

## **SHOCKING ROAD FATALITY FIGURES REVEAL A MORE TRAGIC PROBLEM**

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The shocking road fatality figures for the festive season reveal only a small part of a bigger and more tragic problem.

The 1 714 deaths in December and part of January is tragic but we should also take into account the more than 12 000 people who died on the roads in the rest of the year. We need to focus on the whole disaster and not just the festive season.

One of the problems was that the Road Traffic Management Corporation has not published annual road fatality figures since 2011 when the number was given as 13 947 despite many appeals to do so.

Since then things have got worse on our roads not better. If we take increasing festive season figures as a guide, then annual fatalities were now probably more than 15 000 but even this may be short of the real number.

When Africa Check investigated the problem they found that under reporting was likely and the figure could be 20 per cent higher. One of the reasons for this is that not all road injury cases are followed up and many more may die in hospital.

The first step in dealing with any problem is to get accurate information and, clearly, the Road Traffic Management Corporation is not doing this. Figures were available for 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 and then they stopped.

This is unacceptable. We urge Transport Minister Dipuo Peters to crack the whip and get the RTMC to do its job. Without this information we will never get to grips with the problem.

The Minister should also compare the death rate on our roads with road fatality rates in other countries. The best way to do this was to look at fatality rates per 100 000 cars on the road. In the European countries there were between 4.5 and seven deaths per 100 000 cars per year. The figure for South Africa (based on the 2011 figures) was a shocking 134.

This means motorists and their passengers are 20 times more likely to die on our roads than motorists on Europe's roads. Clearly, this is not acceptable and urgent action is called for.



**CAPE CHAMBER**  
OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

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