

## SAFETY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 4

### PERCENTAGE OF SEATBELT COMPLIANCE



Apr 2025

Safety Performance Indicator (SPI) 4 measures the percentage of vehicle occupants who use a seatbelt.

#### WHY USING SEATBELTS LEGALLY IS IMPORTANT

Seatbelts do not stop a crash from occurring but do significantly reduce the likelihood of injury for when a crash does occur.

In fact, Austroads (2021) found that research into seatbelt effectiveness in light vehicles has shown that there could be a 45 to 50 per cent reduction in the risk of fatal injuries for individuals seated in the front of a vehicle and a 25 per cent reduction for those seated in the rear of the vehicle if a seatbelt is worn/worn correctly.

Front of vehicle seatbelt use =  
**45-50% reduction  
in fatal injury risk**



Rear of vehicle seatbelt use =  
**25% reduction in  
fatal injury risk**



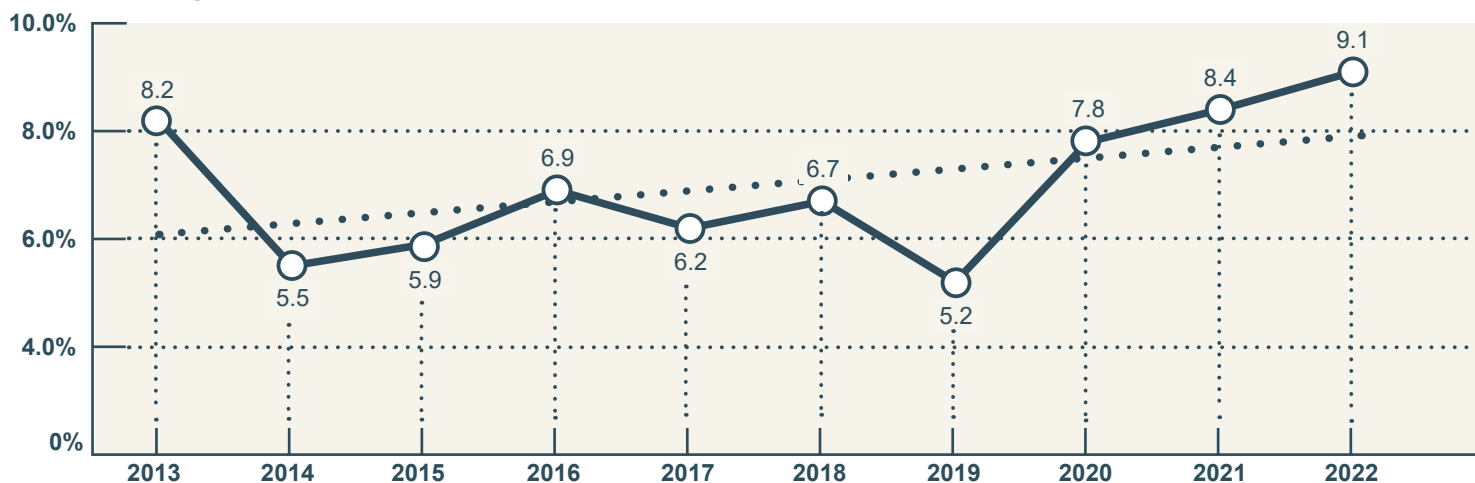
We know that on average each year over 200 people are involved in crashes while not wearing a seatbelt.

We also know that between 2013 - 2023 a total of 2,126 people were not wearing their seatbelt when they were involved in a crash on our roads. This is an average of 2.1 per cent of total casualty crashes where we know a seatbelt was or was not worn (in some crashes it is not possible to be certain if a seatbelt was or was not worn).

In the same period (2013 – 2023) a total of 207 people have been seriously injured or killed in crashes where we know that they were not wearing their seatbelt legally or properly, this is 8 per cent of all crashes involving a serious injury or death (where it is known if a seatbelt was worn or not).

An investigation of the crashes where seatbelts were not worn and the crash resulted in a death indicates that if a seatbelt had been worn and worn properly, that the crash outcome may have been much different in approximately half of the crashes, potentially avoiding death.

—○— Seatbelt not worn by vehicle occupants, as per cent of crashes resulting in serious injury or death



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HOW THIS INDICATOR IS MEASURED

This SPI measures compliance through an observational survey of a representative sample. The survey observed if vehicle occupants were wearing a seatbelt. Conditions for the representative sample and information collection were informed by best practice methodological guidance, including undertaking observational surveys at a range of locations and times.

PROGRESS ON COMPLIANCE

- The Tasmanian Government is committed to targeting seatbelt use compliance on Tasmanian roads.
- Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) technologies are utilised to detect illegal, improper seatbelt use on our roads.
  - The Road Safety Advisory Council (RSAC), supported by the Motor Accident Insurance Board (MAIB), undertake targeted campaigns to influence behaviour change promoting seatbelt use.

An observational survey of seatbelt use compliance in 2023 showed that most vehicle occupants observed were wearing a seatbelt (98.9%). Although this is a high percentage of compliance, the remaining 1.1 per cent (level of observed non-compliance) still equates to around 4,000 licensed Tasmanian drivers not complying with seatbelt laws.

As an example, this level of non-compliance this could mean that if someone were to observe the East Derwent Highway, Lindisfarne for an hour at 4pm on a typical day, of all the vehicles that pass by there could be approximately 18 vehicles passing by in the hour that may have a driver not complying with seatbelt laws.

WHAT DOES 100 PER CENT COMPLIANCE MEAN?

Increasing the level of compliance for proper and legal seatbelt use will help reduce the level of road trauma that is due to improper and illegal use of seatbelts

If Tasmania was to achieve 100 per cent compliance with legal and proper seatbelt use, then it may reduce the severity of 44 per cent of crashes where seatbelts were not worn correctly.

Based on crash data between 2013 to 2023, this may result, on average, 10 fewer people per year being seriously injury or killed in a crash. However, injuries may still result from crashes as seatbelts do not stop a crash from occurring in the first instance, they only help to lessen the severity of injuries.

Overall, individuals who do not wear seatbelts make up a small proportion of road users. However, they do make up a considerable proportion of fatalities and serious injuries. This is why increasing compliance with seatbelt laws is so important.

- The target direction for SPI 4 is an increasing level of compliance.
- Based on a sample in 2023 SPI 4 = 98.9 per cent of seatbelt compliance.