



**FATALITY FREE FRIDAY 2020  
WEST AUSTRALIA FACT SHEET**

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

- One in four West Australian drivers (25%) admit to taking road risks since the implementation of Covid-19 lockdowns
- A frightening statistic, likely driven by the fact that two thirds of West Australians (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 West Australian drivers during Covid-19 lockdown conditions (16% more), followed by using a mobile phone behind the wheel 10% higher), or driving after a few drinks (6% 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:**

- Four in five West Australians (76%) admit to breaking a road law. Those taking risks are more likely to be metro drivers (78%) rather than regional drivers (68%)
- When it came to excuses for this dangerous behaviour, the most common were: not paying attention (36%), a brief lapse in judgement (26%), or simply believing it was "safe" to do so (22%)
- Speeding is the most common with over two thirds of the state's drivers admitting to speeding, but what's more, is it's happening at an alarming frequency. In fact, one in three drivers (25%) admit to speeding on at least a weekly basis, while a further 40% of drivers admit to speeding at least once every few months
- Again, the majority of the state's drivers who admitted to speeding were metro based (67%) compared to regional (58%)
- Added to this, distraction continues to be a common safety issue in the car. More than half admit to eating while driving, a quarter admit to using their mobile phone, and one in four 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 West Australian drivers also admit to driving over the legal alcohol limit
- But the state's drivers are not only a danger when behind the wheel, almost half also admit to pedestrian risks like jaywalking, a third of cyclists admit to riding without a helmet, and a quarter 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:**

- Close to one third of Western Australian drivers (29%) 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 (50%) admitting to taking risks behind the wheel
- This jumps to 71% 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 9% of the state's drivers think about the safety of other road users when behind the wheel
- West Australians admit they are 10 times more likely to spend money on paying bills (39%) than they would fixing a critical safety issue with their car (4%)
- Further, West Australians are also nine 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



#### **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](https://www.bitre.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/rda_mar_2020.pdf) (accessed 31 March 2020).*