



**FATALITY FREE FRIDAY 2020
NEW SOUTH WALES FACT SHEET**

There should never be an excuse to take risks on or around our roads. Sadly, many New South Wales drivers still do and the complacency of fewer cars on the road during coronavirus is driving more dangerous behaviour:

- One quarter of New South Wales drivers (23%) admit to taking road risks since the implementation of Covid-19 lockdowns
- A frightening statistic, likely driven by the fact that more than two thirds of the state's drivers (69%) believe the roads are safer under current conditions
- And while you might have expected the road toll to reflect the minimal vehicles on the road, the national year-to-date road toll has only declined by 12.5% compared to the same period last year
- Speeding is the most common risk being taken by drivers during Covid-19 lockdown conditions (16% more), followed by using a mobile phone behind the wheel (7% higher) or driving after a few drinks (2% spike)

Speed is already the most common form of bad driving behaviour, but it's just one of many risks that together are creating an unacceptable amount of risk for road users:

- More than two in three New South Wales drivers (71%) admit to breaking a road law
- When it came to excuses for this dangerous behaviour, the most common were: not paying attention (36%), a brief lapse in judgement (31%), or simply believing it was "safe" to do so (23%)
- Speeding is the most common with over half of the New South Wales drivers admitting to speeding, but what's more, is it's happening at an alarming frequency. In fact, more than a quarter (28%) admit to speeding on at least a weekly basis, one third of drivers (36%) admit to speeding at least once every few months
- Added to this, distraction continues to be a common safety issue in the car. Half admit to eating while driving, a third admit to using their mobile phone, and a quarter admit to looking away from the road at GPS or music for more than two seconds (which doubles your chance of a crash)
- A quarter of New South Wales drivers also admit to driving over the legal alcohol limit
- But New South Wales drivers are not only a danger when behind the wheel. Half admit to pedestrian risks like jaywalking, a quarter of cyclists admit to riding without a helmet and a fifth of passengers admit to distracting their driver

In fact, not even having a child in the car is a deterrent to taking risks on the road:

- One in three New South Wales drivers (30%) admit to speeding, using their mobile phone or driving distracted when kids are in the car
- Risky road behaviour continues to climb when driving with adult passengers, with half of drivers (48%) admitting to taking risks behind the wheel
- This increases to 64% when driving solo, despite the risk to themselves and other road users, including children

There is an obvious need for the community to take ownership of road safety in order to reduce the road toll:

- Shockingly, only 7% of the state's drivers think about the safety of other road users when behind the wheel
- New South Wales drivers admit they are three-and-a-half times more likely to spend money on paying bills (31%) than they would fixing a critical safety issue with their car (9%)
- Further, the state's drivers are also three times more likely to book a holiday, buy something frivolous for themselves or spend a night out with friends, when compared to fixing a vehicle's safety issue
- One quarter of New South Wales drivers (27%) believe walking home alone at night poses a similar risk to their safety as travelling in a car



Statistics Source

- *Research conducted by Pure Profile on behalf of the Australian Road Safety Foundation, April 2020, n=1,005 nationally representative by gender, age and location of Australian drivers aged 18 years and over.*
- *The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE), https://www.bitre.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/rda_mar_2020.pdf (accessed 31 March 2020).*