FATALITY FREE FRIDAY 2022
NATIONAL RESEARCH FACT SHEET
Embargoed until 00:01 on Friday, 29 April

Despite our highest populated areas under extended periods of lockdowns last year, the number of people killed on Australian roads increased across 2021, compared to 2020 (by 3%)[1]:

- In 2020, there were 1,095 people killed, which increased to 1,127 in 2021

- While the number of drivers killed remained almost the same (534 fatalities in 2020 versus 532 fatalities in 2021), it was motorcyclists whose deaths dramatically spiked

- There were 180 motorcyclist deaths in 2020, and that rose to 227 last year - meaning motorcyclists made up one in every five road deaths across 2021

- What's more, many might be surprised to learn that less than half of the 2021 total road toll were drivers. Specifically, those killed on our roads:
    - 532 drivers
    - 227 motorcyclists
    - 188 passengers
    - 134 pedestrians
    - 39 cyclists
    - An additional 7 deaths , which were uncategorised

New research conducted for the Australian Road Safety Foundation[2] showed the role all road users play in contributing to the unacceptably high numbers of injury and death:

- Almost a third of all road users (32%) admit that since the pandemic, they've become more concerned with health matters than they have road safety

- 60% of road users only define road safety as obeying road rules, rather than taking responsibility for preventing injury or death when using the road

- Interestingly, the number of road users who have broken a road rule (71%) was higher than the number of road users who admit taking a risk on the road (54%)

- It might explain why, despite the majority of the population breaking road laws, 99% claimed to be a safe road user

---

[1] Deaths in Australia, Australian Government, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (accessed 14 Jan)

[2] Research conducts by Pure Profile on behalf of Australian Road Safety Foundation between 2-8 March 2022 with a sample size of n=1,503 adults aged 18+years

- When it came to breaking road laws, all road users were bad and the worst offenders were:
  - 81% of cyclists
  - 80% of skateboarders
  - 78% of pedestrians
  - 77% of motorcyclists
  - 76% of drivers
  - 76% of scooterists
  - 71% of passengers

- Overall, the top two reasons for breaking a road rule were believing it was safe to do so, and simply not being focused on the road (37% and 36% respectively)

- Lack of focus was the biggest issue for drivers (38%), whereas it was cyclists who were most guilty of simply believing it was safe to break road laws (44%)

The Australian Road Safety Foundation were concerned by drivers' lack of focus, given how quickly a road crash can happen, and how prevalent risky behaviour was amongst the nation's drivers:

- The research showed that almost two thirds (63%) of drivers admit to speeding, and more than a third (35%) drive fatigued

- There were also significant levels of drivers breaking other road rules such as not stopping at stop signs (27%), using a mobile phone (25%) and crossing double lines (18%)

- Almost 1 in 5 (19%) of drivers are committing these illegal acts at least once a month

- Distraction continues to be a prevalent risk. In fact, 62% of Australian drivers admit to being distracted on the roads, with the most common reasons being:
  - Talking on the phone (34%)
  - Looking away to change music/radio (29%)
  - Looking away to use GPS (29%)

- Eating while driving also proved to be a common high risk behaviour, with more than half of drivers (56%) admitting to eating while driving

- Sadly, half of this number (29%) said they could not be persuaded from changing this behaviour, even if it were made illegal

The research also unveiled some concerning lack of preparation for drivers when it came to dangerous driving conditions:

- When it came to resilience, almost a third of Australians (30%) reported that they don't have any plans in place to protect their homes, cars or selves from natural disasters

- Australians are typically more prepared for natural events impacting them at home (27%) compared to on the road (24%)