

Traffic policing

QPS road safety initiatives and road enforcement activities aim to reduce trauma on Queensland roads and create a safer environment. Initiatives include tougher vehicle impoundment laws, roadside drug driving detection, new technologies, congestion and speed management, and media campaigns.

The table below provides an overview of the QPS's performance against service standards from the *2012-2016 Strategic Plan* and *2012-13 Service Delivery Statement*.

Traffic policing	Notes	2011-12 Actual	2012-13 Target/Est.	2012-13 Actual
Rate (per 100 000 population) of road crash fatalities	1,2	6.15	5.90	6.44
Rate (per 100 000 population) of persons hospitalised following a crash	3	142.08	130	Not available
Other measures				
Number of vehicles monitored per offence by:				
- Speed cameras	4	269:1	200-300:1	315:1
- Red light cameras	5	5 133:1	3 500-5 500:1	4,860:1

Notes:

1. There are many factors which can cause or contribute to road crash fatalities. Key causal factors include drink and drug driving, fatigue, speeding, unrestrained occupants and distraction and inattention.
2. Data reported previously may differ from what is reported in this annual report due to settling and revised population figures.
3. The 2012-13 actual rate of persons hospitalised following a crash is not available at the time of reporting due to the time it takes to investigate and finalise crash information.
4. Excludes data for portable mobile speed cameras. These devices are aimed at a specific vehicle and not all vehicles passing that location are monitored.
5. Offence rates for speed and red light detection cameras will vary due to a range of factors including road users becoming more familiar with the location of speed and red-light detection cameras through road safety advertising, results of enforcement, the popularity of in-car navigation aids with built in camera alerts and general community awareness and changes to enforcement practices.

Achievement highlights

The road toll for 2012 was 280, with 6.13 fatalities per 100 000 people. This was the third lowest fatality rate recorded in Queensland for a calendar year since accurate records began in July 1952.

In December 2012, the road safety education emphasis on the 'Fatal Four' was expanded to include driver distraction and inattention. The Fatal Four was speeding, drink/drug driving, seatbelts and fatigue.

The QPS's hoon hotline provides Queenslanders with an easy to remember central contact point to report drivers behaving in dangerous, reckless or anti-social ways on Queensland roads. Calls to 13HOON are answered at the Policelink Contact Centre. During 2012-13, 7 916 calls from the public were answered on this service. Also during 2012-13, an online option for hoon reporting began, which resulted in 4 380 further reports from the public.

In April 2013, the *Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012* was passed in Parliament. The new laws will cause offenders to have their cars impounded after their first serious hooning offence. A second offence within five years will lead to the offender's vehicle being forfeited. In 2012-13, 8 468 vehicles were impounded and 158 vehicles were forfeited, because their owners engaged in hooning behaviours.

In August, the *Criminal Law Amendment Bill 2012* increased penalties for motorists attempting to outrun police to a mandatory \$5 500 fine and two-year loss of license.

During 2012-13, 19 667 roadside blood or saliva tests were conducted resulting in 1 050 drivers testing positive for a relevant drug. This is a detection rate of one offender per 18 tests. Ninety-five repeat offenders were detected. The most commonly detected drug was

methylamphetamine. Drivers who test positive have their licence suspended for 24 hours to allow drugs to dissipate from their system. They face similar penalties in court to drink drivers.

Over 3.5 million random breath tests were conducted by the QPS during the 2012-13 financial year, resulting in the detection of approximately 25 036 drink driving offences.

In 2012-13, congestion on South East Queensland roads continued to be managed through the deployment of police officers to the Brisbane Metropolitan Transport Management Centre during peak travel times. Dedicated congestion management motorcycle patrols performed 6 798 hours, travelling 257 234 kilometres on major arterial roads in South East Queensland during peak travel periods.

Outside Brisbane, police continued to work in conjunction with regional Traffic Management Centres to help manage and divert traffic as required.

There are currently up to 60 operational digital red light cameras, which are rotated State wide through 147 approved red light camera sites. The number of offences per 1 000 vehicles has reduced more than 54% from 0.46 in 2004-05 to 0.21 in 2012-13, which reflects the deterrence value of road safety cameras at intersections.

Additionally, there are seven approved combined speed red light camera sites. The Ashgrove and Calamvale sites commenced operations during August 2011 and averaged 0.20 offences per 1 000 vehicles during 2012-13. The remaining five sites are expected to commence operations during July 2013.

The Mobile Speed Camera Program includes portable devices, marked and covert speed camera vehicles. This combination helps reduce speeding and improve community safety. The QPS deployed mobile speed cameras on 26 595 occasions for 89 710 hours in 2012-13.

Fixed speed cameras operated for approximately 121 624 hours in 2012-13, with an average of 1.26 offences per 1 000 vehicles. With the installation of a fixed camera, average vehicle speeds at camera sites reduce and compliance with posted speed limits increases, improving the safety of road users.

During 2012-13, three additional fixed speed camera sites began enforcing as part of the QPS commitment to road safety. Cameras commenced operations in July 2012 in the Airport Link M7 Tunnel, in January 2013 on the Nambour Connection Road, Woombye and in February 2013 on the Pacific Motorway, Gaven.

An average speed camera system monitors vehicles travelling north on the Bruce Highway between the Glass House Mountains and Landsborough. In 2012-13, the system averaged 0.59 offences per 1 000 vehicles.

In March 2013, the State Coroner released the findings of an inquest into two separate fatal traffic crashes involving wide load escorts. In his findings, the Coroner noted that the establishment of the Heavy Vehicle Road Operations Program Office was a positive move towards effectively managing wide load escorts. This office was established early in 2012 in partnership with the Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Rail and QR National (now known as Aurizon). The Coroner made recommendations relevant to the QPS about limiting wide loads, improving signage, increasing public awareness and reviewing the use of motorcycles as escort vehicles. The transport industry has been consulted on the recommendations and the QPS response is expected to be released later this year.

Future initiatives

All road policing responsibilities have been amalgamated into a new Road Policing Command (RPC). This will ensure the work of all Road Policing Units (formerly known as District Traffic Branches) across Queensland is coordinated to enable proactive targeting of those behaviours and places that research and intelligence demonstrate pose risk to the safety of road users. The RPC will also work closely with other commands and regions to stop crime using place and case management strategies. The RPC will support the Strategy and Business Review Command for policy relevant to the Command's responsibilities at a whole-of-Service, State and national level.

From 1 July speed tolerances will be reduced across all speed detection devices. These changes to speed tolerances will be incremental over time. They will be guided by evidence such as the road toll and public compliance with the speed limits. The level of speed tolerances will not be revealed, to avoid creating a de facto speed limit. The speed limit is the maximum. It is not a guide or a recommendation. If road users obey the speed limit, they won't receive a ticket. Speeding is a major contributor to the road toll and is a factor in about one in every five road deaths.

Also from 1 July, the speed camera locations will be published throughout Queensland via www.police.qld.gov.au.

A speed camera system will be installed during 2013-14 in the Legacy Way road corridor to reduce road trauma and improve road safety.

The Government is looking to improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the Camera Detected Offence Program. Alternative options to deliver the program are currently being considered, including outsourcing camera operations and infringement processing. Camera operations and infringement processing are currently delivered by the QPS. Projects Queensland has led the project, in consultation with the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the QPS.

In March 2012, the QPS started a trial of 12 mobile Automatic Number Plate Recognition devices. When the devices detect certain vehicles of interest, they provide 'alerts' to police who then intercept suspicious vehicles and take any necessary enforcement action. In the first 15 months of operation to 29 June 2013 the twelve trial devices monitored over 8.5 million vehicle number plates. This resulted in:

- 264 599 alerts to police of potential offences;
- 2 919 notices to appear;
- 10 920 traffic infringement notices; and
- 377 vehicles impounded under 'hoon' legislation.

The trial has been extended to March 2014.