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Traffic Safety Facts
Crash•Stats

August 2005 A Brief Statistical Summary Published by the Mathematical Analysis Division DOT HS 809 897

2004 Traffic Safety Annual Assessment – Early Results

Early results from the 2004 Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) show that the number of persons killed in the U.S. in motor vehicle traffic crashes declined from 2003. This is the second consecutive year in which traffic crash fatalities have declined after reaching a recent high of 43,005 in 2002. With an expected increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), the fatality rate per 100 million VMT will be 1.46, the lowest recorded by the Department of Transportation (see Figure 1). Early results also show (see Table 1) a decline in pedestrian fatalities and in fatalities in all passenger vehicles combined. By vehicle type, occupant fatalities increased in large trucks and sport utility vehicles (SUV). Motorcycle rider fatalities increased for the seventh year in a row, exceeding 4,000 fatalities for the first year since 1987.

In other significant results, shown in Table 2, fatalities in alcohol-related crashes decreased for a second year, declining by 2.4 percent, falling below 17,000 fatalities for the first time in five years. Fatalities declined by 1.8 percent in crashes where the highest blood alcohol concentration (BAC) was 0.08 grams per deciliter (g/dl) or greater. Fatalities of unrestrained passenger vehicle occupants declined by 3.4 percent, reflecting the increasing use of safety belts and contributing to the overall reduction in passenger vehicle occupant fatalities. Increases were found in the number of passenger vehicle occupants killed when their vehicle rolled over (1.1 percent) and for persons killed in crashes involving large trucks (3.1 percent).

Table 1
Motorists and Non-motorists Killed in Traffic Crashes

Description	2003	2004	Change	% Change
Motorists Killed in				
Passenger Vehicles	32,271	31,693	-578	-1.8%
Passenger Cars	19,725	19,091	-634	-3.2%
Vans	2,080	2,036	-44	-2.1%
SUVs	4,483	4,735	252	5.6%
Pickup Trucks	5,957	5,801	-156	-2.6%
Large Trucks	726	761	35	4.8%
Other/Unknown	630	680	50	7.9%
Motorcycles	3,714	4,008	294	7.9%
Non-motorists Killed				
Pedestrians	4,774	4,641	-133	-2.8%
Pedalcyclists	629	725	96	15%
Other/Unknown	140	128	-12	-8.6%
Total	**42,884**	**42,636**	**-248**	**-0.6%**

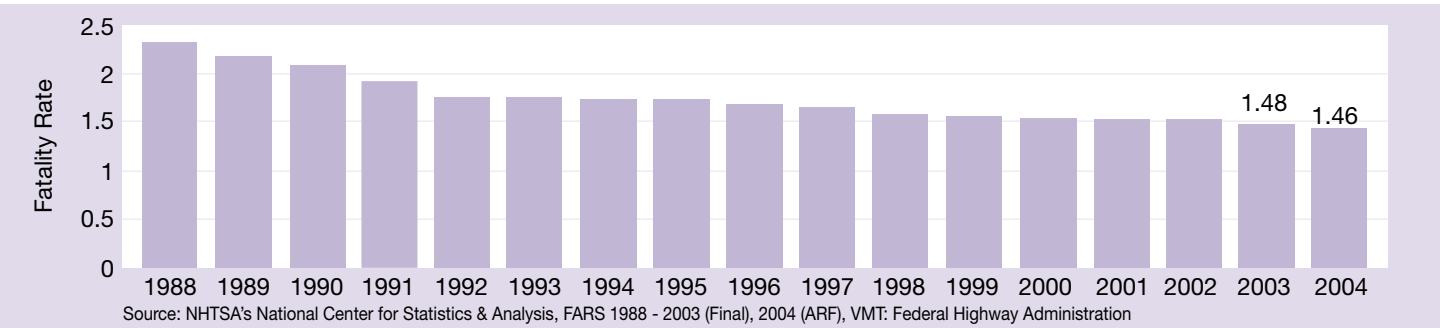
Source: FARS 2003 [Final], 2004 Annual Report File [ARF].

Table 2
Characteristics of Fatal Crashes

Description	2003	2004	Change	% Change
Traffic Fatalities by Highest BAC in the Crash				
BAC 0.01+	17,105	16,694	-411	-2.4%
BAC 0.08+	14,678	14,409	-269	-1.8%
Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities				
Unrestrained	18,196	17,575	-621	-3.4%
In Vehicle Rollovers	10,442	10,553	111	1.1%
Fatalities in Large Truck Crashes				
Total Fatalities	5,036	5,190	154	3.1%

Source: FARS 2003 [Final], 2004 Annual Report File [ARF].

Figure 1
Fatalities per 100 Million Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT), 1988 - 2004



Source: NHTSA's National Center for Statistics & Analysis, FARS 1988 - 2003 (Final), 2004 (ARF), VMT: Federal Highway Administration

Table 3 shows the total number of fatalities for 2003 and 2004, the change in the number of fatalities and the percent change for each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Twenty-seven States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico had reductions in the number of fatalities. States with the largest reduction in the number of fatalities were Texas (-238) and Michigan (-124). The District of Columbia and Rhode Island had the greatest percentage reductions (-35.8 percent and –20.2 percent, respectively). States with the largest increases were Alabama (150) and Indiana (114). The largest percentage increases were found in Vermont (42.0 percent) and New Hampshire (34.6 percent). The number of fatalities in New York did not change.

NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) is a census of all crashes of motor vehicles traveling on a public roadway in which a person died within 30 days of the crash.

The information in this Crash•Stats represents only major findings from 2004 FARS. Additional information and details will be available at a later date. Internet users may access this Crash•Stats and other general information on traffic safety at: http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-30/ncsa/AvailInf.html

Table 3
Persons Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes, by State, 2003-2004

State	2003	2004	Change	% Change
Alabama	1,004	1,154	150	14.9%
Alaska	98	101	3	3.1%
Arizona	1,118	1,150	32	2.9%
Arkansas	640	704	64	10.0%
California	4,224	4,120	-104	-2.5%
Colorado	642	665	23	3.6%
Connecticut	298	291	-7	-2.3%
Delaware	142	134	-8	-5.6%
District of Columbia	67	43	-24	-35.8%
Florida	3,169	3,244	75	2.4%
Georgia	1,603	1,634	31	1.9%
Hawaii	133	142	9	6.8%
Idaho	293	260	-33	-11.3%
Illinois	1,454	1,356	-98	-6.7%
Indiana	833	947	114	13.7%
Iowa	443	390	-53	-12.0%
Kansas	469	461	-8	-1.7%
Kentucky	928	964	36	3.9%
Louisiana	940	904	-36	-3.8%
Maine	207	194	-13	-6.3%
Maryland	650	643	-7	-1.1%
Massachusetts	462	476	14	3.0%
Michigan	1,283	1,159	-124	-9.7%
Minnesota	655	567	-88	-13.4%
Mississippi	872	900	28	3.2%
Missouri	1,232	1,130	-102	-8.3%
Montana	262	229	-33	-12.6%
Nebraska	293	254	-39	-13.3%
Nevada	368	395	27	7.3%
New Hampshire	127	171	44	34.6%
New Jersey	733	731	-2	-0.3%
New Mexico	439	521	82	18.7%
New York	1,493	1,493	0	0.0%
North Carolina	1,553	1,557	4	0.3%
North Dakota	105	100	-5	-4.8%
Ohio	1,274	1,286	12	0.9%
Oklahoma	671	774	103	15.4%
Oregon	512	456	-56	-10.9%
Pennsylvania	1,577	1,490	-87	-5.5%
Rhode Island	104	83	-21	-20.2%
South Carolina	969	1,046	77	7.9%
South Dakota	203	197	-6	-3.0%
Tennessee	1,193	1,288	95	8.0%
Texas	3,821	3,583	-238	-6.2%
Utah	309	296	-13	-4.2%
Vermont	69	98	29	42.0%
Virginia	943	925	-18	-1.9%
Washington	600	563	-37	-6.2%
West Virginia	394	411	17	4.3%
Wisconsin	848	792	-56	-6.6%
Wyoming	165	164	-1	-0.6%
US (excluding Puerto Rico)	**42,884**	**42,636**	**-248**	**-0.6%**
Puerto Rico	495	494	-1	-0.2%

Source: FARS 2003 [Final], 2004 Annual Report File [ARF].

MATHEMATICAL ANALYSIS DIVISION

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

NCSA
NHTSA's National Center for Statistics & Analysis