

September 12, 2005

Revised

New statistics reveal slight drop in traffic collisions, fewer injuries

Not good enough, says Minister-Traffic Safety Plan still moving ahead

Edmonton... The number of collisions on Alberta roads decreased by less than one per cent in 2004, and driver error remains the most common contributing factor in traffic collisions, according to the newly released *Alberta Collision Statistics 2004*.

"As the minister responsible for traffic safety, I am relieved things aren't getting worse, but I am also frustrated that things are not getting better," said Dr. Lyle Oberg, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. "That is why I continue to support the development of the Traffic Safety Plan. I am reviewing the proposed plan, including its financial implications, and I will bring recommendations through government shortly."

The Traffic Safety Plan is the government's response to the McDermid Report, *Saving Lives on Alberta's Roads*. The government accepted all nine of McDermid's recommendations. Twelve ministries and 35 stakeholder groups have participated in the plan's development.

Some 2004 collision statistics highlights:

- Traffic fatalities increased by 0.5 per cent to 387 in 2004 from 385 in 2003.
- The number of traffic injuries decreased 6.5 per cent to 24,249 in 2004 from 26,426 the previous year.
- The number of traffic collisions decreased 0.7 per cent to 112,553 in 2004 from 113,357 in 2003.
- Of the drivers involved in fatal collisions, 19.1 per cent had consumed alcohol, down from 22.3 per cent the previous year.
- Driver error remains a contributing factor in 90 per cent of traffic collisions.

Copies of the 2004 Alberta Traffic Collision Statistics Report are available on the Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation web site at <http://www.trans.gov.ab.ca/Publications/CollisionStats.asp>. The McDermid Report is available at <http://www.trans.gov.ab.ca/Content/doctype48/production/SavingLives.pdf>. The government's response to the McDermid report is available at <http://www.gov.ab.ca/acn/200409/1700590144A31-7C97-4454-9E7245C96D894DD7.html>.

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Revised:

This news release was amended on September 12, 2005.

Attention editors:

see attachments Alberta Traffic Collision Facts 2004 and Driver Error stats
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Background

ALBERTA TRAFFIC COLLISION FACTS 2004

WHAT HAPPENED ON ALBERTA'S ROADWAYS IN 2004?

During 2004...

- 387 people were killed as a result of traffic collisions.
- 24,249 people were injured in traffic collisions
- A total of 112,553 collisions occurred.

Every day in 2004 approximately...

- 1 person was killed.
- 66 people were injured.
- 308 traffic collisions were reported.

ALBERTA TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

2000-2004

| Severity of Collision | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 | 2001 | 2000 |
|-----------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Fatal | 339 | 321 | 322 | 341 | 312 |
| Non-Fatal Injury | 17,248 | 18447 | 20152 | 19000 | 18246 |
| Property Damage | 94,966 | 94589 | 95834 | 88050 | 85905 |

**Total
Reportable**

Collisions 112,553 113357 116308 107391 104463

Number
Killed 387 385 372 404 364

Number
Injured 24,249 26426 28989 27583 26464

**Total
Number
of
Casualties 24,636 26811 29361 27987 26828**

WHO WERE THE VICTIMS?

Traffic Fatalities (%) Traffic Injuries (%)

| | | | |
|-----|---|-------|---|
| 197 | Drivers (50.9) | 14486 | Drivers (59.7) |
| 99 | Passengers (25.6) | 6766 | Passengers (27.9) |
| 50 | Pedestrians (12.9) | 1188 | Pedestrians (4.9) |
| 6 | Bicyclists (1.6) | 612 | Bicyclists (2.5) |
| 25 | Motorcyclists (6.5) | 678 | Motorcyclists (2.8) |
| 10 | Other road user class/unspecified (2.6) | 519 | Other road user class/unspecified (2.1) |

SPECIAL ROAD USER CLASSES

Pedestrians

Based on population, pedestrians between the ages of 15 and 19 were most likely to be involved in a crash. Pedestrian casualty collisions were most likely to occur during the evening rush hour. Of pedestrians involved in injury collisions 13.7% had consumed alcohol, compared to 48.6% of pedestrians in fatal collisions.

Motorcycles

There were 25 people killed in collisions involving motorcycles. Motorcycle drivers under the age of 25 were most likely to be involved in casualty collisions. Compared to other drivers, motorcyclists were more likely to have consumed alcohol before the crash. Compared to drivers in total casualty collisions, motorcycle drivers were more likely to run off the road or pass improperly.

Truck Tractors

In 2004, there were 69 people killed and 753 injured in collisions involving truck tractors. Compared to drivers of other vehicles, truck tractor drivers were more likely to run off the road or make an improper lane change but less likely to have consumed alcohol before the crash.

Trains

In 2004, two people were killed and 35 people were injured in crashes in which a train was involved.

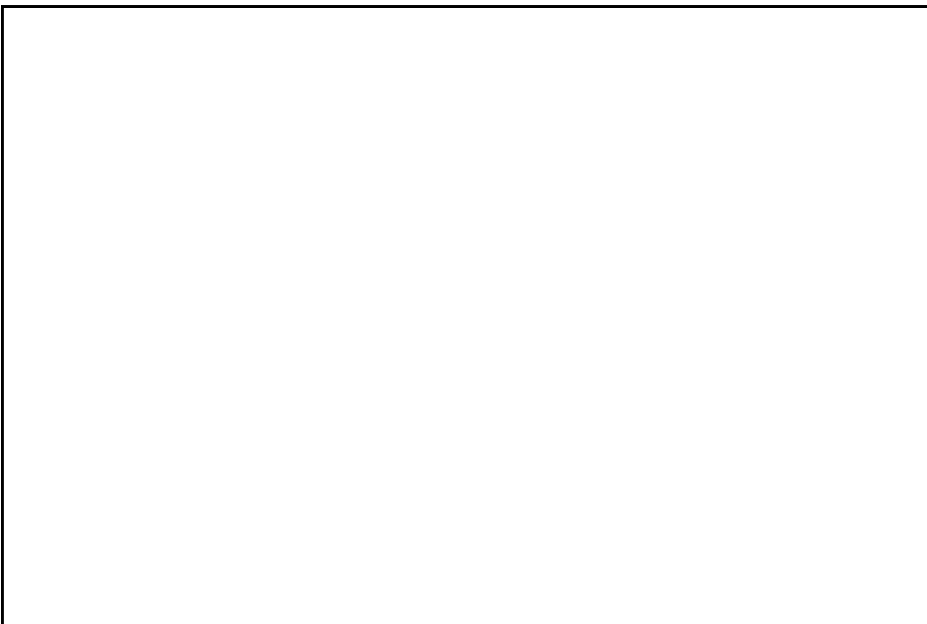
Bicycles

Young bicyclists, 10-14 years of age, were the group most frequently involved in bicycle casualty collisions. Compared to other drivers, bicyclists were more likely to disobey a traffic signal or fail to yield the right-of-way at an uncontrolled intersection.

WHEN DID THE COLLISIONS OCCUR?

July saw more fatal collisions than other months. January recorded the highest number of injury collisions. The highest number of property damage collisions occurred during December. There are more collisions on Friday than any other day of the week. The afternoon rush-hour period accounted for the highest number of crashes.

HOW DOES ALBERTA COMPARE TO OTHER PROVINCES?





Note: The fatality rate for Nunavut for 2003 was N/A. Figures for 2004 are not available at this time.

Sources: Transport Canada Canadian Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision Statistics TP3322 and Statistics Canada, "Canadian Vehicle Survey", catalogue No. 53-223-XIE.

Looking back...

- Fatality rates are unchanged from the past year.
- Injury rates have decreased over the past year.
- Property damage collision rates have decreased over the past year.

WHERE DID THE COLLISIONS OCCUR?

Over two-thirds of all collisions occurred in urban areas. Fatal collisions were more frequent in rural areas.

| Urban (%) | | Rural (%) | |
|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| 0.1 | Fatal collisions | 1.0 | Fatal collisions |
| 14.9 | Injury collisions | 16.9 | Injury collisions |
| 85.0 | Property Damage collisions | 82.2 | Property Damage collisions |

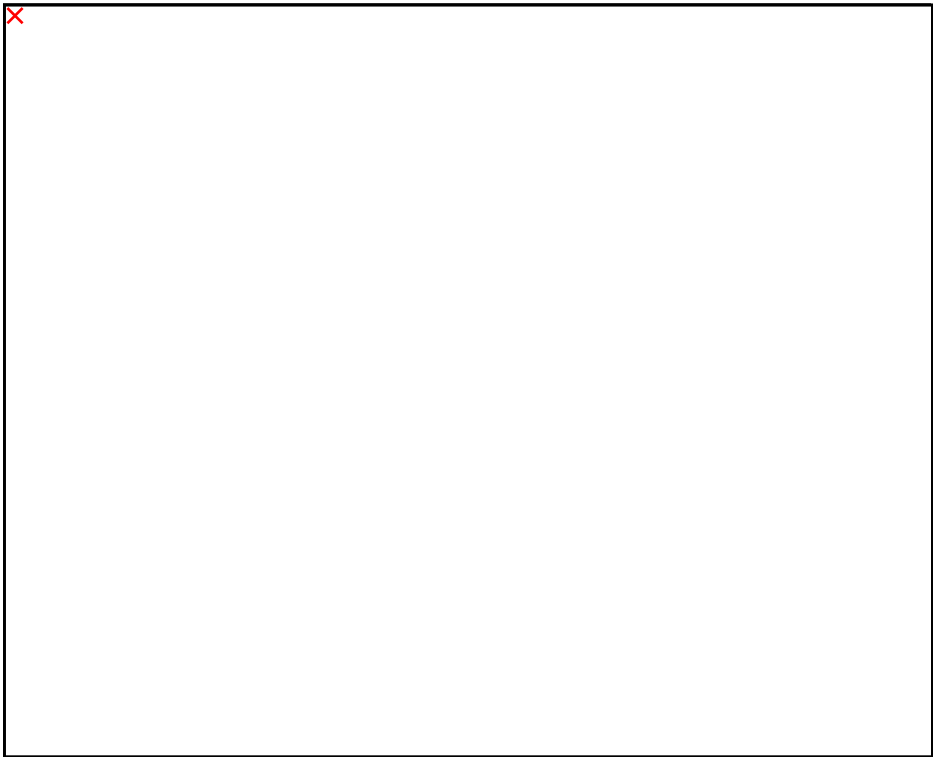
WHAT ABOUT DRINKING AND DRIVING?

Of all drivers involved in fatal collisions, 19.1% had consumed alcohol before the crash. Of all drivers

involved in injury collisions 4.8% had consumed alcohol before the crash. The majority of drinking drivers were males between the age of 25 and 44. In terms of involvement per 1,000 licensed drivers, males 18-24 years of age were more likely to have consumed alcohol prior to a casualty collision than any other age group. Alcohol related casualty crashes were most likely to occur in the month of September on the weekends and during the late night/early morning hours.

WHO WERE THE DRIVERS INVOLVED IN CASUALTY COLLISIONS?

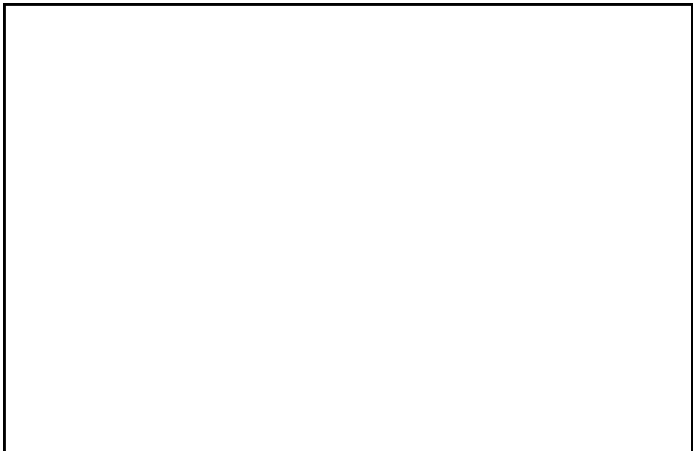
WHAT ABOUT SEAT BELTS?

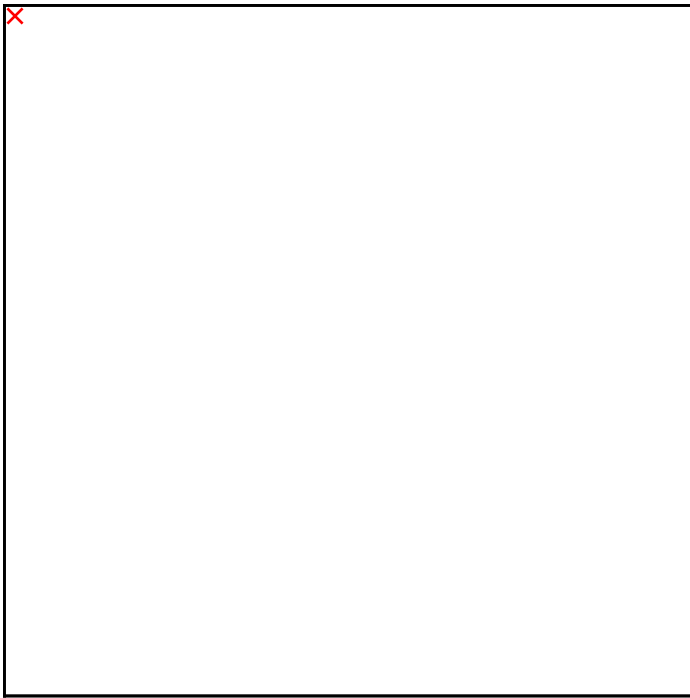


The data shows that occupants who were using restraints at the time of the collision were injured less often (11.3%) than occupants who were not using restraints (39.5%). Therefore, non-restraint users were three and a half times as likely to be injured as restraint users.

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- **In 2004, 89.6% of total collisions involved one or more drivers identified as committing a driver error.**

Other factors which contributed to the 112553 reported collisions in 2004 were:

- Driver Condition - 5.2% of total collisions involved one or more drivers identified as having a physical condition which contributed to the collision (i.e. had been drinking, impaired by alcohol/drugs, fatigued/asleep or medical defect). 31.9% of fatal collisions involved one or more drivers with a physical condition which contributed to the collision.
- Speed - 8.6% of total collisions involved one or more drivers indicated by the police as having been travelling at a speed too great for the given conditions. However, 26.0% of fatal collisions involved unsafe speed.
- Vehicle Condition - Only 0.7% of total collisions involved one or more vehicles identified as having a vehicle defect which contributed to the collision.

NOTE: DOES NOT INCLUDE COUNTER REPORTED PROPERTY DAMAGE ONLY COLLISIONS.

Driver Safety, Research and Traffic Safety Initiative
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