



Easter 2009 Road Traffic Report

Wednesday, 15 April 2009

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1. Introduction

The 2009 Easter weekend started on 9 April and continued until 13 April. Just like in the previous years; the Road Traffic Management Corporation obtained the statistics of all fatal accidents that occurred during this period from the South African Police Services.

As part of its Rolling Enforcement Plan; the Road Traffic Management Corporation embarked on a national Easter project named the Easter Road Safety Project. The aim of this project was to concentrate on all unroadworthy, private and public transport motor vehicles as well as paying a special attention on preventing crashes in hazardous locations and thus attempting to curb the fatality rate on our roads. Roadblocks, roadside checks, patrols and awareness campaigns were launched even before the Easter weekend. Vehicles were stopped, searched and checked with specific emphasis placed on illegal and unroadworthy vehicles, drivers and crime related issues, to clear our roads of these killer offences before the Easter weekend.

Due to traffic volumes increases during the Easter weekend (which starts from Thursday to Monday), there is an increased risk of accidents on our roads. The biggest increase of traffic is experienced on the main routes leading out of Gauteng, with the N1 north and south, the N3 towards KwaZulu-Natal and the N4 towards Mpumalanga having the highest traffic volumes.

Apart from the people taking short holidays, migrant workers go home to their families and the members of the Zion Christian Church go to worship at Moria City.

During periods of peak traffic volumes, like Easter and December/ January festive holidays, the issuing of information about fatal road traffic accidents, weather and road conditions and law enforcement actions, serves as a platform in the mass media to get road traffic safety information across to road users. Informing road users about the dangers of unsafe road usage and educating them on correct traffic participation is of vital importance in changing the perceptions and ultimately the behaviour of road users.

This Easter weekend fell within the school holidays; however the schools in Gauteng and nearby provinces reopened just after the Easter weekend. Subsequently, the 2009 Easter saw higher traffic volumes on our roads relative to 2008 during the same period.

2. Summary

From March 2008 to March 2009 there was an overall increase of 127,775 (11,30%) in the number of learner licenses over the 1-year period from 1,130,663 in 2008 to 1,258,438 in 2009.

The number of licenced drivers increased by 333,497 (4,06%) from 8,205,987 licences at the end of March 2008 to a total of 8,539,484 licences issued at the end of March 2009.

The number of professional drivers increased by 51,171 (7,22%) from 708,253 at the end of March to 759,424 PrDPs at the end of March 2009

The overall vehicle population increased by 211,242 (2,30%) from a total of 9,182,677 at the end of March 2008 to a total of 9,393,919 at the end of March 2009.

There was an overall increase in traffic volumes on national roads of about 142,259 vehicles (30,31%) from an average of 469,295 vehicles counted at 7 counting stations in 2008 to an average of 611,554 vehicles during 2009.

The number of fatal crashes over Easter 2009 decreased by 46 (21,00%) from 219 during 2008 to 173 in 2009.

The number of fatalities over Easter 2009 decreased by 90 (31,36%) from 297 during 2008 to 197 in 2009.

3. Number of Registered Drivers

The number of learner driving licences issued on 31 March 2009 in comparison with the number issued on the same date in 2008 is given in the table below.

Number of Learner Licences Issued				
Category	Mch 2008	Mch 2009	Change	% Change
1	45,777	59,342	13,565	29.63
2	343,948	347,268	3,320	0.97
3	740,938	851,828	110,890	14.97
Total	1,130,663	1,258,438	127,775	11.30

The above information shows an overall increase of 127,775 (11,30%) in the number of learner licenses over the 1-year period from 1,130,663 in 2008 to 1,258,438 in 2009. Motorcycle (category 1) licences increased by 29,63%; light motor vehicle (category 2) licences increased by 0,97%; and heavy motor vehicle (category 3) licences increased by 14,97%.

The number of driving licences issued on 31 March 2009 in comparison with the number issued on the same date in 2008 is given in the table below.

Number of Driving Licences Issued				
Category	Mch 2008	Mch 2009	Change	% Change
A1	120,822	121,576	754	0.62
A	398,323	406,175	7,852	1.97
B	1,396,992	1,520,221	123,229	8.82
EB	3,611,421	3,616,887	5,466	0.15
C1	1,189,664	1,382,005	192,341	16.17
EC1	608,361	606,717	-1,644	-0.27
C	13,440	14,278	838	6.24
EC	866,964	871,625	4,661	0.54
Total	8,205,987	8,539,484	333,497	4.06

The information in the table above shows an increase of 333,497 (4,06%) from 8,205,987 licences at the end of March 2008 to a total of 8,539,484 licences issued at the end of March 2009.

The number of of licenced drivers showed an average annual increase of 4,07% over the past 5 years. From March 2004 to March 2005 the increase was 4,08% from 6,996,782 licenced drivers to a total of 7,282,458. The biggest annual increase was from March 2005 to 2006 when the increase was 4,21% to a total of 7,589,176 licenced drivers at the end of March 2006. On a provincial percentage basis the biggest increase from 2008 to 2009 was recorded in Limpopo where the number of licenced drivers increased by 7,60% followed by Mpumalanga with and increase of 6,02%.

The number of professional driving permits (PrDPs) issued on 31 March 2009 in comparison with the number issued on the same date in 2008 is given in the table below.

Number of PrDP's Issued				
Category	Mch 2008	Mch 2009	Change	% Change
G	10,121	10,903	782	7.73
P	3,949	2,596	-1,353	-34.26
P G	565,975	657,195	91,220	16.12
D G	915	470	-445	-48.63
D P G	127,293	88,260	-39,033	-30.66
Total	708,253	759,424	51,171	7.22

The information in the table above shows an increase of 51,171 (7,22%) from 708,253 at the end of March 2008 to 759,424 PrDPs at the end of March 2009. (G = goods; P = passengers and D = dangerous goods).

4. Number of Registered Vehicles

In accordance with the information in the table below, the overall vehicle population increased by 211,242 (2,30%) from a total of 9,182,677 at the end of March 2008 to a total of 9,393,919 at the end of March 2009.

Motorised vehicles increased by 190,885 (2,31%) from 8,245,585 to 8,436,473. The number of towed vehicles increased by 20,358 (2,17%) from 937,089 to 957,446. The number of minibuses increased by 1,425 (0,51%) from 280,632 to 282,057 and buses increased by 2,696 (6,61%) from 40,760 to 43,456 at the end of March 2009.

Number of Registered Vehicles	Number registered Mch 2008	Number registered Mch 2009	Change	% Change	% of Group Mch 2009	% of Total Mch 2009
Motorised Vehicles						
Motorcars	5,224,652	5,316,921	92,269	1.77	63.02	56.60
Minibuses	280,632	282,057	1,425	0.51	3.34	3.00
Buses	40,760	43,456	2,696	6.61	0.52	0.46
Motorcycles	315,643	335,005	19,362	6.13	3.97	3.57
LDV's - Bakkies	1,856,440	1,913,901	57,461	3.10	22.69	20.37
Trucks	307,828	319,800	11,972	3.89	3.79	3.40
Other & Unknown	219,634	225,333	5,700	2.60	2.67	2.40
Total Motorised	8,245,589	8,436,473	190,885	2.31	100.00	89.81
Towed Vehicles						
Caravans	106,468	104,226	-2,242	-2.11	10.89	1.11
Heavy Trailers	136,595	145,240	8,645	6.33	15.17	1.55
Light Trailers	677,516	691,510	13,994	2.07	72.22	7.36
Other & Unknown	16,510	16,470	-40	-0.24	1.72	0.18
Total Towed	937,089	957,446	20,358	2.17	100.00	10.19
All Vehicles	9,182,677	9,393,919	211,242	2.30		100.00

The monthly percentage change in the above regard is also reflected in the graph below.



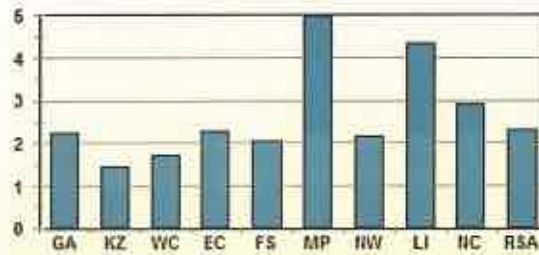
The number of registered vehicles per province is given in the table below, and reflects the following changes from the end of March 2008 to the end of March 2009: On a percentage basis, the biggest increase in the number of registered vehicles was recorded in Mpumalanga where the number of vehicles increased by 4,98% followed by an increase of 4,32% increase in Limpopo.

The number of registered vehicles showed an average annual increase of 5,31% over the past 5 years. An increase of 4,87% was recorded from 7,256,339 vehicles at the end of March 2004 to 7,609,814 vehicles at the end of March 2005. The biggest increase was recorded for the period from 2006 to 2007, when the number of vehicles increased by 7,24% from 8,138,254 vehicles at the end of March 2006 to 8,727,062 vehicles at the end of March 2007.

Table 2 : Number of Registered Vehicles per Province	Number registered Mch 2008	Number registered Mch 2009	Change	% Change	% of Total Mch 2009
Gauteng	3,531,181	3,609,740	78,559	2.22	38.43
KwaZulu-Natal	1,269,715	1,288,345	18,630	1.47	13.71
Western Cape	1,531,928	1,557,952	26,024	1.70	16.58
Eastern Cape	629,573	643,790	14,217	2.26	6.85
Free State	518,545	529,193	10,648	2.05	5.63
Mpumalanga	552,846	580,403	27,557	4.98	6.18
North West	519,401	530,650	11,249	2.17	5.65
Limpopo	426,618	445,053	18,435	4.32	4.74
Northern Cape	202,870	208,793	5,923	2.92	2.22
RSA	9,182,677	9,393,919	211,242	2.30	100

The above changes are also reflected in the graph below.

% Annual Growth in Vehicle Population
Mch 2008 - Mch 2009



5. Traffic Volumes

Traffic volumes on the main routes over Easter for the years 2007, 2008 and 2009 are given in the table below.

Traffic Volumes over Easter						
Rte	Site Name	2007	2008	2009	Change 2008-09	% change 2008-09
N1	Carousel plaza	131,884	101,152	126,279	25,127	24.84
N1	Kranskop plaza	115,586	75,756	105,469	29,713	39.22
N1	Huguenot plaza	77,335	61,762	74,850	13,088	21.19
N1	Verkeerdevlei		43,594	45,591	1,997	4.58
N2	Groot Brak	72,770	32,103	54,929	22,826	71.10
N3	Tugela plaza	84,624	64,296	85,577	21,281	33.10
N4	Middelburg	107,900	90,632	118,859	28,227	31.14
Total		590,099	469,295	611,554	142,259	30.31

The information in the table above shows an overall increase in traffic volumes of about 142,259 vehicles (30,31%) from an average of 469,295 vehicles at the 7 counting stations in 2008 to an average of 611,554 vehicles during 2009. On a percentage basis the biggest increase was recorded at Groot Brak in the Western Cape where the increase was in the order of 71,10%. On the N1 north the increase was 24,84% at the Carousel plaza and 39,22% at the Kranskop toll plaza.

6. Number of Fatal Crashes

The number of fatal crashes per Province over Easter 2009 in comparison with the number of fatal crashes over Easter 2008, is given in the table below.

Number of Fatal Crashes per Province over Easter										
Year	GA	KZ	WC	EC	FS	MP	NW	LI	NC	RSA
2007	38	48	24	25	13	25	15	28	3	219
2008	28	31	11	21	10	19	22	29	2	173
change	-10	-17	-13	-4	-3	-6	7	1	-1	-46
% change	-26.32	-35.42	-54.17	-16.00	-23.08	-24.00	46.67	3.57	-33.33	-21.00

The information in the table above shows that the number of fatal crashes over Easter 2009 decreased by 46 (21,00%) from 219 during 2008 to 173 in 2009.

On a provincial basis the changes from Easter 2008 to 2009 were as follows:

- Gauteng: decrease of 10 (- 26.32%) from 38 to 28
- KwaZulu-Natal: decrease of 17 (-35.42%) from 48 to 31
- Western Cape: decrease of 13 (-54.17%) from 24 to 11
- Eastern Cape: decrease of 4 (-16,00%) from 25 to 21
- Free State: decrease of 3 (-23.08) from 13 to 10
- Mpumalanga: decrease of 6 (-24%) from 25 to 19
- North West: increase of 7 (46.67%) from 15 to 22
- Limpopo: increase of 1 (3.57%) from 28 to 29
- Northern Cape: decrease of 1 (-33.33%) from 3 to 2.

7. Number of Fatalities

The number of fatalities per Province over Easter 2009 in comparison with the number of fatalities over Easter 2008, is given in the table below.

Number of Fatalities per Province over Easter										
Year	GA	KZ	WC	EC	FS	MP	NW	LI	NC	RSA
2007	44	61	33	35	14	46	20	41	3	297
2008	26	37	9	21	22	22	23	35	2	197
change	-18	-24	-24	-14	8	-24	3	-6	-1	-100
% change	-40.91	-39.34	-72.73	-40.00	57.14	-52.17	15.00	-14.63	-33.33	-33.67

The number of fatalities over Easter 2009 decreased by 90 (31,36%) from 297 during 2008 to 197 in 2009.

On a provincial basis the changes from Easter 2008 to 2009 were as follows:

- Gauteng : decrease of 18 (-40.91%) from 44 to 26
- KwaZulu-Natal : decrease of 24 (-39.34%) from 61 to 37
- Western Cape : decrease of 24 (-72.73%) from 33 to 9
- Eastern Cape : decrease of 14 (-40%) from 35 to 21
- Free State : increase of 8 (57.14%) from 14 to 22
- Mpumalanga : decrease of 24 (-52.17%) from 46 to 22
- North West : increase of 3 (15%) from 20 to 23

- Limpopo : decrease of 6 (-14.63%) from 41 to 35
- Northern Cape: decrease of 1 (-33.33%) from 3 to 2.

8. Fatalities per Road User Group

The number of fatalities per road user group over the Easter period for the past 6 years, from 2004 to 2009, together with the percentage of fatalities for each user group (drivers, passengers and pedestrians), are shown in the table below.

Number of Fatal Crashes & Fatalities per User Group						% of Annual Total		
Year	Fatal Crashes	Drivers	Passengers	Pedestrians	Total	Drivers	Passengers	Pedestrians
2004	187	46	58	101	205	22.44	28.29	49.27
2005	196	48	102	93	243	19.75	41.98	38.27
2006	197	60	114	84	258	23.26	44.19	32.56
2007	251	74	128	118	320	23.13	40.00	36.88
2008	219	77	137	83	297	25.93	46.13	27.95
2009	173	56	81	60	197	28.43	41.12	30.46

The information in the table above shows that:

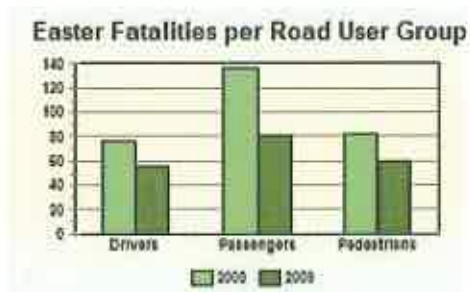
- During 2004 there were a total of 205 fatalities, of which 46 (22,44%) were drivers; 58 (28,29%) were passengers and 101 (49,27%) almost half of all the fatalities, were pedestrians;
- From 2004 the total, number of fatalities increased on an annual basis as follows : 243 in 2005; 258 in 2006 and peaked during 2007 with a total of 320 fatalities;
- The number of fatalities over Easter 2007 were made up as follows : 74 (23,13%) drivers; 128 (40,00%) passengers and 118 (36,88%) pedestrians;
- Over Easter 2008 the 219 fatal crashes resulted in a total of 297 fatalities of which 77 (25,93%) were drivers; 137 (46,13%) were passengers and 83 (27,95%) were pedestrians; and
- Over Easter 2009 the total number of fatalities comprised of : 56 (28,43%) drivers; 81 (41,12%) passengers and 60 (30,46%) pedestrians.

The information in the table above, amongst others, shows a decrease in the number of Easter weekend fatalities from 2007, the peak year, to 2009 as follows:

- Driver fatalities : decreased from 74 to 56 (24,32%);

- Passenger fatalities : decreased from 128 to 81 (36,72%); and
- Pedestrian fatalities : decreased from 118 to 60 (49,15%).

The above information on the number of fatalities per road user group is also reflected in the graphs below.



The percentage year-on-year change in the number of fatalities per road user group over the period from 2004 to 2009 is shown in the table below.

% Change in Road User Group Fatalities				
Year	Drivers	Passengers	Pedestrians	Total
2004-05	4.35	75.86	-7.92	18.54
2005-06	25.00	11.76	-9.68	6.17
2006-07	23.33	12.28	40.48	24.03
2007-08	4.05	7.03	-29.66	-7.19
2008-09	-27.27	-40.88	-27.71	-33.67

9. Major Fatal Crashes over Easter

Eight crashes occurred during Easter 2008 resulting in the deaths of 45 people. During 2009, 13 people died from two major crashes.

In one crash in Mpumalanga on the R33 between Carolina and Wonderfontein a sedan and bakkie collided due to unsafe overtaking on a blind rise. 5 people were killed and 3 injured.

In another, 8 people were killed and 4 injured when two mini-buses collided after one ignored a stop sign in Free State on the R26 near Hobhouse and R702 intersection.

The contributory factors to these major crashes tell us in no uncertain terms that the loss of lives in both cases was unnecessary and could have been avoid. The simple truth is that motorists endanger their own lives and that of other innocent road users. Road users need to obey traffic rules.

10. Contributory Factors to Fatal Crashes

Three main factors are contributing to the occurrence of crashes, these are human, vehicle and road environment factors. During Easter 2009 the main factors in this regard are summarised as follows:

Human factors:

- Speed too high for circumstances (48%)
- Pedestrian Jay Walking (36%)
- Overtook when unlawfull / unsafe (6%)
- Hit and run (6%)

- U-turn (2.4%)
- Intoxicated driver (1.6%)

Vehicle factors:

- Tyre burst prior to crash (65.5%)
- Faulty steering (25%)
- Faulty brakes (12.5%)

Road factors:

- Sharp bend (33.3%)
- Poor condition of road surface (33.3%)
- Poor visibility (16.7%)
- Road surface slippery/wet (16.7%)

11. Severity of Fatal Crashes over Easter

The severity, or the average number of fatalities per fatal crash per Province over Easter 2009, in comparison with Easter 2008, is shown in the table below.

Severity of Crashes per Province (Av no. of fatalities/crash) over Easter										
Year	GA	KZ	WC	EC	FS	MP	NW	LI	NC	RSA
Year	1.158	1.271	1.375	1.400	1.077	1.840	1.333	1.464	1.000	1.356
2007	0.929	1.194	0.818	1.000	2.200	1.158	1.045	1.207	1.000	1.139
change	-0.229	-0.077	-0.557	-0.400	1.123	-0.682	-0.288	-0.257	0.000	-0.217
% change	-19.81	-6.08	-40.50	-28.57	104.29	-37.07	-21.59	-17.58	0.00	-16.03

The information in the table above shows a decrease of 0,217 (16,03% from an average of 1,356 fatalities per crash in 2008 to an average of 1,139 fatalities per crash over Easter 2009. On a percentage basis the biggest increase was recorded in the Free State where the severity increased by 1,123 (104,29%) from 1,077 to 2,200.

12. Law Enforcement

The RTMC, with the cooperation and participation of the various provincial and metropolitan road traffic law enforcement authorities, developed a so-called Rolling Enforcement Plan. This plan is year-round and already it is

making a huge difference in ensuring uniformity in the approach and conducting of law enforcement operations.

Over Easter 2009 the following significant interventions in this regard were made:

- 776 arrests were made for drunken driving with KwaZulu-Natal accounting for 424, Nelson Mandela Metro for 108, Johannesburg Metro for 99, Gauteng province for 65 and Western Cape for 71.
- 61 arrests were also made for excessive speed.
- And 36 for reckless and negligent driving.

***A road crash is someone's fault –
Don't let it be yours***

