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Media Release**Safer driving is the New Year's resolution NSW needs to lower road toll**

Thursday, 2 January 2025

The NSW Government is issuing a call to the 6.9 million drivers across the state to make the safest decisions on the road in 2025 and help reduce the annual road toll.

NSW recorded a total of 340 road deaths in 2024 – the same number of people lost in 2023.

Data suggests there was a slight moderation in the second half of the year as the Minns Labor Government introduced a string of measures to tighten road safety, including the July 1 introduction of seatbelt cameras.

However, the number of people lost on our roads remains too high and the Government is focused on building on those measures to increase safety and reduce the trauma impacting our community.

Overall, fatalities remain below the pre-COVID era.

Speed remains the biggest killer on NSW roads. In 2024, 136 people died in crashes where speed was a factor.

The NSW Government is doubling the number of locations where mobile speed cameras can be positioned on state roads and has also announced the upcoming trial of average speed cameras for private vehicles in two regional areas.

Similar to recent years, far too many deaths are happening in regional NSW. In 2024, 234 people died on regional roads which was down 2% on the previous year.

Fatigue remains a stubborn problem, with 77 fatalities attributed to driver tiredness last year.

Alcohol and drugs are also preventable issues that factor in too many deaths. However, in the first nine months of last year, the preliminary figures show a decrease from 2023 of 12% for alcohol and 20% for drugs.

As the NSW Government continues to invest in life saving initiatives for all road users and the number of licence holders on the road continues to grow, there have been a number of areas of improvement in road trauma this year.

Deaths of bicycle riders have hit the equal lowest level in the state's history since detailed records began in 1960, with five cyclists dying in 2024, and pedestrian deaths are lower than in previous years.

Sadly, there has been a concerning rise in deaths of motorcyclists with 67 deaths, an increase of 34% when compared to 2023 figures.

In response, the NSW Government is changing the Graduated Licensing Scheme for motorcyclists to improve novice rider training, testing standards, and licence requirements.

Also, legislation will be introduced in 2025 to enable mandatory drug and alcohol testing for drivers involved in a crash which results in grievous bodily harm.

The NSW Government will also continue to roll out around \$1 billion in lifesaving infrastructure upgrades on regional and metropolitan roads through its Towards Zero Safer Roads Program and the joint federal/ state funded Road Safety Program.

The NSW Government introduced a number of measures in 2024 which will continue or expand in 2025. They include:

- The trial of average speed cameras for light vehicles in 2025
- Doubling roadside enforcement sites used for mobile speed cameras, with an additional 2,700 new sites where a camera can be deployed. Total enforcement hours will remain the same
- Seatbelt enforcement via the state's existing mobile phone cameras
- The demerit point return trial that encourages safe driving
- Releasing more ratings for bicycle helmets as part of its star rating system
- Removing a loophole to force all motorists driving on a foreign licence to convert to a NSW licence within six months
- Implementing recommendations from the Demerit Point Integrity Taskforce to stamp out rorting of the system by mainly visiting foreign nationals
- Signing the National Road Safety Data Agreement with the Commonwealth

For further details on road death data visit <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety/statistics>

Minister for Roads John Graham said:

“Too many lives were lost on NSW roads in 2024.

“We should never become desensitised to the annual figure or accept that it should be as high as 340 as it has been for the last two years running. Every one of these 340 *represents a family and network of loved ones and friends who will never be the same for having lost someone.*

“If there is a bright spot in the data in 2024 it is that the sharply higher trend of fatalities recorded in 2023 has not continued and we did not see another increase in the total.

“The NSW Government is committed to building on measures already introduced like switching mobile phone detection cameras on to seatbelt detection, conducting a trial of average speed cameras for light vehicles and a range of measures to ensure drivers on foreign licences or visiting visas are playing by the same rules as everyone else.

“I want to urge all drivers who qualify, to remain offence-free from January 16 to receive a demerit point removed from their licence. The more people who succeed, the more overall road safety is enhanced.”

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Jenny Aitchison said:

“Today we remember the 340 people who we have lost in road crashes in 2024.

“More than two thirds of those people died on regional roads, despite only a third of our population living in the regional areas of NSW.

“As we remember the people who died this year as well as those who suffered serious injuries and trauma on our regional roads during 2024, the NSW Government is investing the majority of nearly \$1 billion in road infrastructure through the Towards Zero Safer Roads Program and the jointly

funded Australian-NSW Road Safety Program on regional roads. These initiatives are improving road safety, particularly in high-risk areas, and help reduce fatal crashes across the state.

“Speeding remains the number one issue in NSW when it comes to road trauma and the NSW Government is doing everything it can to educate and enforce the rules around speeding. We are rolling out more sites for camera enforcement, trialling the use of average speed cameras for light vehicles, reviewing speed zones, delivering public education campaigns and working with NSW Police.

“Again, I urge everyone to obey the speed limits – they are there for a reason and could save your life.

“Fatigue related crashes have increased significantly this year with 77 fatalities (up by 24 compared with 2023). There is also a significant increase in fatalities where drivers are travelling on their own in fatigue related crashes (up from 18 to 29).

“This highlights the need for people driving on their own to ensure they don’t drive when they are tired.

“It’s heartening to see preliminary information showing a reduction in the involvement of drugs and alcohol in fatal crashes and I continue to remind all road users it is vital they take personal responsibility when behind the wheel – whether it’s obeying speed limits and driving to the conditions, taking regular breaks, never driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, not being distracted by mobile phones and always, always wearing a seat belt.”

Tom Daher, Founding Member of the Road Trauma Support Group NSW said:

“Road trauma leaves a lasting scar on families and communities. Losing my father, Tannous, to a preventable crash caused by a driver on drugs was a heartbreak that will stay with me forever.

“Every day, families in NSW face the unimaginable pain of losing a loved one on our roads – almost one life lost daily. These are parents, children, siblings, and friends whose absence is felt every moment. Over 1.5 million adults in NSW have been affected by road trauma, leaving emotional and psychological wounds that never fully heal.

“No one should have to bury a loved one because of an avoidable fatal crash. We hope 2025 will bring a significant reduction in the number of people killed and injured on our roads, but it requires all of us to commit to safer choices, stronger accountability, and greater awareness of the lifelong impacts of road trauma.”

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