



# **BENCHMARKING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY**

**MARCH QUARTER 2020**



Australian  
Automobile  
Association

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## Key changes

# Key changes since December 2019 report

In the 12 months to March 2020, the number of road fatalities remained relatively unchanged, with 1,154 deaths compared to 1,161 deaths in the 12 months to March 2019.

Road fatalities decreased by 4.0 per cent from the December 2019 quarter to the March 2020 quarter.

The data still indicate that Australia is not on track to achieve either the NRSS target for reduction in fatalities or the targeted reductions in serious injuries.

## Analytical key

### Green

- On track to meet or exceed NRSS target. The reduction in road crash fatalities is equal to or greater than the rate required to achieve NRSS target.

### Amber

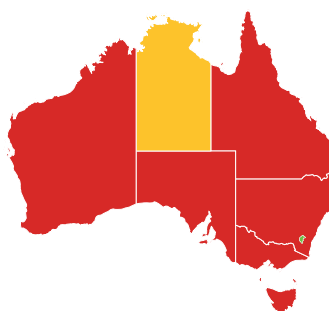
- Currently ahead of (notional) target but a faster rate of improvement is required to achieve NRSS target by 2020.

### Red

- Road crash fatalities are above the notional NRSS target.

## Current national status

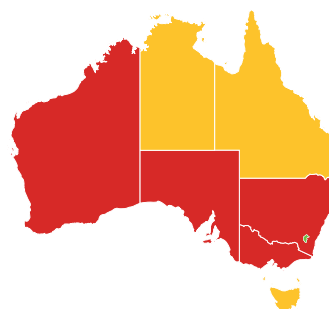
**Red**



NSW	Red
VIC	Red
QLD	Red
SA	Red
WA	Red
TAS	Red
NT	Amber
ACT	Green

## Previous national status

**Red**



NSW	Red
VIC	Red
QLD	Amber
SA	Red
WA	Red
TAS	Amber
NT	Amber
ACT	Green

## User groups

Previous

Current

User groups	Previous	Current
Drivers	Red	Red
Passengers	Green	Green
Pedestrians	Red	Red
Motorcyclists	Red	Red
Cyclists	Red	Red

Note: The data used to produce this information were sourced from the Australian Road Deaths Database: [https://www.bitre.gov.au/statistics/safety/fatal\\_road\\_crash\\_database](https://www.bitre.gov.au/statistics/safety/fatal_road_crash_database), accessed on 14 April 2020; and Road Deaths Australia March 2020 monthly bulletin ISSN 1449-1168. Data on severe injuries were obtained from the Australian Trauma Registry (ATR).

## Foreword

# Safety Strategy at Standstill

The AAA's first Road Safety Benchmarking report measuring 2020 shows there was relatively no change in the nation's road toll for the 12 months to March, compared with the corresponding period in the previous year. In the 12 months to March 2020, there were 1,154 fatalities on our roads compared to 1,161 fatalities in the 12 months to March 2019.

This report covers the period that immediately precedes the height of COVID-19 travel restrictions in Australia. It confirms that immediately prior to the national lockdown, progress towards achieving the National Road Safety Strategy targets to reduce deaths and trauma had come to a virtual standstill. The Commonwealth and all State and Territory governments committed to reducing the road toll and injury rates by at least 30% by the end of this year.

As at March 2020, prior to the COVID-19 travel restrictions, not a single state was on track to meet that target. Worse still, some states have recorded serious increases, with the road toll in South Australia soaring by 27.5%, in Tasmania by 23.3%, and Victoria by 11.5%.

While this report confirms the worrying reality that the nation's road toll is relatively unchanged over the past year, it does indicate that severe injuries have declined marginally. In analysing that data however, it is important to note that the trauma centres reporting severe injuries have changed since March 2018. As a result, the data does not allow for accurate direct comparisons.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments have demonstrated what can be achieved when there is cooperation and a laser-focus on tackling serious health issues.

Governments have proven that consistent data can be collected and reported in real time; that the success of public health campaigns can be instantly changed, nuanced or targeted depending on what the health data is showing; and that Australians themselves will readily change their practices when governments demonstrate and communicate an urgency. By contrast, in the almost ten years since governments collectively committed to road safety targets, many are still not even measured.

There are great learnings from the collective response of governments to COVID-19, which the AAA will lobby to ensure are adopted as part of road safety responses going forward. These learnings give real hope for the next National Road Safety Strategy to take effect from next year.

Lives depend on it.



**Michael Bradley**

Managing Director  
Australian Automobile Association



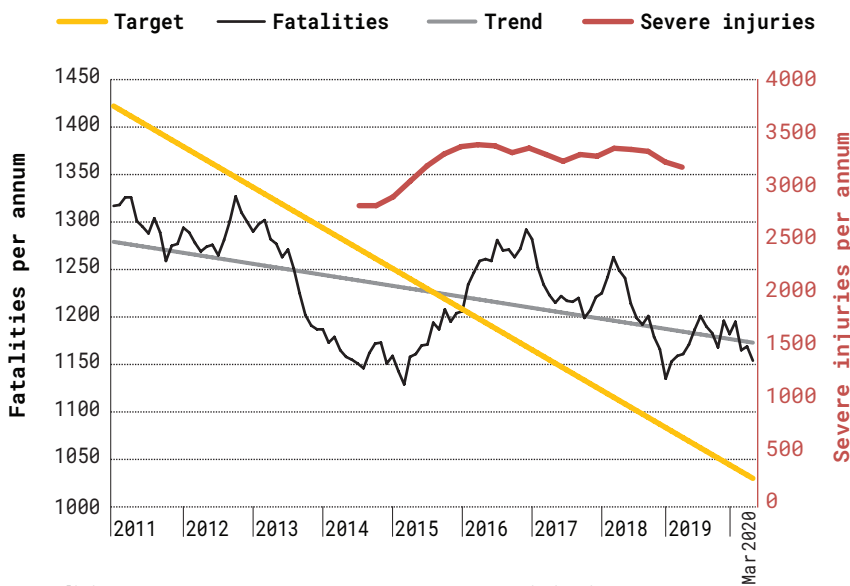
ROAD SUBJECT TO  
FLOODING  
INDICATORS SHOW DEPTH

Section One

# National overview

## National (Australia) fatalities and severe injuries per annum

Red



As of March 2020, fatalities have reduced by 19.1 per cent against the National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS) baseline.

The Strategy aims to reduce road fatalities and serious injuries by at least 30 per cent by 2020.

Compared with 2011, when the strategy began, the 12-month road toll has decreased by only 14.7 per cent.

### Fatalities

There were 286 fatalities in the quarter ending March 2020; this was 4.0 per cent lower than the 298 deaths recorded in the previous quarter.

In the 12 months ended March 2020, there were 1,154 deaths on Australian roads.

This was a 0.6 per cent decrease from the 1,161 road deaths in the 12 months ended March 2019.

### Severe injuries

The Benchmarking Report also includes data on severe injuries from on-road crashes. Severe injuries are a subset of serious injuries. The Australian Trauma Registry (ATR) provides national injury statistics to the AAA. The number of reported severe injuries in the 12 months to March 2019 was 3,184.

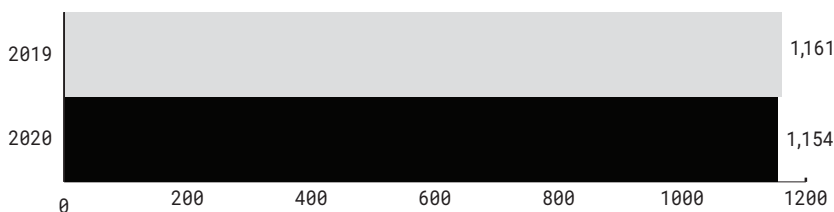
The ATR notes that variations in data may be due to improved data completeness and quality, and this must be considered when interpreting the data.

Annual figures for severe injuries between the July 2015 and March 2018

quarters are directly comparable as the number of reporting trauma sites was consistent for that period. One site has been unable to submit data since June quarter 2018, while another commenced reporting in December quarter 2018, which affected overall numbers for those quarters.

Data quality is consistent across all quarters with the same quality checks applied. Numbers may change slightly for the most recent quarters as sites identify further patients for inclusion/exclusion in future data submissions to the ATR.

## Comparative performance: Road fatalities in the past 12 months



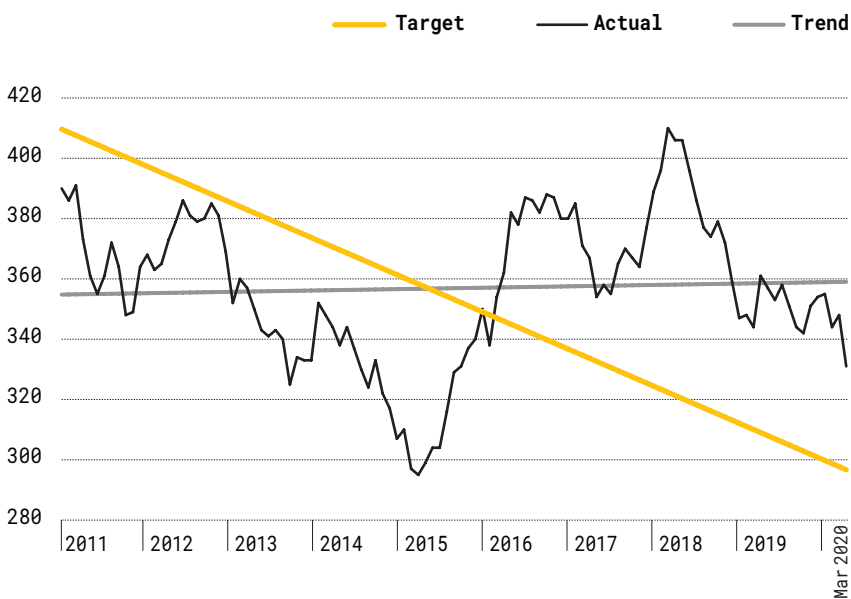
The national road toll for the 12 months ending March 2020 was 0.6 per cent lower than in the previous corresponding period.

## Section Two

# Analysis: States and territories

### New South Wales fatalities per annum

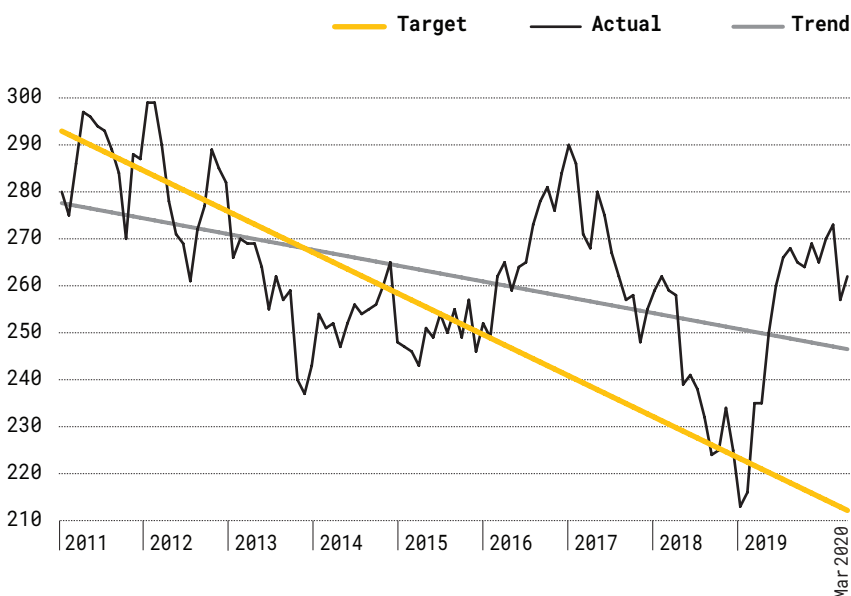
Red



- In the 12 months to March 2020, 331 people died on NSW roads, compared to 361 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 8.3 per cent.

### Victoria fatalities per annum

Red



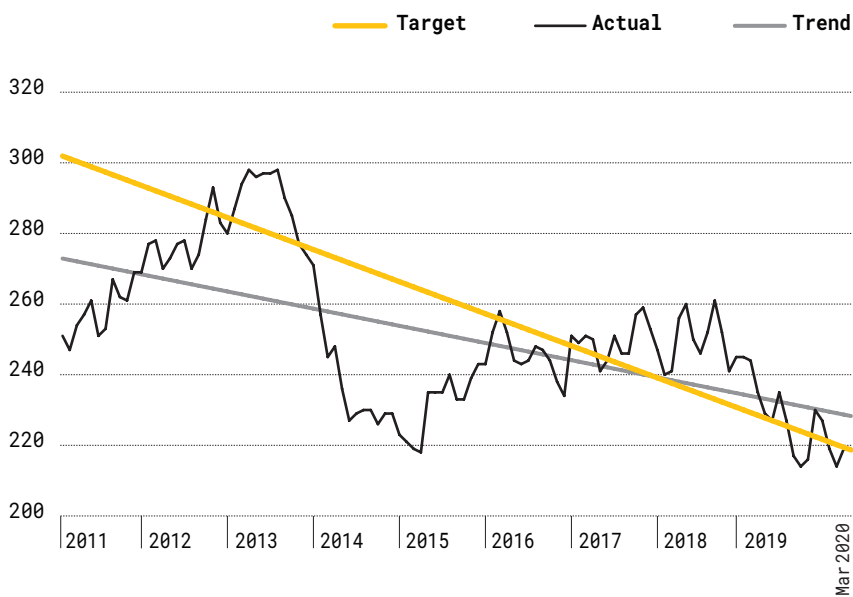
- In the 12 months to March 2020, 262 people died on Victorian roads, compared to 235 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 11.5 per cent.



## Section Two

### Queensland fatalities per annum

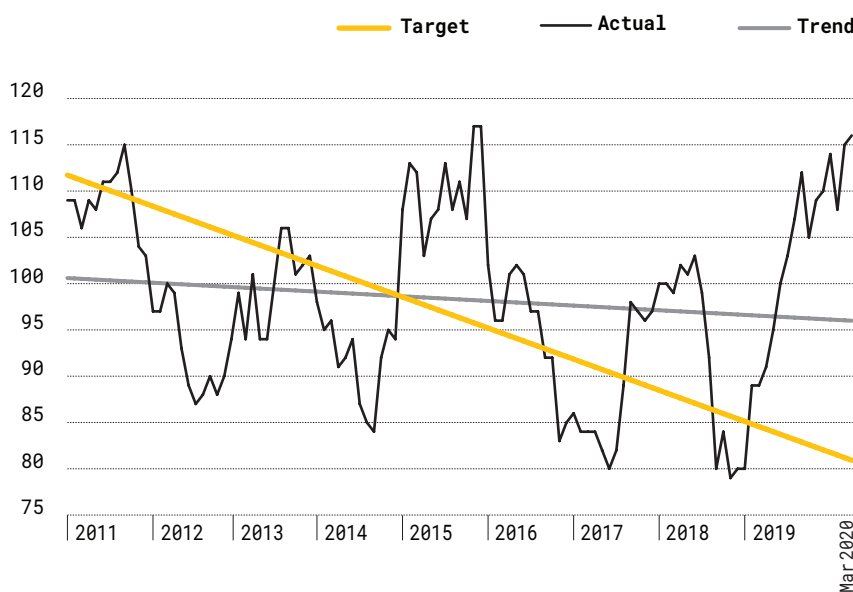
Red



- In the 12 months to March 2020, 219 people died on Queensland roads, down from 229 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 4.4 per cent.

### South Australia fatalities per annum

Red



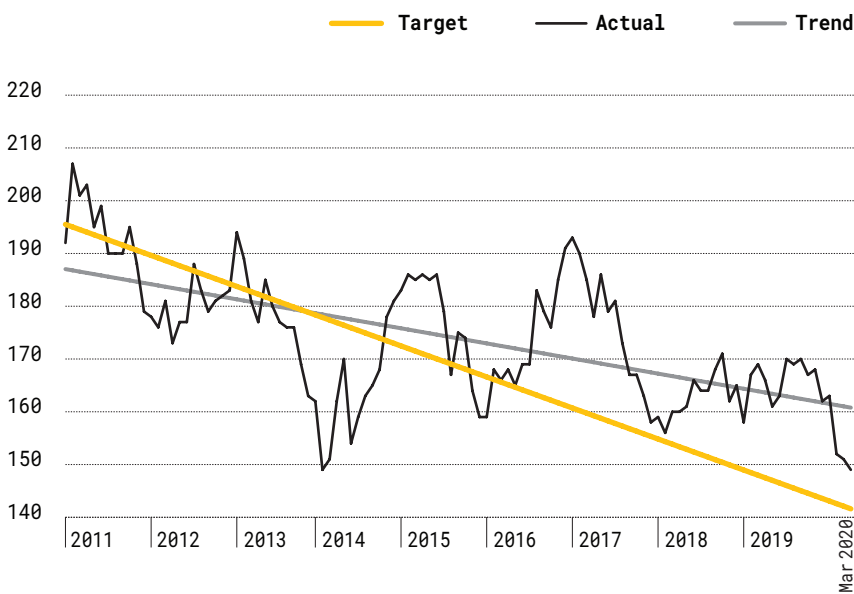
- In the 12 months to March 2020, 116 people died on South Australian roads, compared to 91 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 27.5 per cent.

## Section Two

# Analysis: States and territories

### Western Australia fatalities per annum

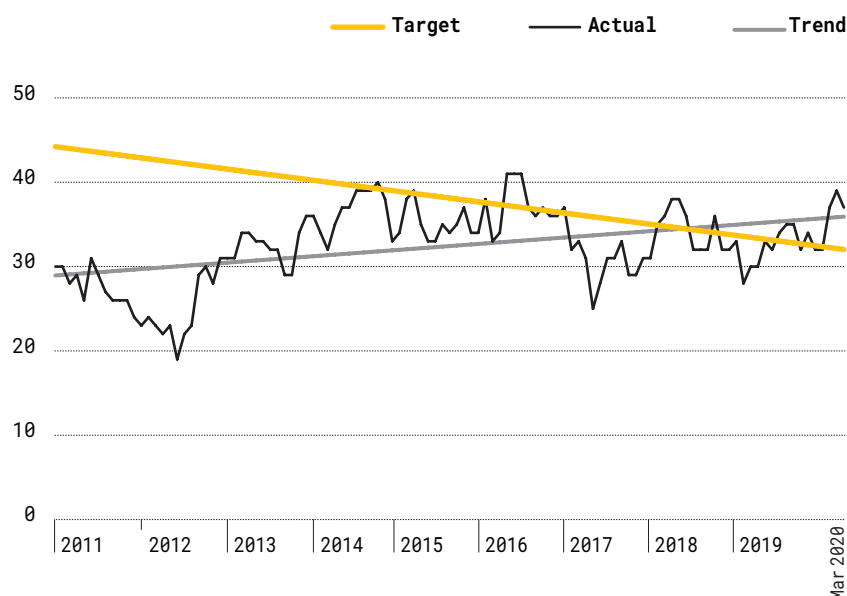
Red



- In the 12 months to March 2020, 149 people died on Western Australian roads, compared to 166 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 10.2 per cent.

### Tasmania fatalities per annum

Red

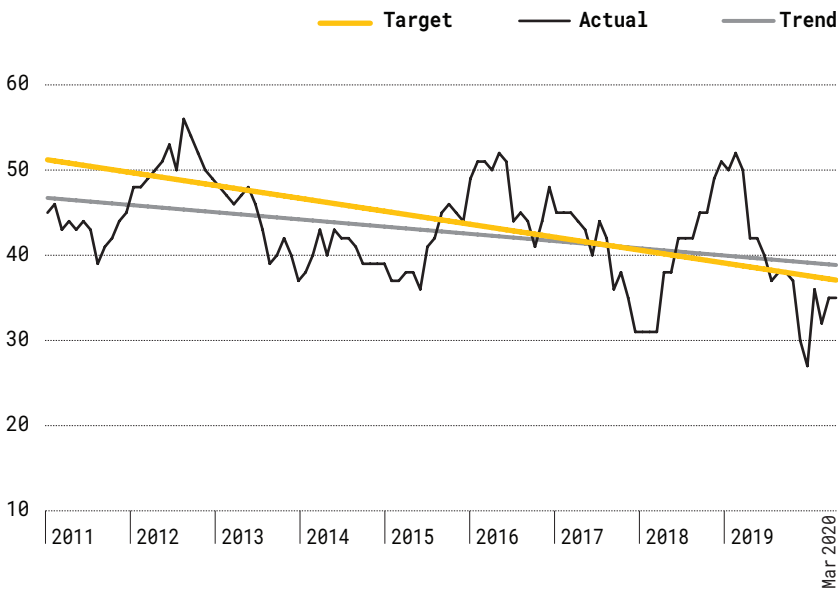


- In the 12 months to March 2020, 37 people died on Tasmanian roads, compared to 30 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 23.3 per cent.

## Section Two

### Northern Territory fatalities per annum

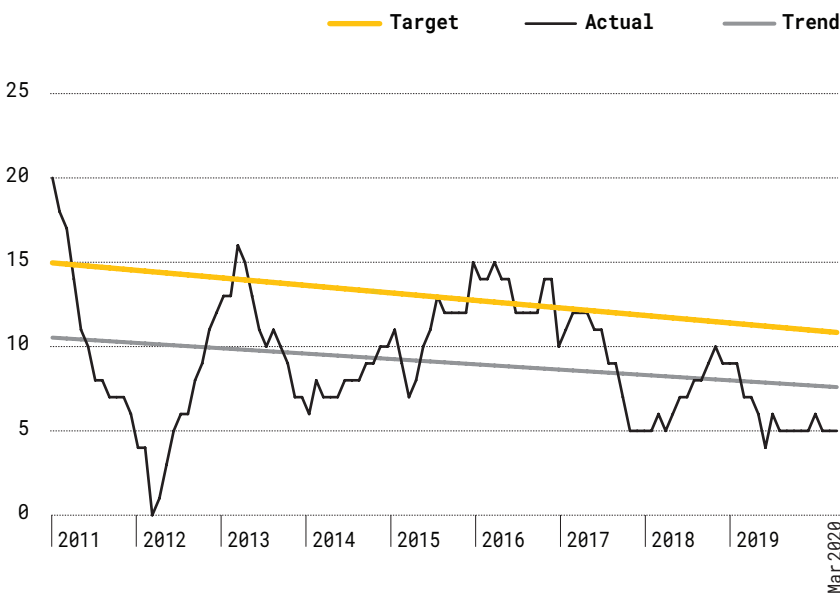
Amber



- In the 12 months to March 2020, 35 people died on Northern Territory roads, compared to 42 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 16.7 per cent.

### Australian Capital Territory fatalities per annum

Green



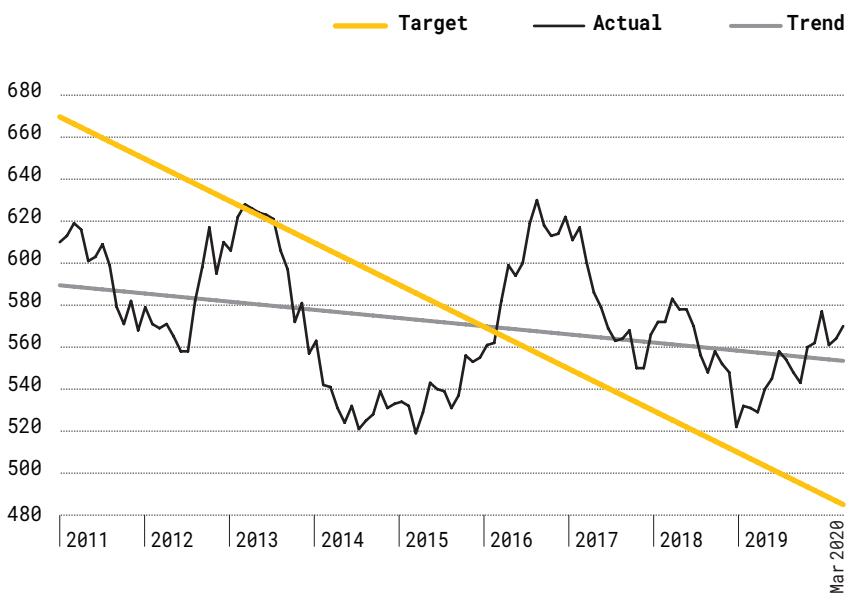
- In the 12 months to March 2020, 5 people died on ACT roads compared to 7 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 28.6 per cent.

## Section Three

# Analysis: Road user groups

### Drivers fatalities per annum

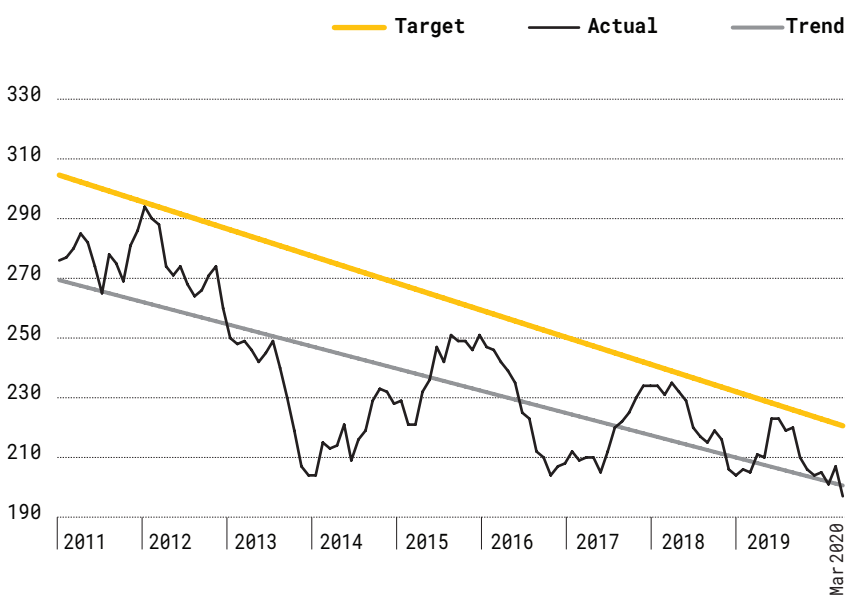
Red



- In the 12 months to March 2020, 570 drivers died on Australian roads, compared to 529 deaths in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 7.8 per cent.

### Passengers fatalities per annum

Green

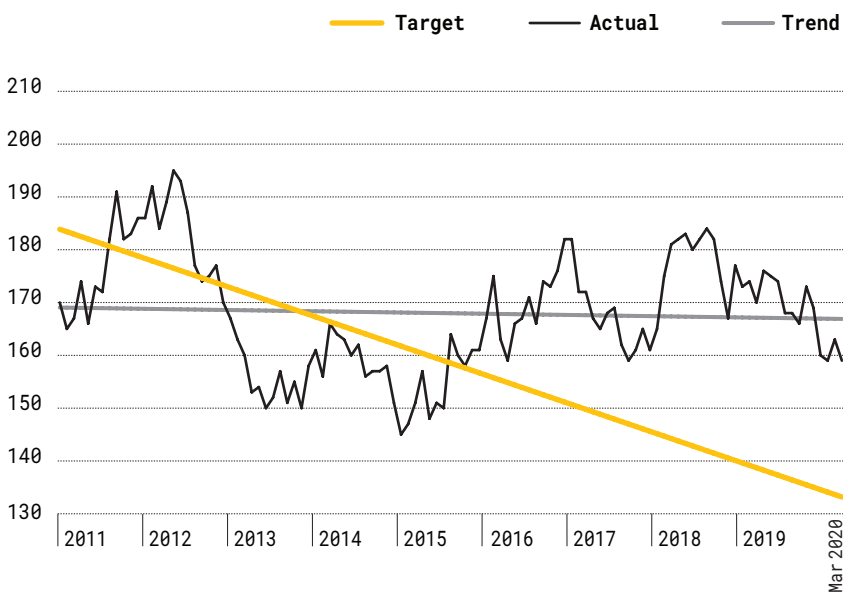


- In the 12 months to March 2020, 197 passengers died on Australian roads, compared to 211 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 6.6 per cent.

## Section Three

### Pedestrians fatalities per annum

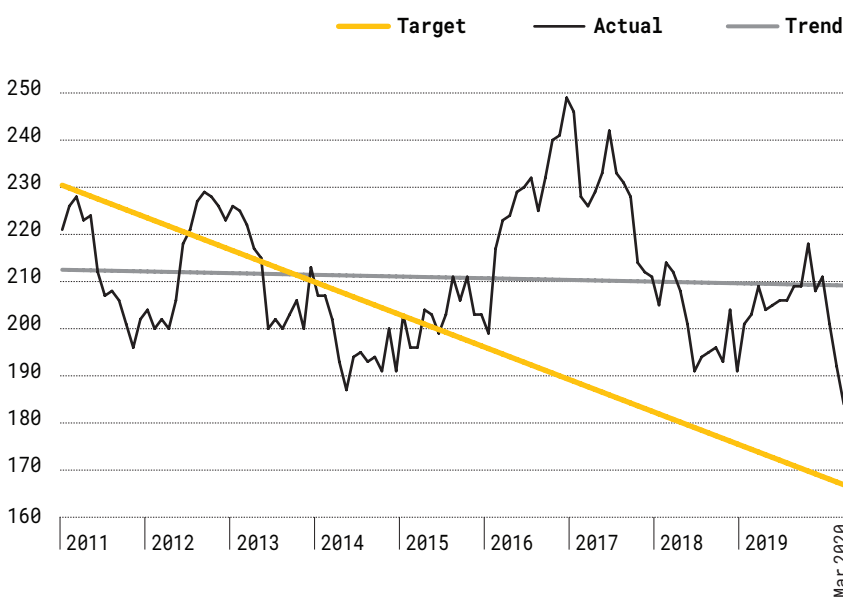
Red



- In the 12 months to March 2020, 159 pedestrians died on Australian roads, compared to 170 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 6.5 per cent.

### Motorcyclists fatalities per annum

Red



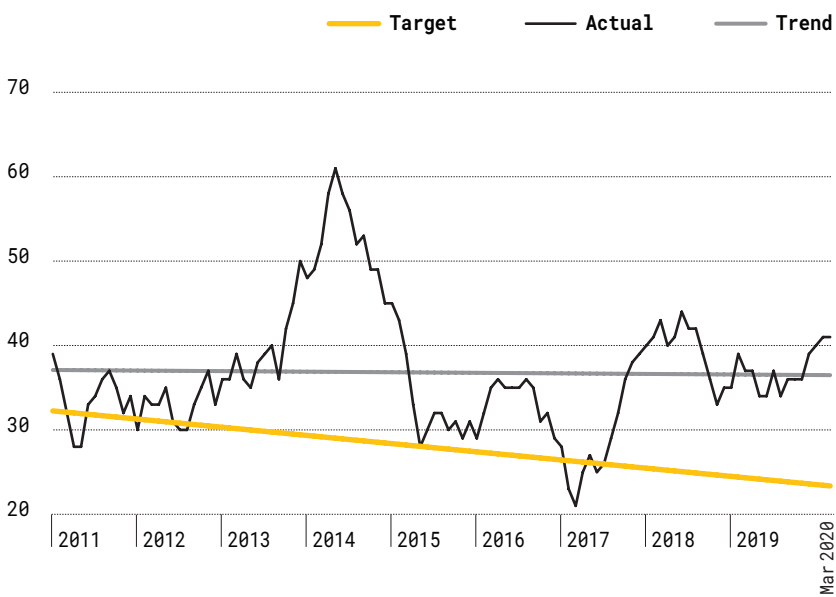
- In the 12 months to March 2020, 184 motorcyclists died on Australian roads, compared to 209 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is a decrease of 12.0 per cent.

## Section Three

# Analysis: Road user groups

### Cyclists fatalities per annum

Red

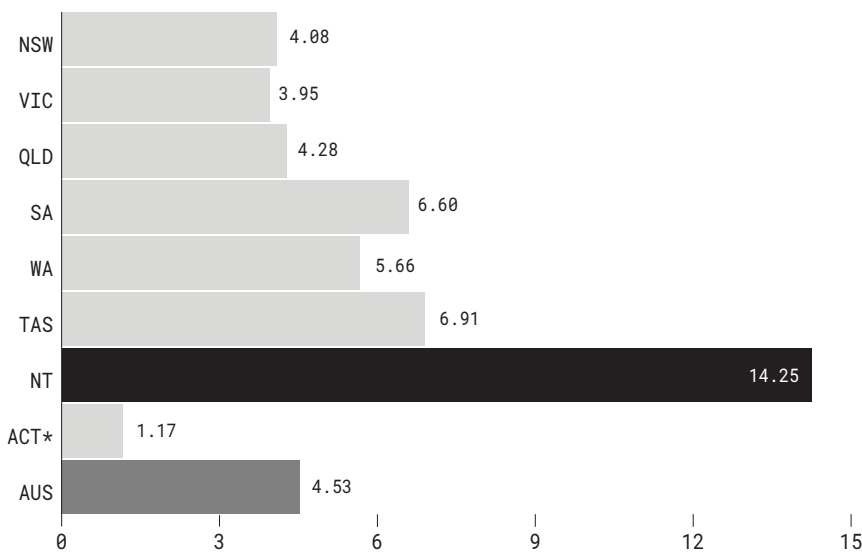


- In the 12 months to March 2020, 41 cyclists died on Australian roads, compared to 37 in the previous corresponding period.
- This is an increase of 10.8 per cent.

## Section Four

# Analysis: Road deaths by population

### Annual road deaths per 100,000 population



The National Road Safety Strategy does not include any fatality rate targets based on deaths per head of population in different jurisdictions. But fatality rates are still useful for determining priority areas. The data show that South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory have more road deaths per head of population than the national average.

# Analysis: Potential lives saved

	Current number of fatalities	Current fatality rate per 100,000 population	Number of fatalities at 3.95 per 100,000 population	Potential lives saved*
NSW	331	4.08	320	11
VIC	262	3.95	262	0
QLD	219	4.28	202	17
SA	116	6.60	69	47
WA	149	5.66	104	45
TAS	37	6.91	21	16
NT	35	14.25	10	25
ACT*	5	1.17	5	0
National	1,154	4.53	994	160

If the other jurisdictions matched the Victorian fatality rate of 3.95 per 100,000 population, 160 lives could have been saved across Australia in the 12 months to March:

- 11 in New South Wales
- 17 in Queensland
- 47 in South Australia
- 45 in Western Australia
- 16 in Tasmania
- 25 in the Northern Territory.

\* In this scenario, any jurisdiction with a rate already lower than Victoria's (3.95) would not reduce its fatality rate.

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