

Road deaths over the holiday period | Frequently asked questions

When does the official Christmas holiday period start?

- The Christmas holiday period starts at 4pm Wednesday 24 December and runs until 6am on Monday 5th January 2026.

Where do the holiday period road fatality figures come from?

- Holiday period road fatality figures are sourced from NZ Police fatal crash notifications, which are completed after every fatal crash.
- These reports include preliminary details of the incident, such as location, time, and a brief description of the crash.

Why might the road fatality number on the Ministry's website differ from what's reported in the media?

- Our website updates the road fatality numbers automatically every 6 hours, using the NZ Police notifications received. There can be a delay between when a crash happens, when the Police send the data via email and when our website updates.
- A death may have been excluded from the official road fatality numbers for reasons such as the death occurring off a public road or caused by a medical issue, like a heart attack.
- The Ministry website applies automated rules to decide whether a death is included or excluded from the official numbers. These decisions may be manually changed later subject to further information.

Why is the fatality data provisional?

- The fatality data is provisional and may change based on further information or Coronial review.

Why would a crash be excluded from the road fatality statistics?

A crash may not be counted as a road fatality for several reasons, including:

- It did not occur on a public road (for example, on a race track or farm paddock).
- The death wasn't caused by injuries from the crash (for example, if the coroner finds the driver died from a medical event such as a heart attack rather than crash-related injuries).

- The death resulted from suicide or homicide.
- No motor vehicle was involved, for example an e-scooter only crash would be excluded.
- The person died more than 30 days after the crash.

These criteria support consistent reporting, accurate trend analysis and contribute towards evaluation of road safety policies over time.

How can I find the current road fatality number for this holiday period?

- For the current holiday fatality figures go to: www.transport.govt.nz/statistics-and-insights/safety-road-deaths/holiday-periods/
- For more detailed information on holiday fatalities, go to the 'Daily updated provisional road deaths' page, choose the 'All data' tab and filter by 'Holiday type':
<https://www.transport.govt.nz/statistics-and-insights/safety-road-deaths/year-to-date-road-deaths/>
- For historical annual road fatality information go to: www.transport.govt.nz/statistics-and-insights/safety-road-deaths/death-on-nz-roads-since-1921/

How do I find out the official holiday period dates?

- For details of when the official holiday periods start and end go to:
<https://www.transport.govt.nz/statistics-and-insights/safety-road-deaths/holiday-periods/>

What's the Ministry's role in recording the road fatality data?

- The Ministry of Transport is the lead advisor to the Government for road safety policy and we publish official road safety statistics. We work closely with Police, NZTA and ACC to advise Ministers. Agencies use the data collected by Police in the crash analysis system to inform road safety policies, monitor trends, and support future planning.