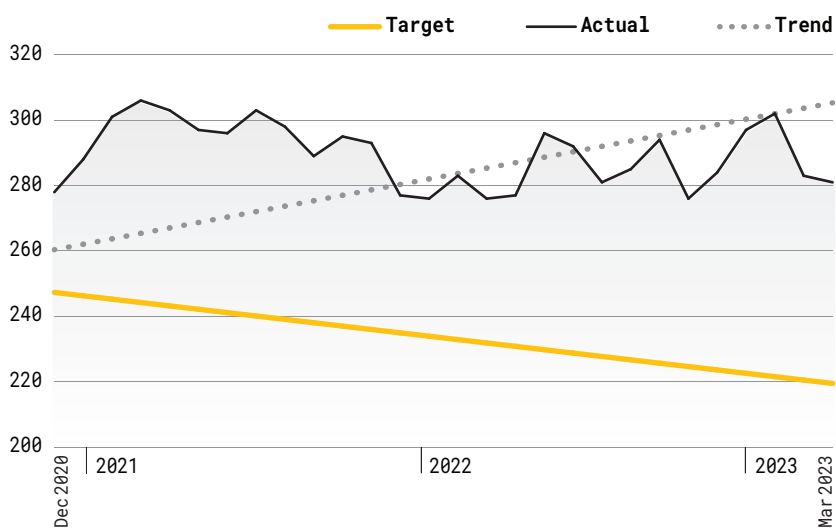


- In the 12 months to March 2023, 259 people died on Victoria's roads, compared to 236 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 9.7 per cent.
- This represents 55 more road deaths than the pro rata target of 204.

Section Two

Queensland deaths per annum

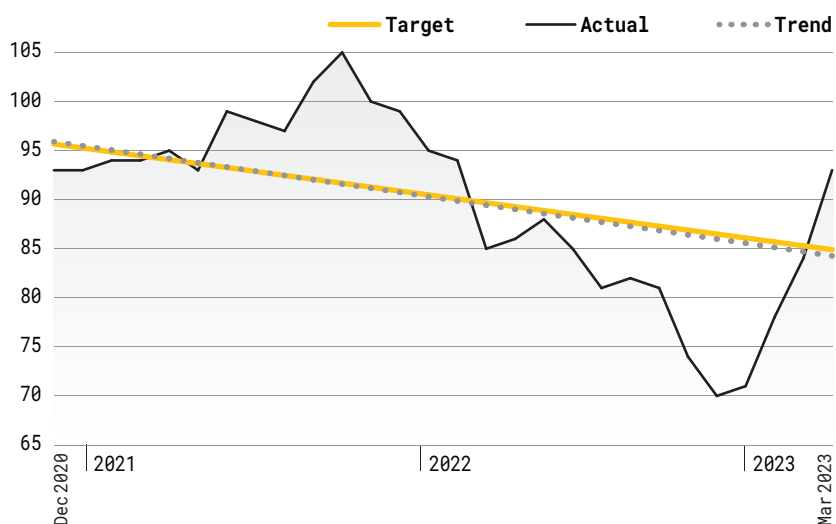
RED



- In the 12 months to March 2023, 281 people died on Queensland's roads, compared to 276 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 1.8 per cent.
- This represents 61 more road deaths than the pro rata target of 220.

South Australia deaths per annum

RED



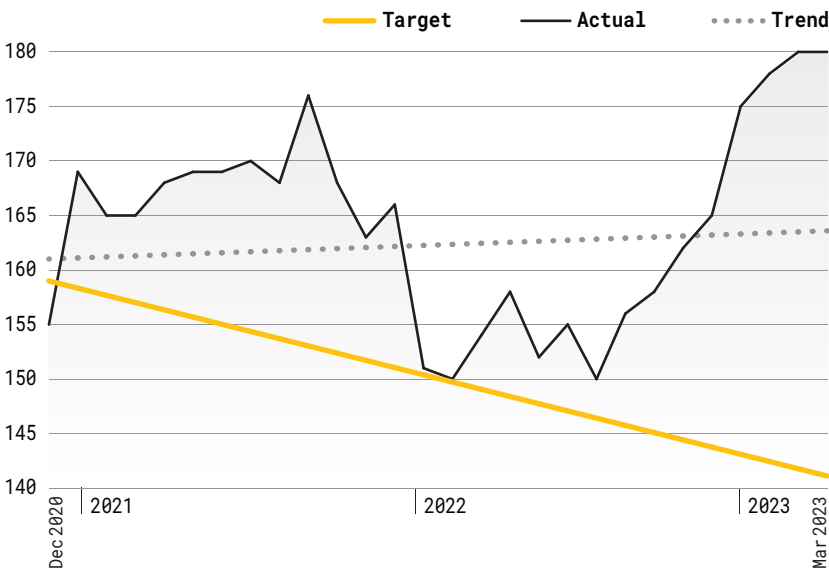
- In the 12 months to March 2023, 93 people died on South Australia's roads, compared to 85 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 9.4 per cent.
- This represents 8 more road deaths than the pro rata target of 85.

Section Two

Analysis: States and territories

Western Australia deaths per annum

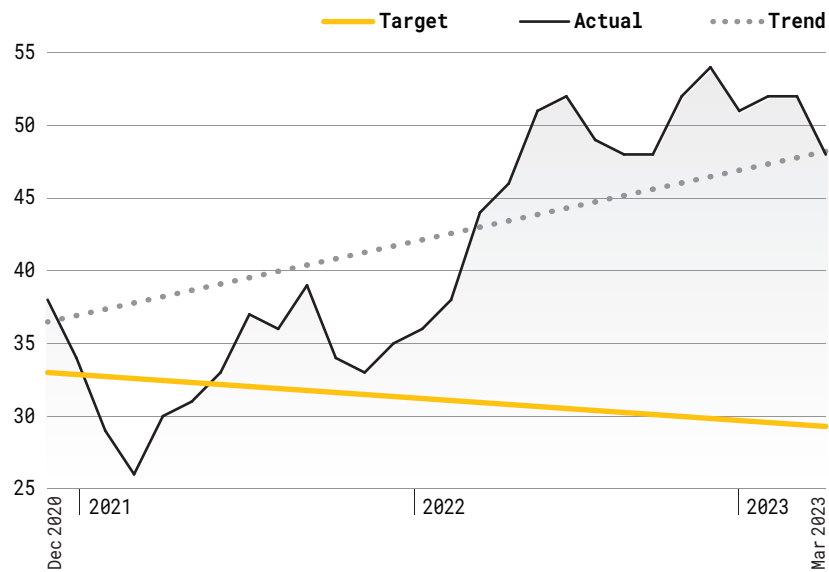
RED



- In the 12 months to March 2023, 180 people died on Western Australia's roads, compared to 154 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 16.9 per cent.
- This represents 39 more road deaths than the pro rata target of 141.

Tasmania deaths per annum

RED

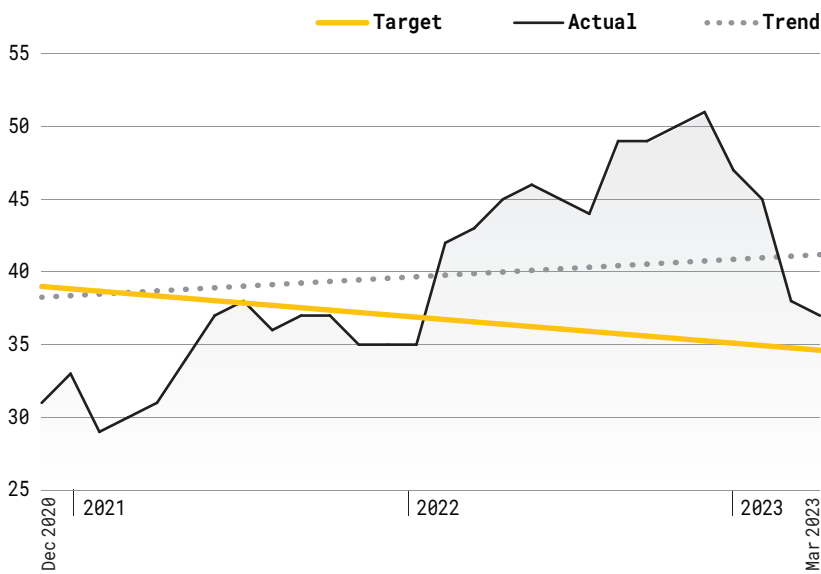


- In the 12 months to March 2023, 48 people died on Tasmania's roads, compared to 44 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 9.1 per cent.
- This represents 19 more road deaths than the pro rata target of 29.

Section Two

Northern Territory deaths per annum

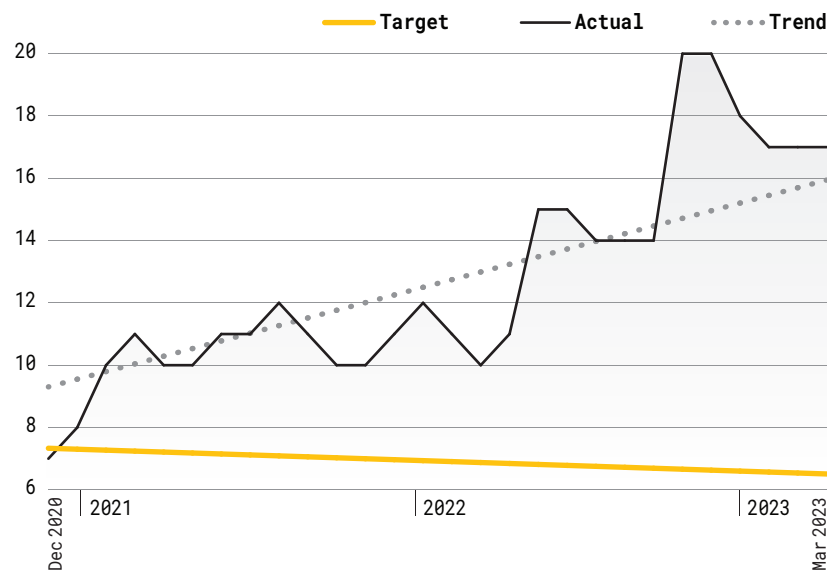
RED



- In the 12 months to March 2023, 37 people died on the Northern Territory's roads, compared to 43 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 14.0 per cent.
- This represents 2 more road deaths than the pro rata target of 35.

Australian Capital Territory deaths per annum

RED



- In the 12 months to March 2023, 17 people died on the Australian Capital Territory's roads, compared to 10 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 70.0 per cent.
- This represents 10 more road deaths than the pro rata target of 7.

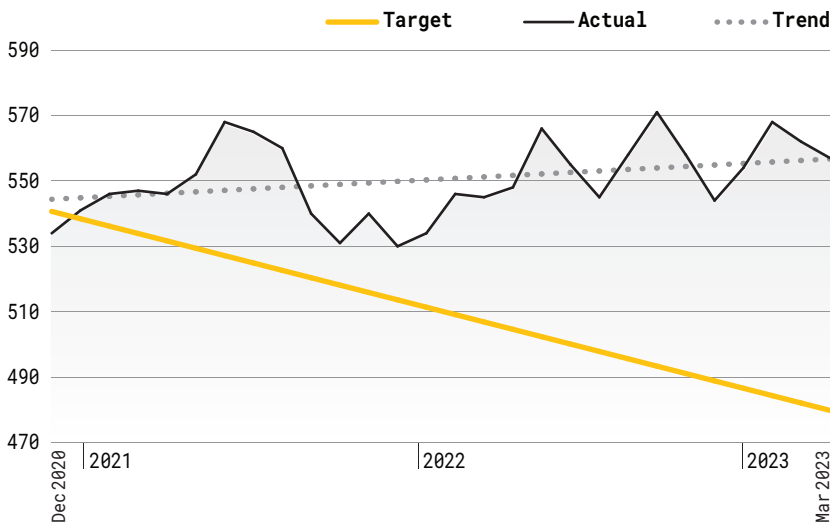
Section Three

Analysis: Road user groups

Whilst the NRSS has no specific target reductions for individual road user groups, the progress of road user groups in achieving a 50 per cent reduction in road deaths by 2030 is measured in line with the headline NRSS target.

Driver deaths per annum

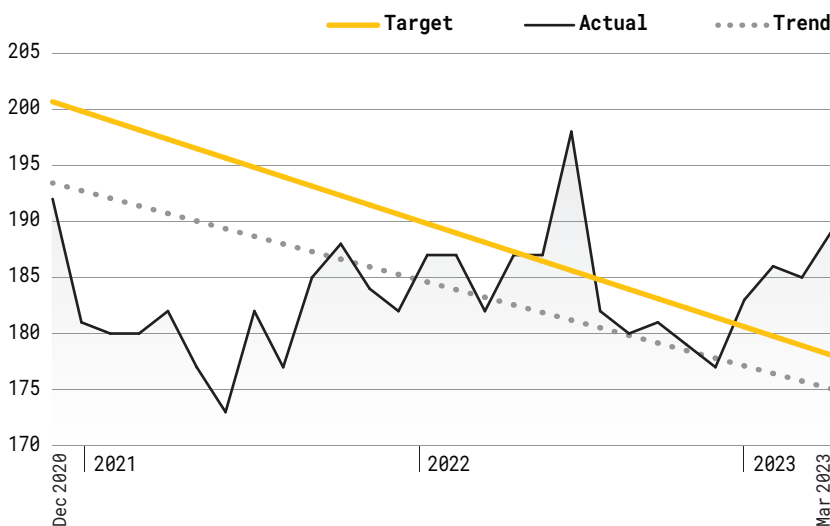
RED



- In the 12 months to March 2023, 557 drivers died on Australian roads, compared to 545 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 2.2 per cent.

Passenger deaths per annum

RED

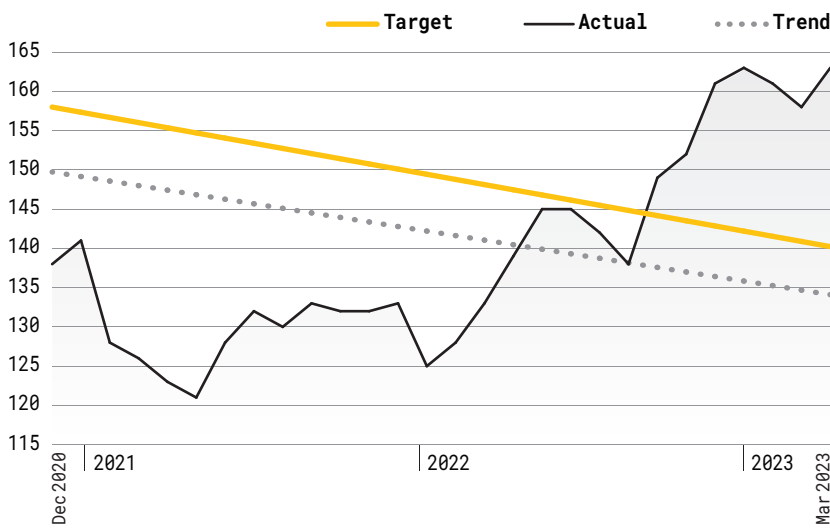


- In the 12 months to March 2023, 189 passengers died on Australian roads, compared with 182 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 3.8 per cent.

Section Three

Pedestrian deaths per annum

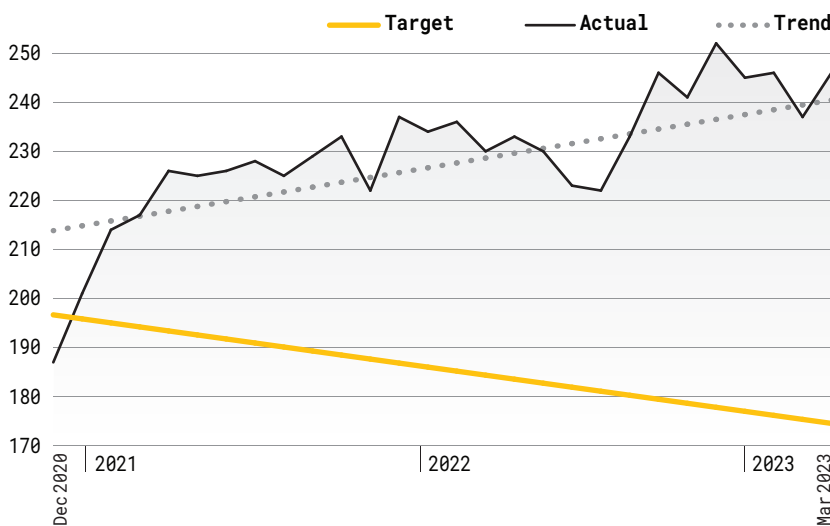
RED



- In the 12 months to March 2023, there were 163 pedestrian deaths on Australian roads, compared to 133 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 22.6 per cent.

Motorcyclist deaths per annum

RED



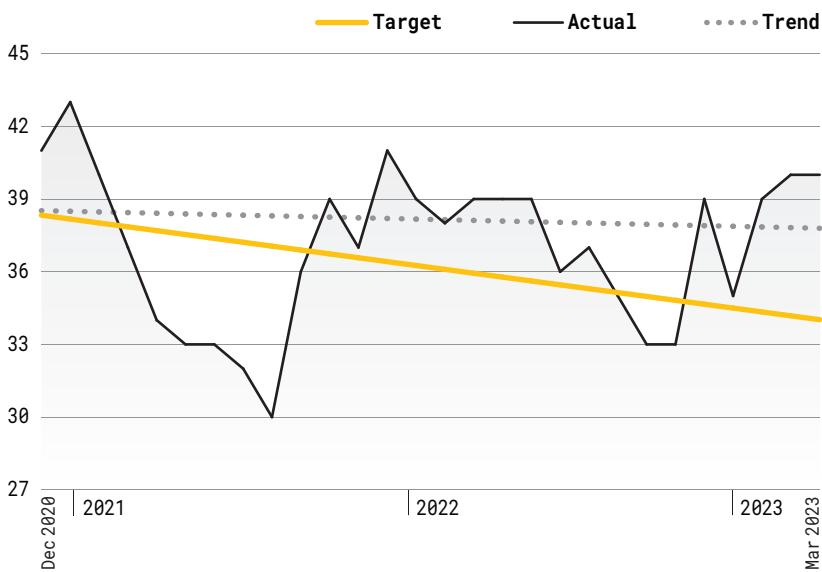
- In the 12 months to March 2023, there were 246 motorcyclist deaths on Australian roads, compared to 230 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 7.0 per cent.

Section Three

Analysis: Road user groups

Cyclist deaths per annum

RED



- In the 12 months to March 2023, 40 cyclists died on Australian roads, compared to 39 deaths recorded in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 2.6 per cent.

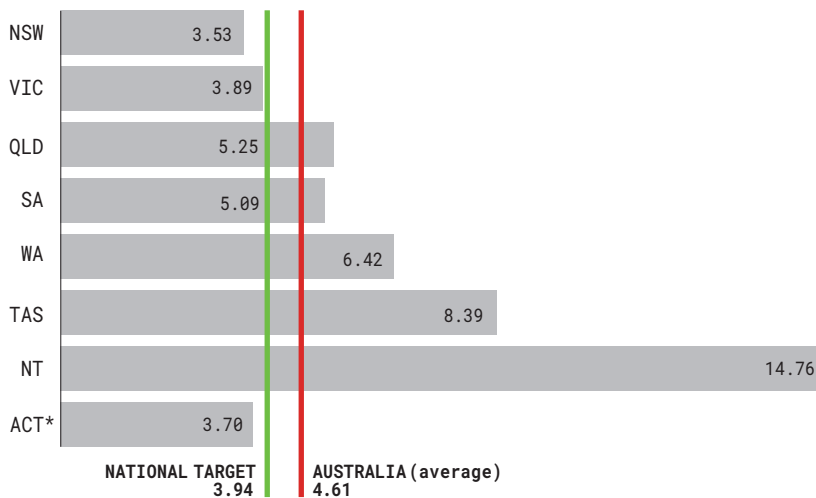


Section Four

Analysis: Road deaths by population

Annual road deaths per 100,000 population (12 months to Mar 2023)

RED



The NRSS also targets an approximate 55 per cent reduction in the national fatality rate per capita to less than 2 road deaths per 100,000 population. The data indicate Australia is not on track to achieve this target.

Fatality rates among individual states and territories are useful in determining priority areas. The data show that Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory have more road deaths per head of population than the national average.

Analysis: Potential lives saved

Annual road deaths per 100,000 population (12 months to Mar 2023)

	Current number of deaths	Current fatality rate per 100,000 population	Number of deaths at 3.53 per 100,000 population	Potential lives saved*
NSW	289	3.53	289	0
VIC	259	3.89	235	24
QLD	281	5.25	189	92
SA	93	5.09	65	28
WA	180	6.42	99	81
TAS	48	8.39	20	28
NT	37	14.76	9	28
ACT*	17	3.70	16	1
National	1,204	4.61	922	282

If the other jurisdictions matched the New South Wales fatality rate of 3.53 per 100,000 population, 282 lives could have been saved across Australia:

- 24 in Victoria
- 92 in Queensland
- 28 in South Australia
- 81 in Western Australia
- 28 in Tasmania
- 28 in the Northern Territory
- 1 in the Australian Capital Territory

* For this analysis ACT is excluded when considering lowest fatality rate jurisdictions as being unrepresentative of other states and territories in terms of geography and variety in road networks.

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