



BENCHMARKING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

SEPTEMBER QUARTER 2023



Australian
Automobile
Association

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Key changes

Key changes since June 2023

Road fatalities rose by 18.1 per cent from the June quarter to the September quarter.

In the 12 months to 30 September 2023, road deaths rose by 4.6 per cent compared to the previous corresponding period (1,240 deaths compared to 1,186 deaths in the 12 months to 30 September 2022).

The data indicate that Australia remains off-track to achieve the National Road Safety Strategy targets for reducing total deaths and deaths of children.

Poor data availability makes it impossible to track progress on serious injuries; deaths on city CBD streets; and deaths on national highways and high-speed roads.

Strategy targets

	Previous	Current
National deaths	Red	Red
National serious injuries	Black	Black
Children (seven years and under) deaths	Amber	Amber
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 pro rata target but a faster rate of improvement is required to achieve NRSS target by 2030.

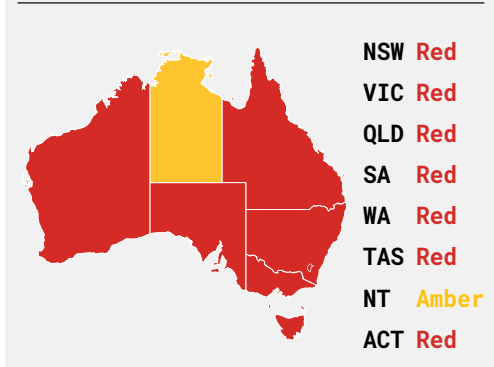
Red

Road crash deaths are above the pro rata NRSS target.

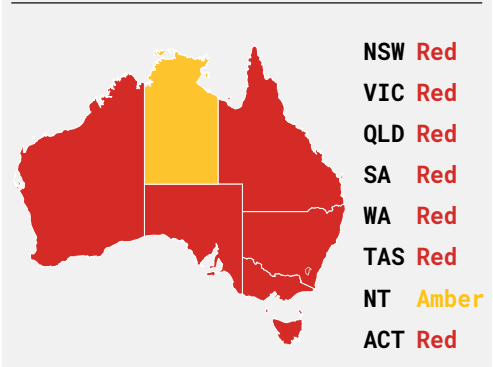
Black

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

Previous: Jurisdictional status



Current: Jurisdictional status



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

The data indicate no headline target, jurisdiction or road user group is on track to achieve a 50 per cent reduction in road deaths by 2030.

Australia's road deaths: September 2023

Release data to get national strategy back on track

Less than three years into the National Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030, it is clear Australia's progress towards the plan's targets is wildly off-track.

Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics data shows a 4.6 per cent rise in road deaths over the 12 months to 30 September 2023.

In that period, 1,240 people were killed on Australian roads—54 more deaths than in the previous corresponding period. Cycling deaths rose 30.3 per cent and pedestrian deaths rose 11.3 per cent.

Far from being on track to halve death rates through the decade as planned, annual Australian road fatalities are today 13 per cent higher than when the strategy began.

We cannot explain these dramatic increases or be confident about proposed solutions, simply because state governments are withholding crucial data about road quality and crash causes.

Every Australian state and territory government has valuable data on road quality assessments, crash causes, and law enforcement issues, including the involvement of drink driving, drugged driving, speeding, and mobile phone use in crashes. This information could guide effective investments and policies to curb road deaths.

In October, the AAA launched its Data Saves Lives campaign with the support of Australia's motoring clubs and 17 organisations that aim to curb Australian road trauma.

Data Saves Lives is not calling for new data. We are simply asking the Commonwealth to use its \$10 billion in annual road funding to compel the states and territories to release existing data on road quality, crash causes, and key law enforcement issues.

Publishing this information would reveal valuable insights to guide road investment, law enforcement, and policy change.

Transparent management and reporting of existing data is a commonsense, inexpensive approach that would save lives.

Data transparency would also provide a new level of accountability that would assure voters that their political representatives are spending taxpayers' money where it can be most effective in saving lives.

This is low-hanging fruit that must no longer be ignored.

Australia's road safety data collection and reporting is shockingly inadequate. Not only do our governments neglect to report, share and use data that they hold, but three of the strategy's five headline targets remain either unmeasured or unreported.

Australians deserve safer roads.

For more information, see datasaveslives.org.au



Michael Bradley

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Section One

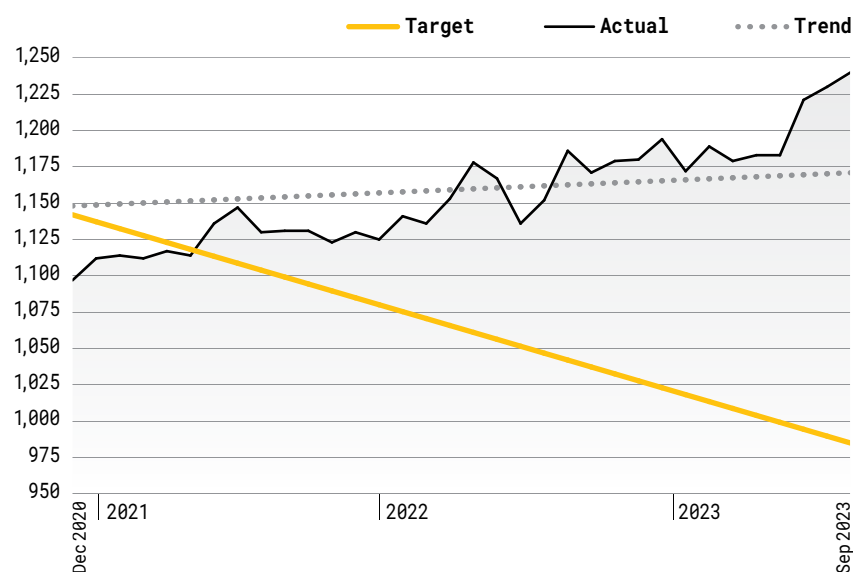
National overview

The federal, state and territory governments have endorsed the NRSS. The strategy 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 since December 2018.

The NRSS also aims to, by 2030, 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

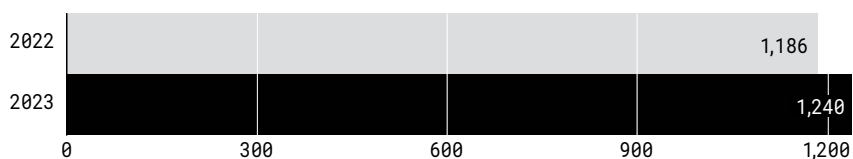


In the 12 months ended September 2023, 1,240 people died on Australian roads. That is 8.6 per cent higher than the NRSS baseline.

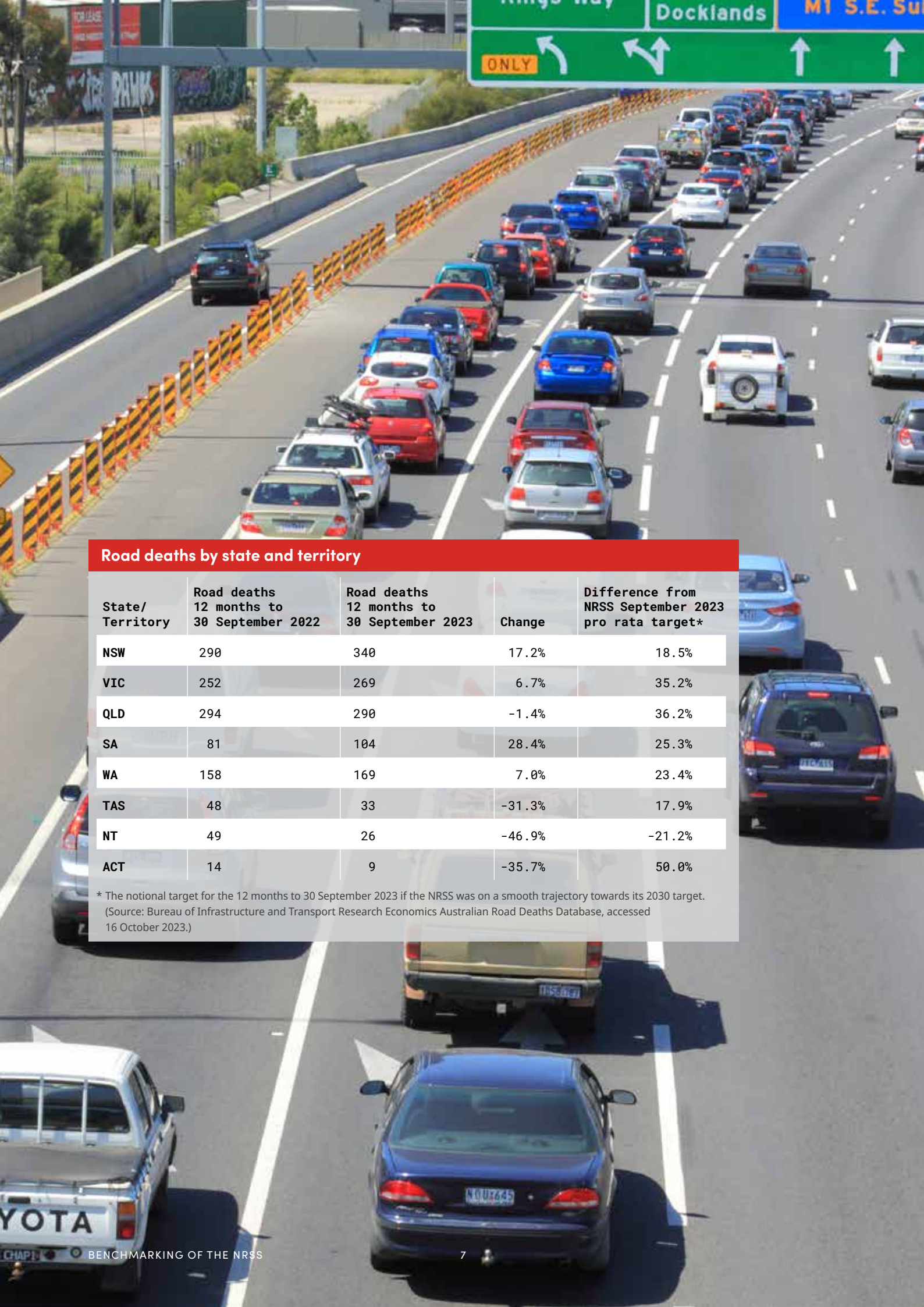
Compared with December 2020, when the strategy began, 12-month road deaths have increased by 13.0 per cent.

The latest 12-monthly figure is 255 more road deaths than the notional pro rata target of 985 fatalities, which would have been the road toll in the 12 months to September 2023 if the NRSS was following a smooth trajectory towards its 2030 target.

Comparative performance: Road deaths in the past 12 months



National road deaths for the 12 months ending September 2023 were 4.6 per cent higher than in the previous corresponding period.



Road deaths by state and territory

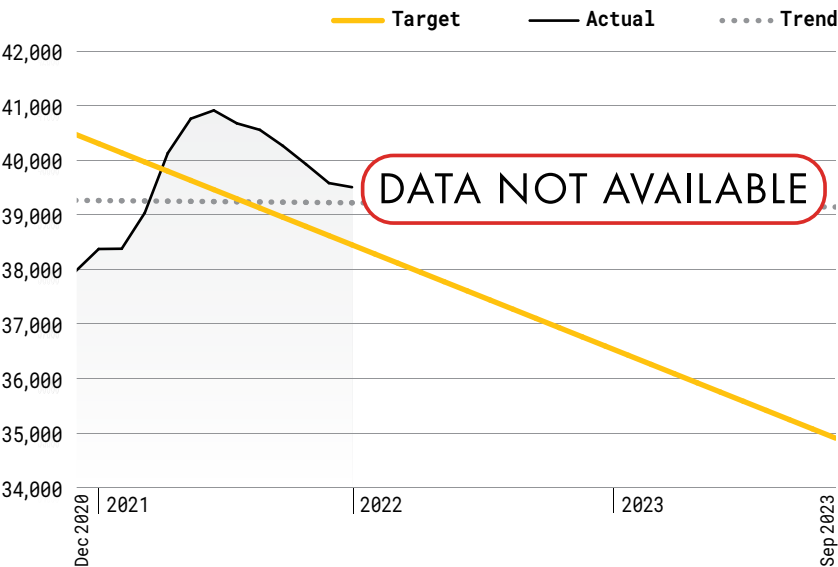
State/ Territory	Road deaths 12 months to 30 September 2022	Road deaths 12 months to 30 September 2023	Change	Difference from NRSS September 2023 pro rata target*
NSW	290	340	17.2%	18.5%
VIC	252	269	6.7%	35.2%
QLD	294	290	-1.4%	36.2%
SA	81	104	28.4%	25.3%
WA	158	169	7.0%	23.4%
TAS	48	33	-31.3%	17.9%
NT	49	26	-46.9%	-21.2%
ACT	14	9	-35.7%	50.0%

* The notional target for the 12 months to 30 September 2023 if the NRSS was on a smooth trajectory towards its 2030 target.
(Source: Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics Australian Road Deaths Database, accessed 16 October 2023.)

National overview

National serious injuries per annum

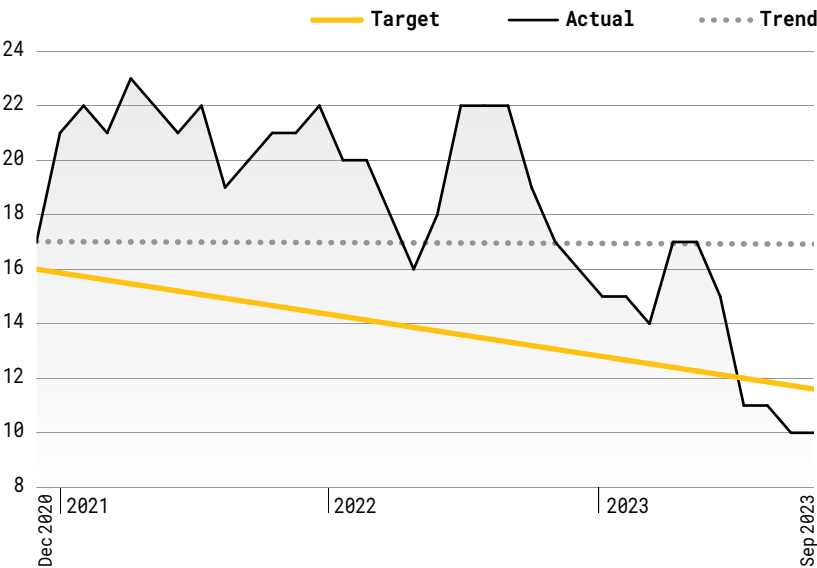
BLACK



Limited data availability makes it impossible to track the incidence of serious injuries—let alone progress on this target—since 2021.

Children (seven years and under) deaths per annum

AMBER



In the 12 months ended September 2023, 10 children (seven years and under) died on Australian roads, compared to 19 deaths in the previous corresponding period.

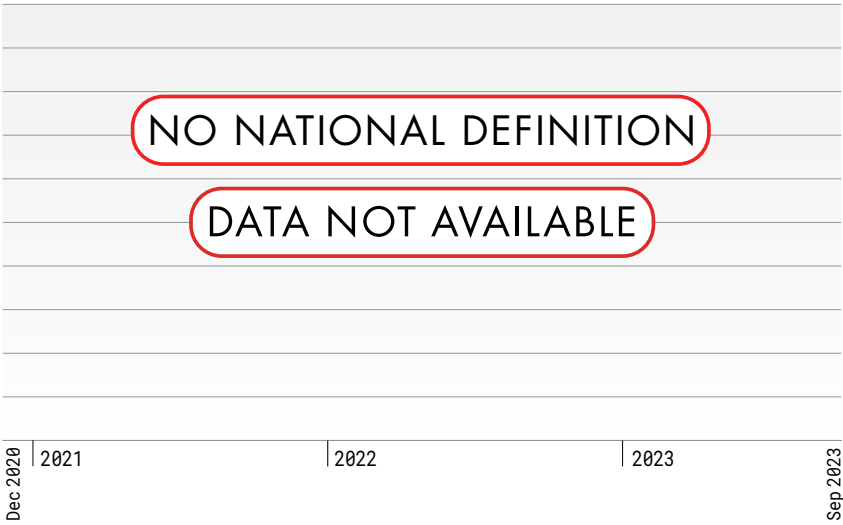
This is a decline of 47.4 per cent.

Compared with the NRSS baseline, deaths in this category have decreased by 37.5 per cent. This figure is two deaths fewer than the notional pro rata target for this stage of the NRSS of 12 deaths. But the trendline indicates that a faster rate of improvement would be needed to meet the 2030 target.

Section One

City CBD area deaths per annum

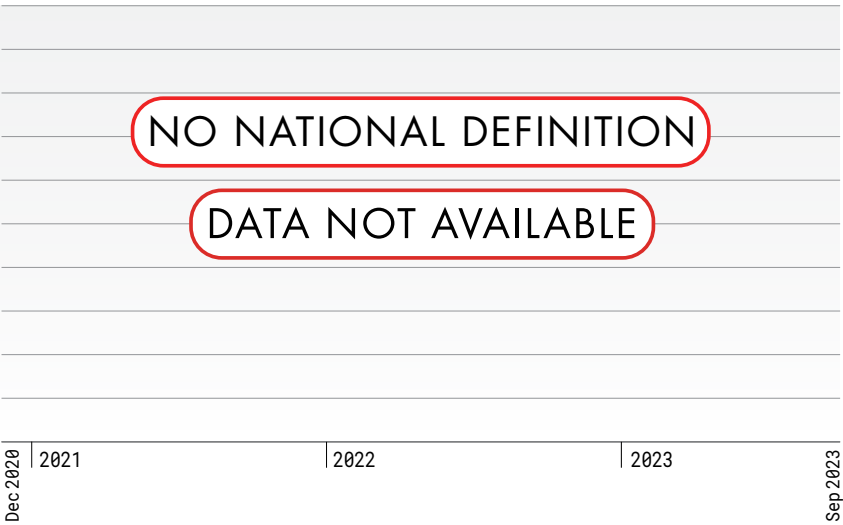
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The relevant data is unavailable, and Australia has no national definition of city CBD areas. Therefore, it is impossible to track road deaths in city CBDs and the progress towards the target.

National highway and high-speed road deaths per annum

BLACK



It is not possible to track road deaths on all national highways and high-speed roads covering 80 per cent of travel across the network. The relevant data is unavailable and there is no national definition of national highways and high-speed roads.

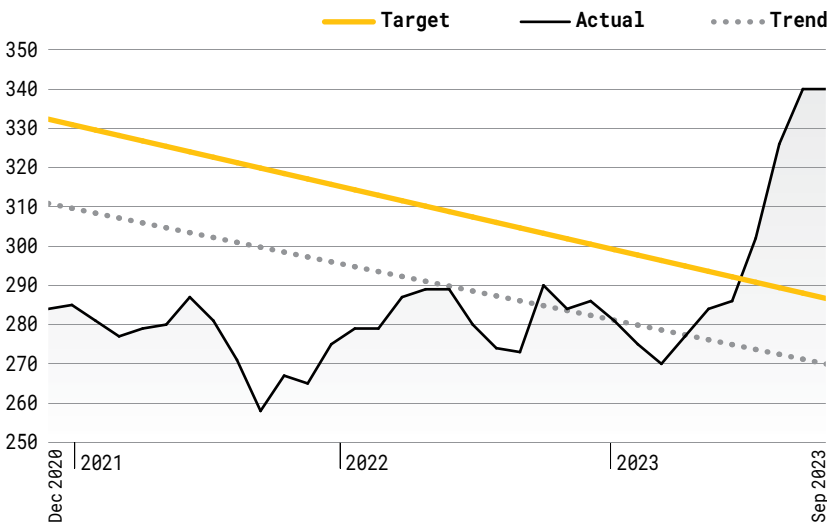
Section Two

Analysis: States and territories

While the NRSS has no specific target reductions for individual states and territories, this report measures jurisdictions' progress in achieving a 50 per cent reduction in road deaths by 2030 in line with the headline NRSS target.

New South Wales deaths per annum

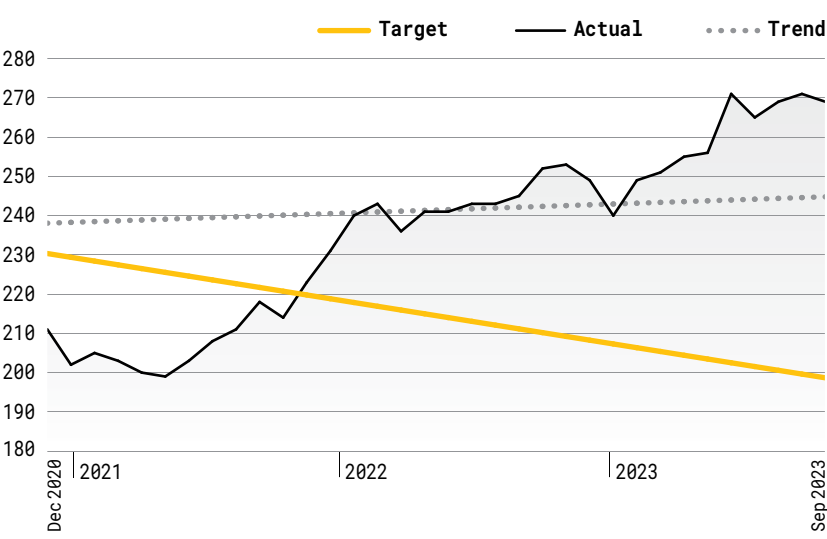
RED



- In the 12 months to September 2023, 340 people died on New South Wales roads, compared to 290 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 17.2 per cent.
- This is 53 more road deaths than the state's pro rata target of 287 for this stage of the NRSS.

Victoria deaths per annum

RED

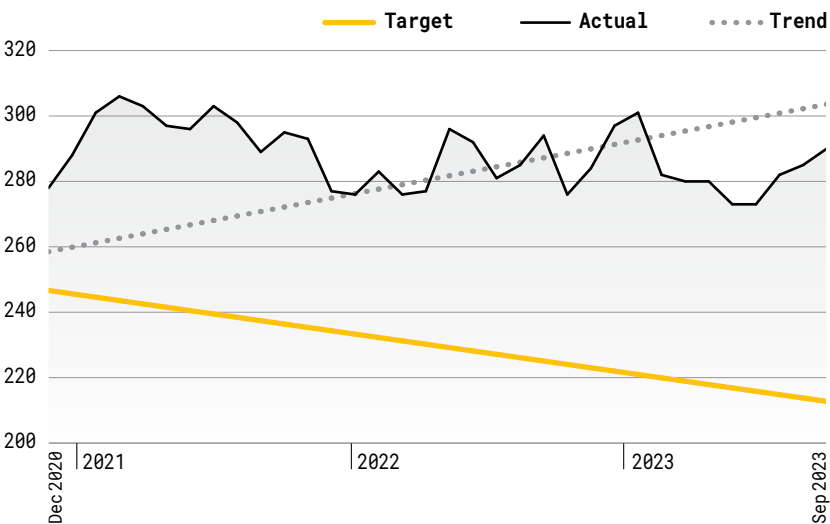


- In the 12 months to September 2023, 269 people died on Victoria's roads, compared to 252 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 6.7 per cent.
- It is 70 more road deaths than the pro rata target of 199 for this stage of the NRSS.

Section Two

Queensland deaths per annum

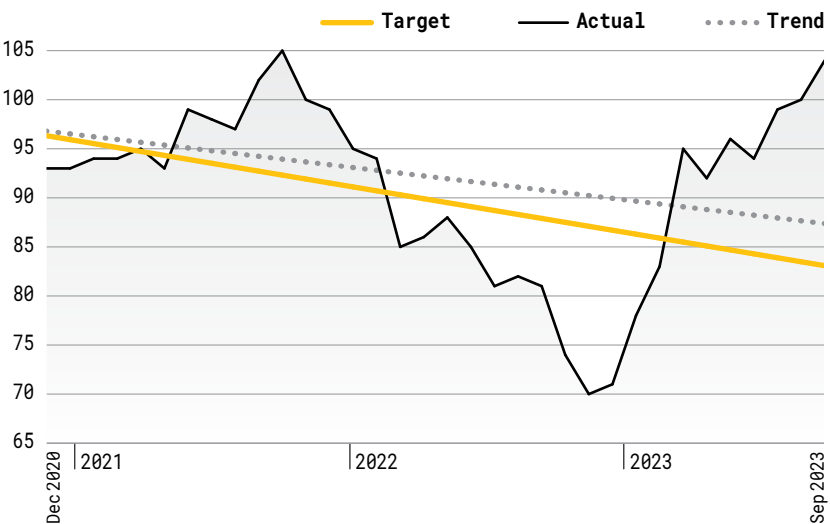
RED



- In the 12 months to September 2023, 290 people died on Queensland roads, compared to 294 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 1.4 per cent.
- But it is 77 more road deaths than the state's notional pro rata target of no more than 213 deaths for this stage of the NRSS.

South Australia deaths per annum

RED



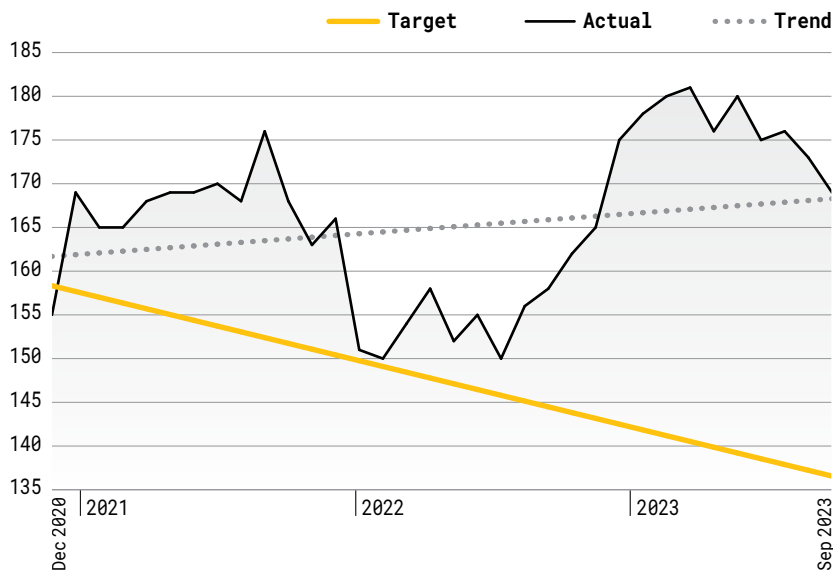
- In the 12 months to September 2023, 104 people died on South Australia's roads, compared to 81 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 28.4 per cent.
- It is 21 more road deaths than the state's notional pro rata target of no more than 83 deaths for this stage of the NRSS.

Section Two

Analysis: States and territories

Western Australia deaths per annum

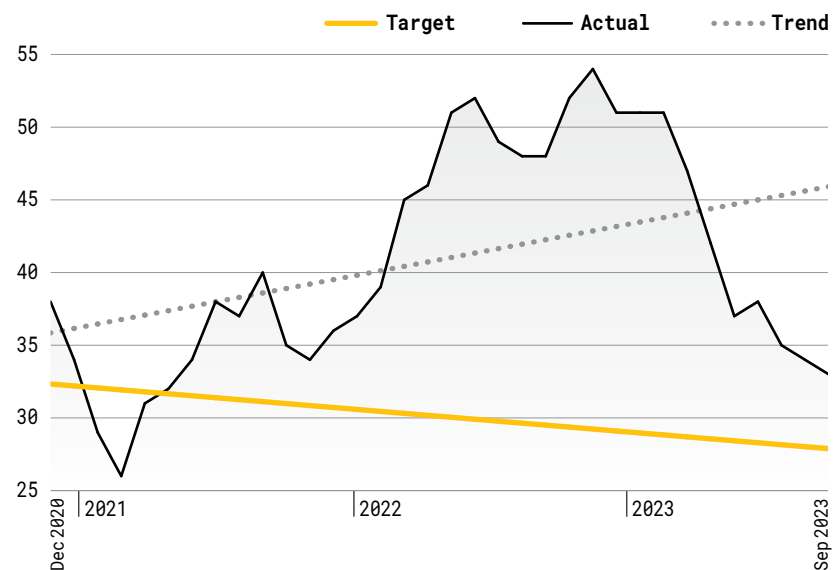
RED



- In the 12 months to September 2023, 169 people died on Western Australia's roads, compared to 158 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 7.0 per cent.
- It is 32 more road deaths than the state's notional pro rata target of no more than 137 deaths for this stage of the NRSS.

Tasmania deaths per annum

RED

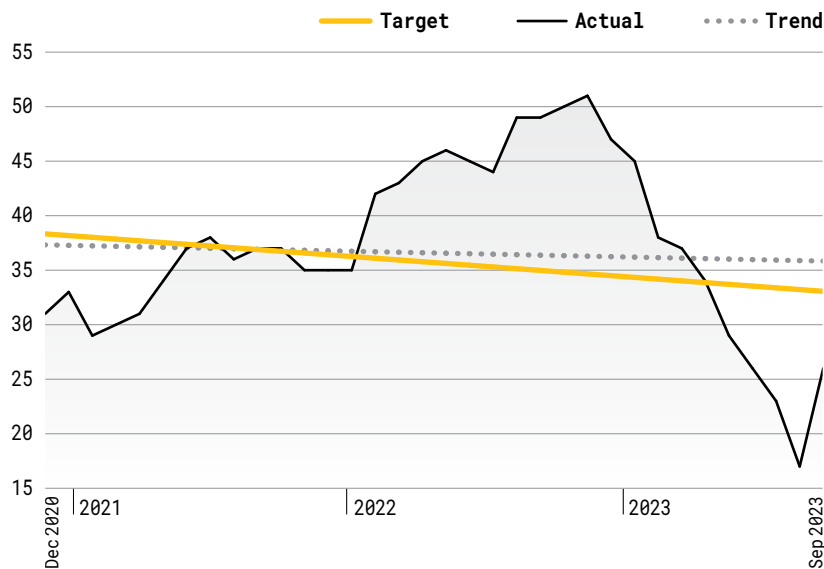


- In the 12 months to September 2023, 33 people died on Tasmania's roads, compared to 48 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- While this is a decrease of 31.3 per cent, it is five more road deaths than the state's notional pro rata target of no more than 28 deaths for this stage of the NRSS.

Section Two

Northern Territory deaths per annum

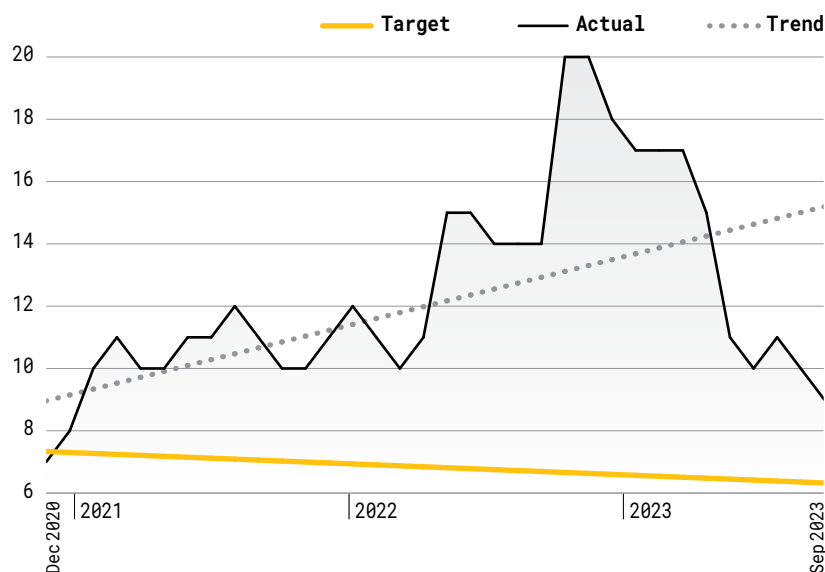
AMBER



- In the 12 months to September 2023, 26 people died on the Northern Territory's roads, compared to 49 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 46.9 per cent.
- It is seven fewer road deaths than the Territory's notional pro rata target of no more than 33 deaths for this stage of the NRSS. But the trendline indicates that a faster rate of improvement would be needed to meet the 2030 target.

Australian Capital Territory deaths per annum

RED



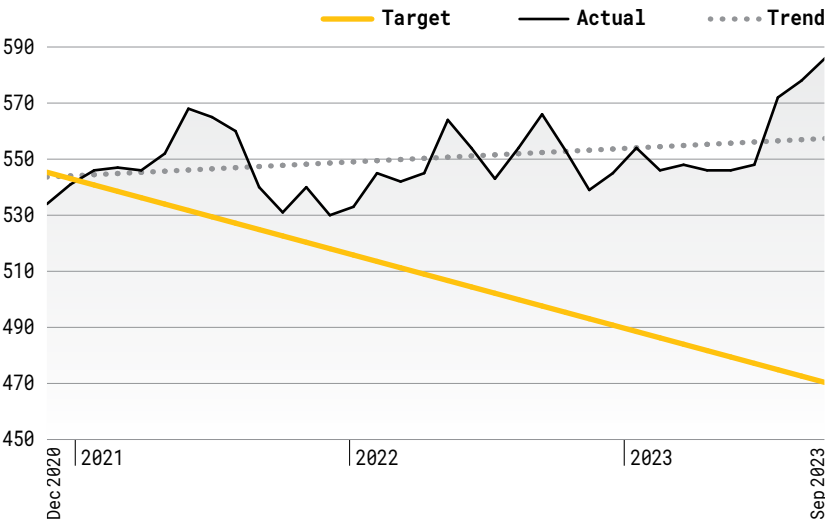
- In the 12 months to September 2023, nine people died on the Australian Capital Territory's roads, compared to 14 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 35.7 per cent.
- But it is three more road deaths—or 50 per cent higher—than the ACT's notional pro rata target of no more than six deaths for this stage of the NRSS.

Analysis: Road user groups

Whilst the NRSS has no specific target reductions for individual road user groups, this report measures the progress in achieving a 50 per cent reduction in road deaths by 2030 among various road user groups by 2030 in line with the headline NRSS target.

Driver deaths per annum

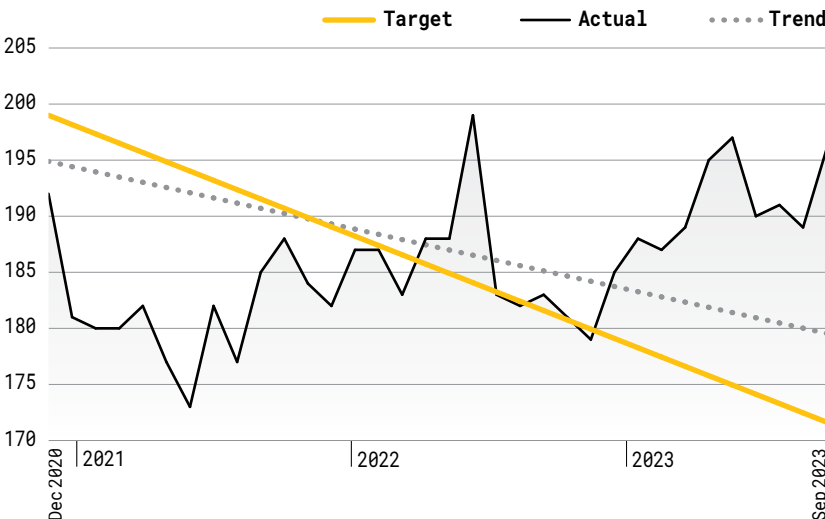
RED



- In the 12 months to September 2023, 586 drivers died on Australian roads, compared to 566 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 3.5 per cent.

Passenger deaths per annum

RED

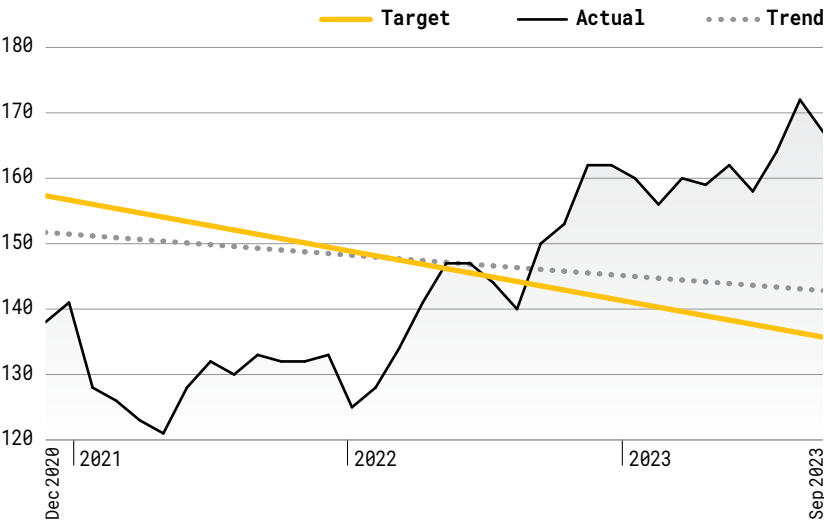


- In the 12 months to September 2023, 196 passengers died on Australian roads, compared with 183 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 7.1 per cent.

Section Three

Pedestrian deaths per annum

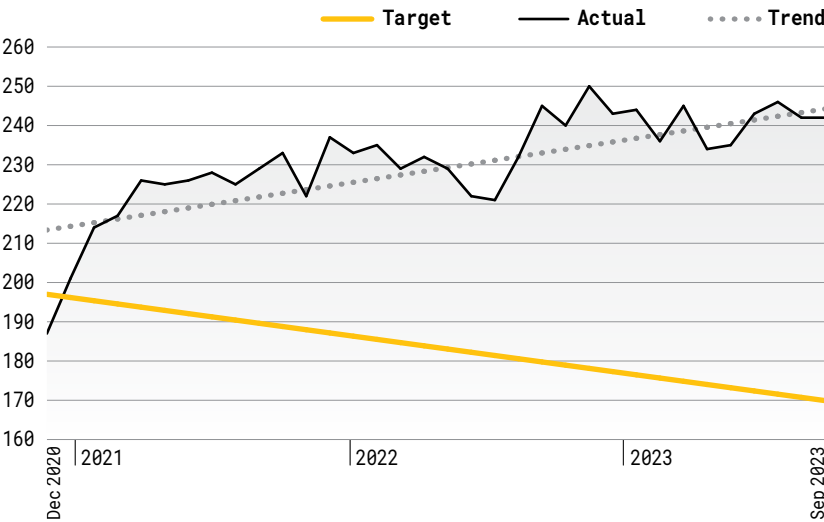
RED



- In the 12 months to September 2023, 167 pedestrians died on Australian roads, compared to 150 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 11.3 per cent.

Motorcyclist deaths per annum

RED



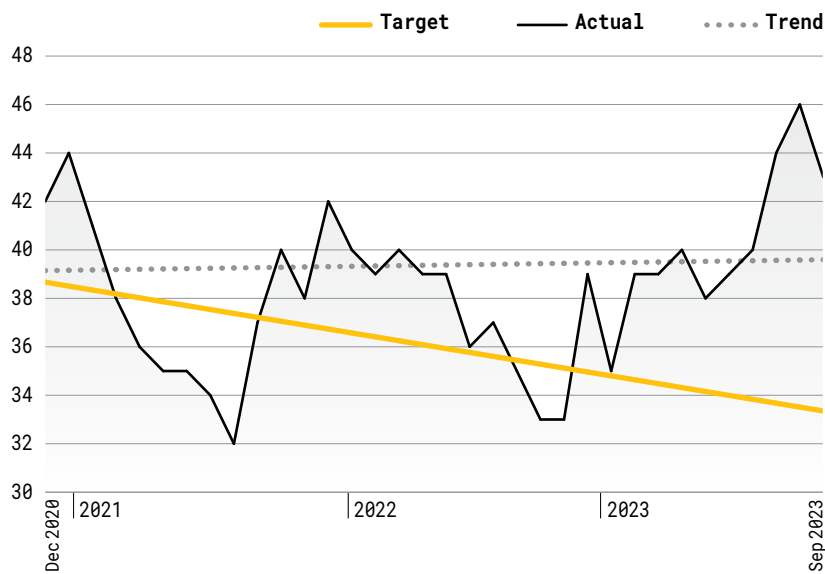
- In the 12 months to September 2023, 242 motorcyclists died on Australian roads, compared to 245 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 1.2 per cent.

Section Three

Analysis: Road user groups

Cyclist deaths per annum

RED



- In the 12 months to September 2023, 43 cyclists died on Australian roads, compared to 33 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 30.3 per cent.



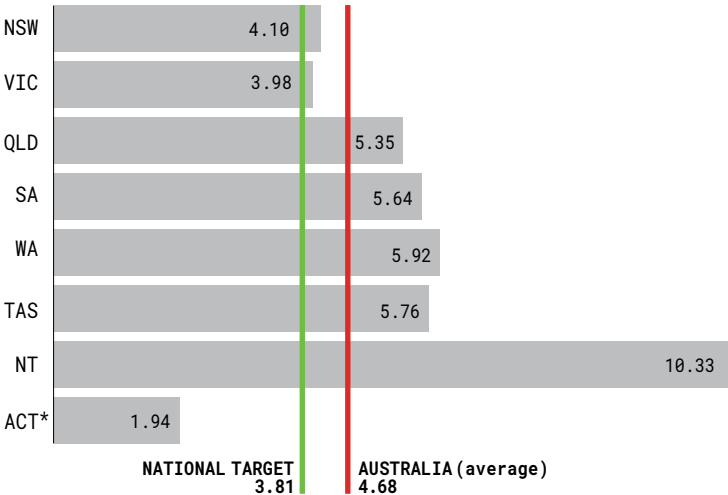
PASS
CYCLISTS
SAFELY



Analysis: Road deaths by population

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

RED



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

Fatality rates among individual states and territories are useful for helping determine 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 Sep 2023)

	Current number of deaths	Current fatality rate per 100,000 population	Number of deaths at 3.98 per 100,000 population	Potential lives saved*
NSW	340	4.1	330	10
VIC	269	3.98	269	0
QLD	290	5.35	215	75
SA	104	5.64	73	31
WA	169	5.92	114	55
TAS	33	5.76	23	10
NT	26	10.33	10	16
ACT*	9	1.94	9	0
National	1,240	4.68	1,043	197

If the other jurisdictions had matched the Victorian fatality rate of 3.98 per 100,000 population, 197 lives could have been saved across Australia:

- 10 in New South Wales
- 75 in Queensland
- 31 in South Australia
- 55 in Western Australia
- 10 in Tasmania
- 16 in the Northern Territory
- 0 in the Australian Capital Territory

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

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