

Austin Police Department

An Analysis of Traffic Fatalities 2016



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Research and Planning Unit
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Contents

Background 2

Overview 2

 Terminology 2

 Notes about the Data 3

 Sources 3

Notable 2016 Findings 4

Fatal Crashes Overall..... 5

Pedestrian Fatalities 12

 Incident Characteristics 12

 Contributing Factors 13

 Person Characteristics 14

Motorcycle Fatalities..... 15

 Incident Characteristics 15

 Contributing Factors 16

 Person Characteristics 17

Motor Vehicle Fatalities 19

 Incident Characteristics 19

 Contributing Factors 20

 Person Characteristics 22

Bicycle Fatalities 24

Map of 2016 Crash Locations..... 25

Background

This analysis was prepared to identify the characteristics of fatal crashes as well as of those people identified as at fault in the crash. This helps recognize patterns and factors leading to traffic fatalities. The primary audiences for this report are the Austin Police Department, Austin Transportation Department, Vision Zero and other organizations working with fatality data.

Overview

In 2016 there were a total of **77 traffic fatality crashes involving 79 fatalities.**

FATALITY TYPE	# OF FATAL CRASHES	# OF FATALITIES
Pedestrian	28	28
Motorcycle	13	13
Motor vehicle	34	36
Bicycle	2	2
TOTAL	77	79

Fatal Crashes Overall examines the characteristics of fatal crashes. When examining the fatalities by type (pedestrian, motorcycle, motor vehicle), we looked at both crash and person characteristics. The person characteristics are based on the person found to be at fault in the fatal crash, not necessarily the person who died. There were four incidents in which no one was determined as at fault.

Terminology

Prior involvement – Any contact with APD prior to the incident where the person had any role either in a General Offense report or Street Check in APD’s records management system.

Conviction – Any moving violation conviction showing on the driver’s license record.

Suspension – Any suspension showing on the driver’s license record which requires a person to refrain from driving.

Death of Offender (DOO) – The person killed committed the violation which caused the crash.

High-use Roadway – Also commonly referred to as “arterial streets”. They include non-highway thoroughfares in Austin such as Lamar, Parmer, Congress, Manchaca, etc.

Contributing Factor – An action or condition which may have facilitated the crash.

FTYROW – Failure to yield right of way

FTMACD – Failure to maintain assured clear distance

FTSRA – Failure to stop and render aid

Notes about the Data

- This report includes only those crashes investigated by APD. The data source is APD's record management system Versadex and is continuously being updated due to on-going investigations. The report represents information as of May 2017 and may change.
- Due to the long processing times for toxicology testing, suspected impairment statistics are based on the initial assessment of the detectives and the Medical Examiner.
- If the information provided is used outside the department, please note that the Austin Police Department cannot assume any liability for any decision(s) made or action taken or not taken by the recipient in reliance upon any information or data provided.

Sources

APD's Fatality Database; Versadex, Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD); City of Austin Population History; TxDOT Crash Query Tool; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) Encyclopedia.

Notable 2016 Findings

All Fatal Crashes

- The majority of crashes occurred on local streets or highways (42% each).
- Impairment was found in 57% of all fatal crashes.
- More than two-thirds of crashes (68%) involved Death of Offender.
- Twenty-nine percent of crashes involved criminal charges.

Pedestrian Fatal Crashes

- Nearly half (46%) of fatal pedestrian crashes occurred between the hours of 6 PM and midnight.
- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of fatal pedestrian crashes involved crossing when or where prohibited or failing to yield to a vehicle.
- More than half (54%) of fatal pedestrian crashes involved impairment.

Motorcycle Fatal Crashes

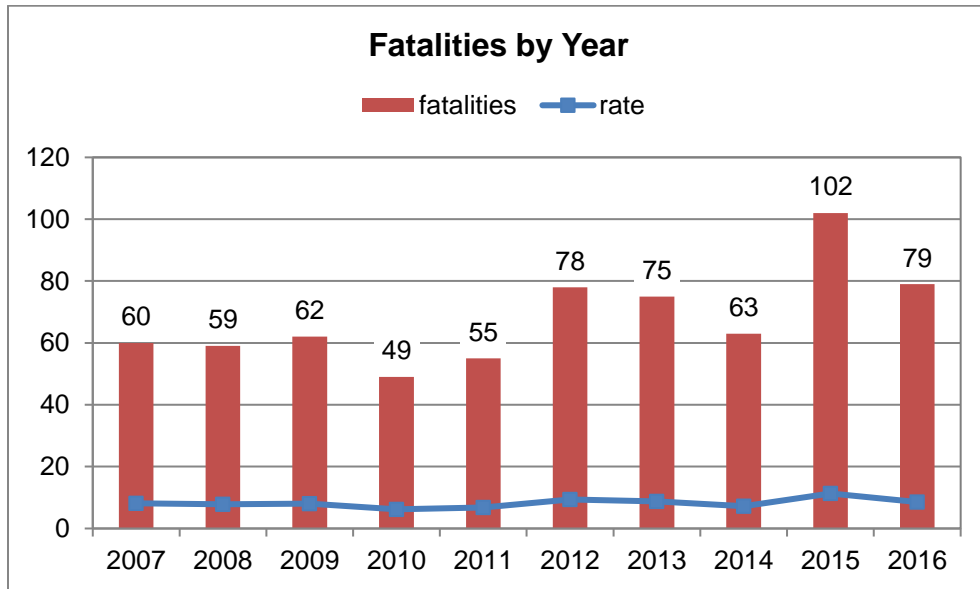
- Over half (54%) of the crashes occurred on local streets.
- Thirty-eight percent of crashes occurred on a Friday.
- Most crashes (54%) involved impairment.
- Nearly half (45%) of those at fault had either no valid driver's license or no motorcycle endorsement.

Motor Vehicle Fatal Crashes

- Nearly half (47%) of motor vehicle crashes occurred on a highway.
- More than half (59%) involved impairment.
- Speeding was involved in just over half (53%) of crashes.
- Twenty-two percent of those at fault had no valid license at the time of the crash.

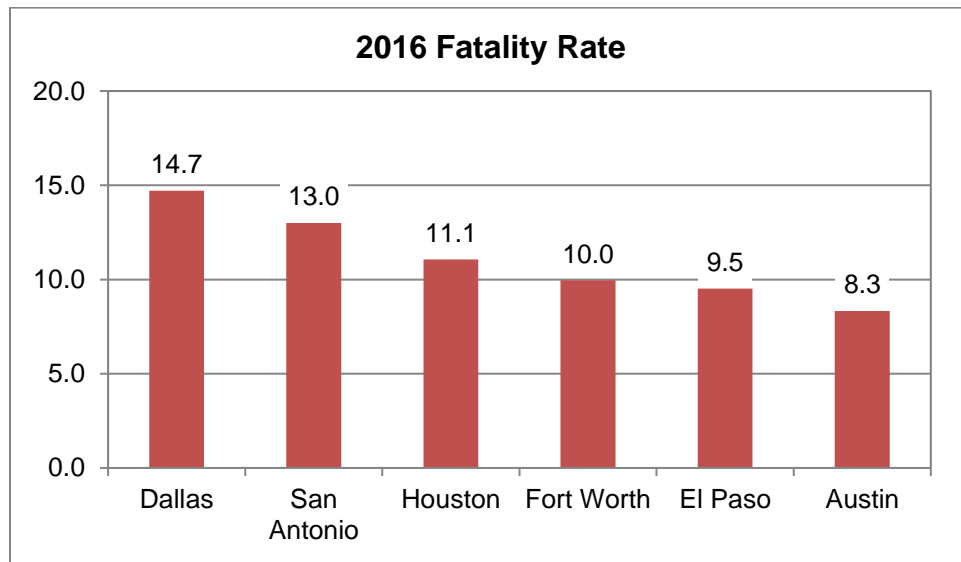
Fatal Crashes Overall

In 2016 there were 79 traffic fatalities in Austin. The average number of fatalities per year for the previous nine years was 67. Austin's rate for 2016 was 8.3 traffic fatalities per 100,000 people, down from 11.3 in 2015. According to the most recent data available, the US rate was 10.3 in 2014.



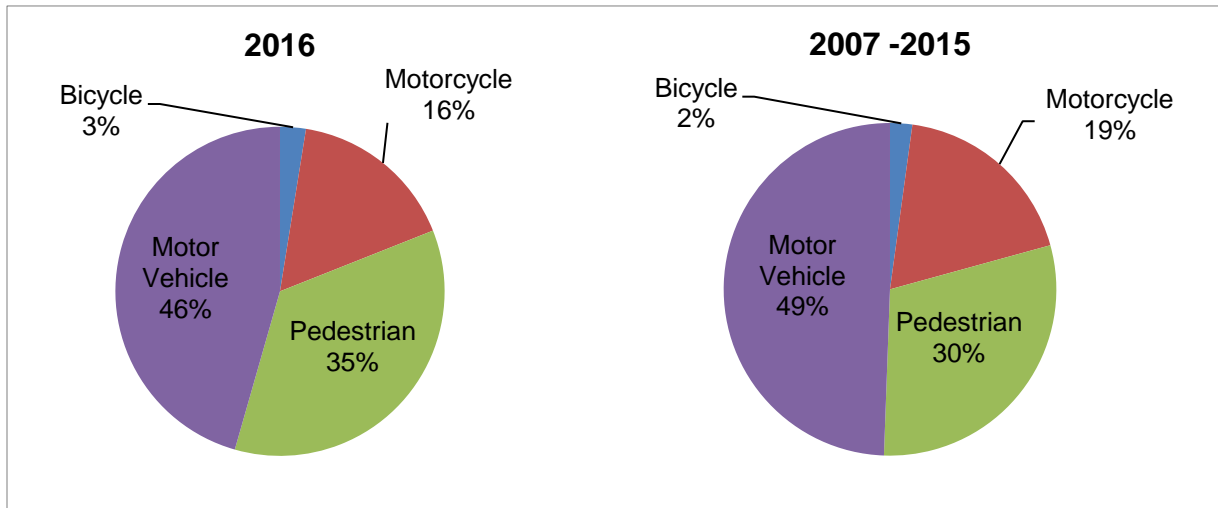
Rate by City

In comparison to other major Texas cities, Austin had the lowest fatality rate for 2016.



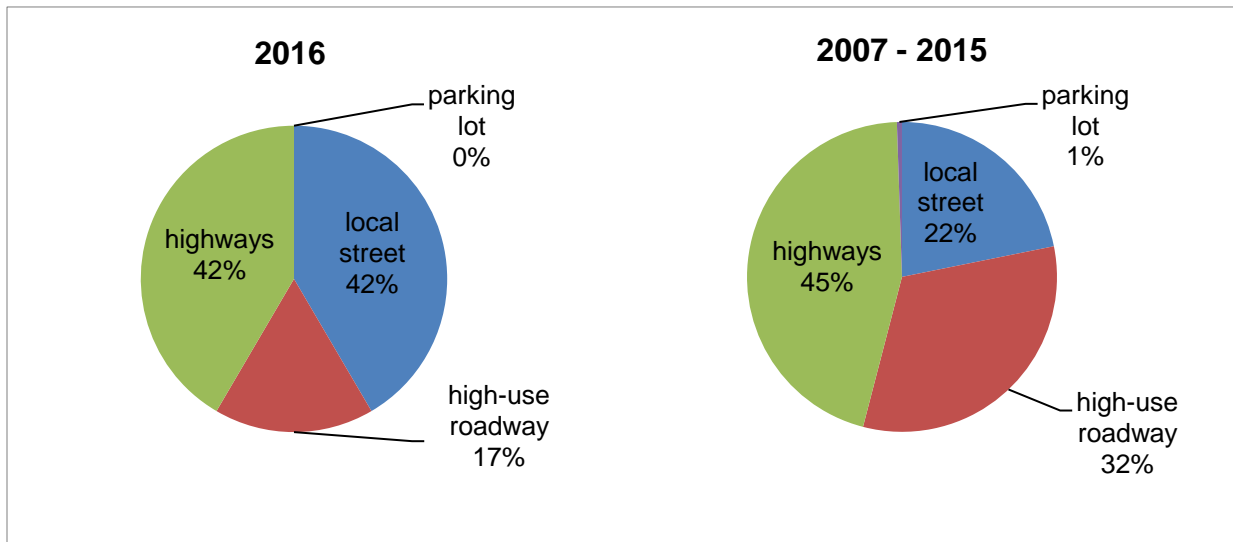
Fatality by Type

The average number of fatalities by type for 2007-2015 was fairly consistent with what we saw in 2016.



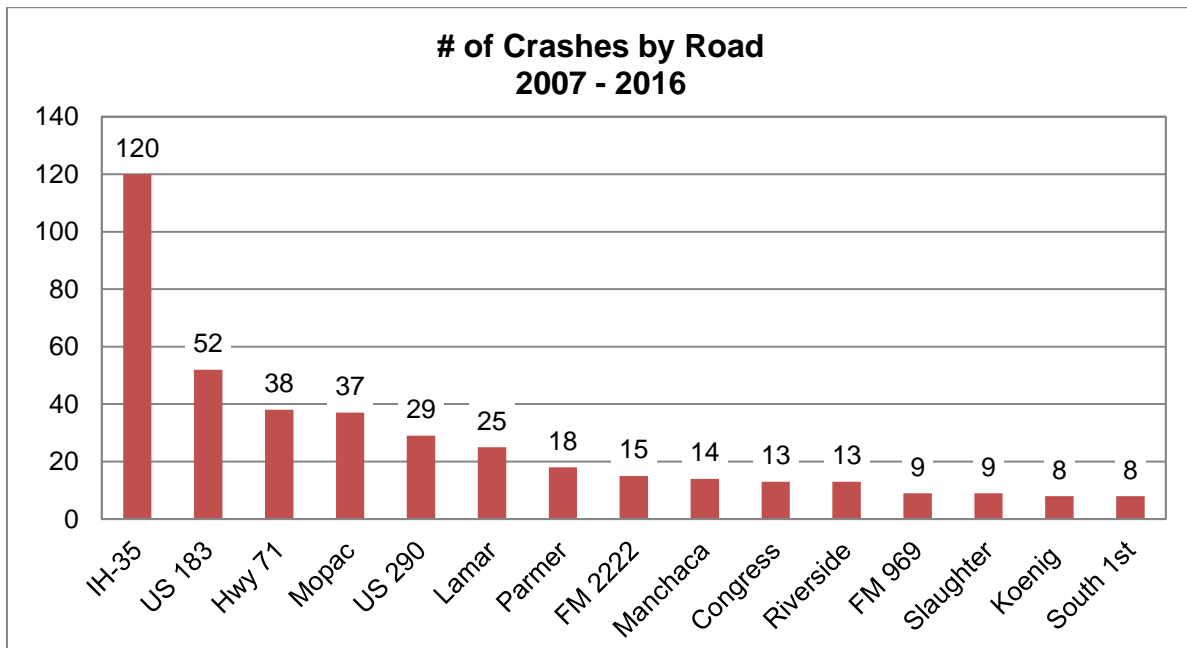
Roadway Type

In 2016 the majority of crashes (42% each) occurred on local streets or highways. For 2007-2015 the majority occurred on highways (45%) and local streets were less than a quarter (22%).



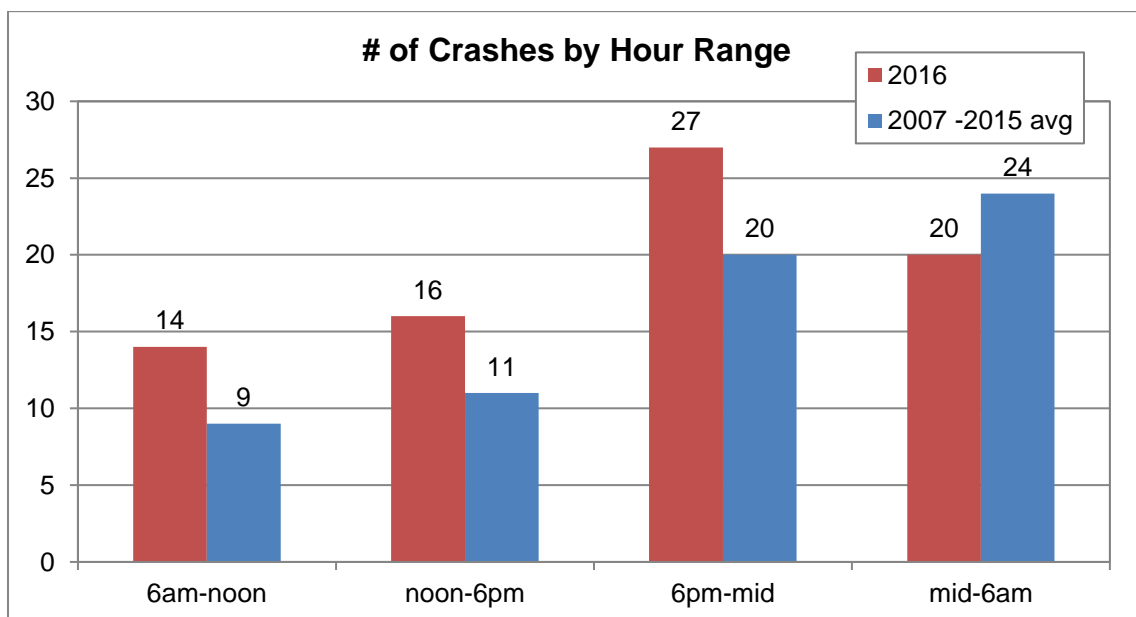
Location

Fifteen roads were identified as having the most fatal crashes for the years 2007-2016.

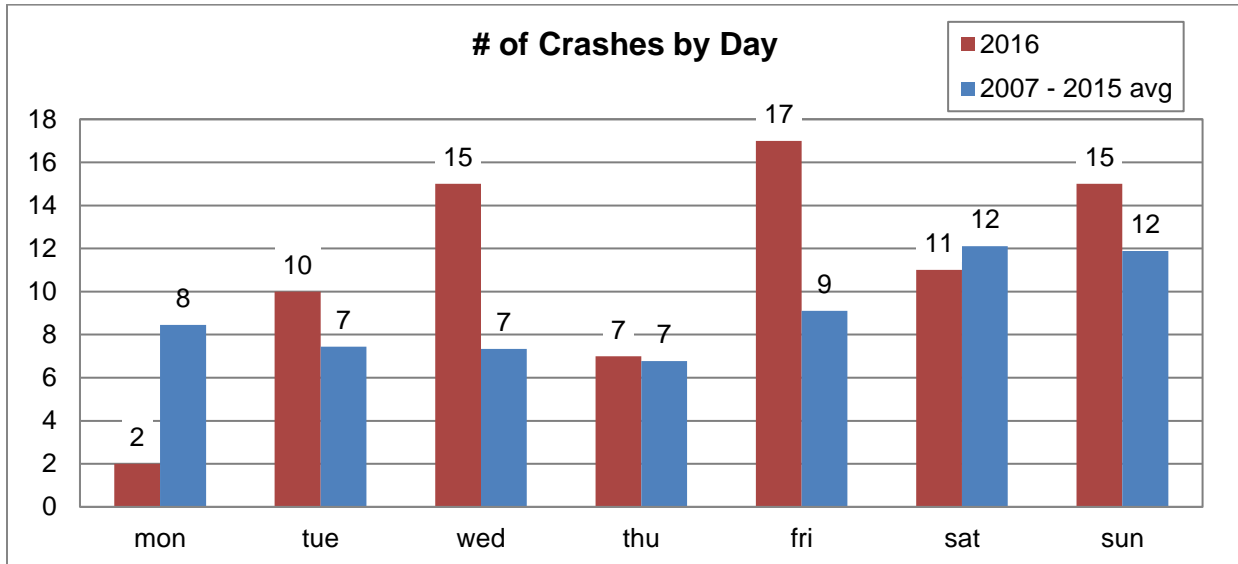


Time Period

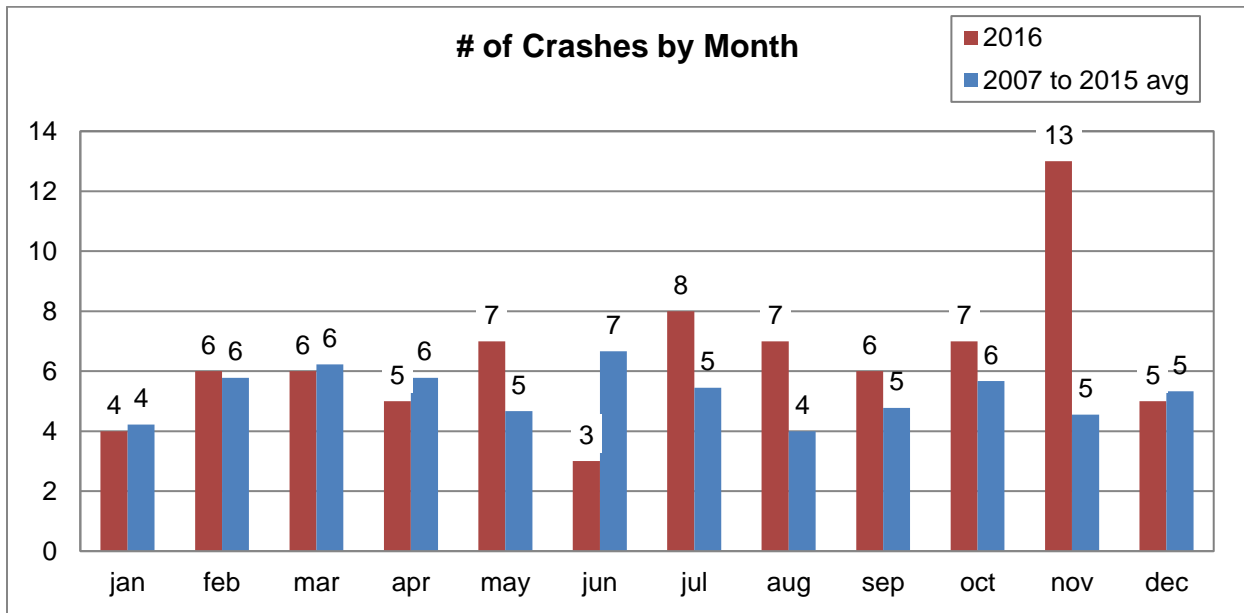
The hours between 6 PM and 6 AM continued to have the most fatal crashes.



On average, Monday through Thursday had the lowest number of fatal crashes.

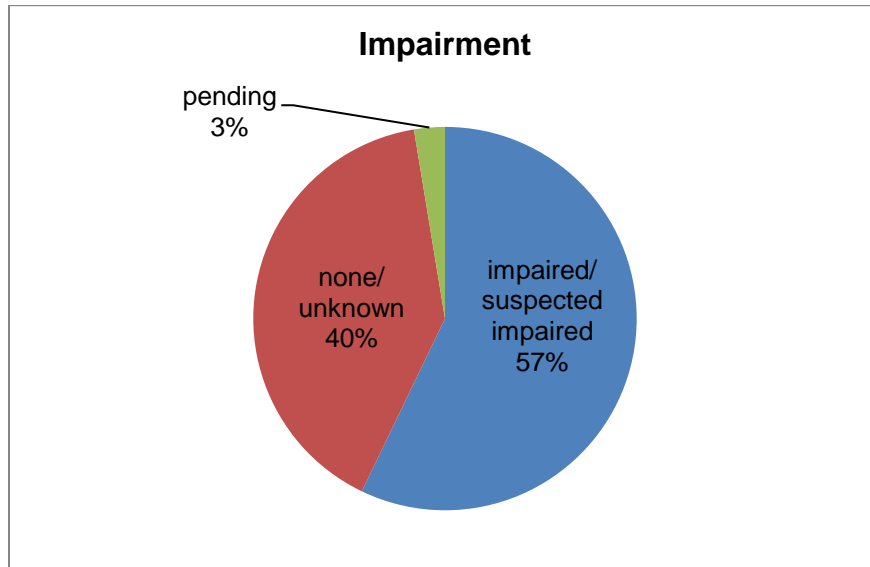


November was an unusually deadly month in 2016: Eight of the thirteen were fatal pedestrian crashes.



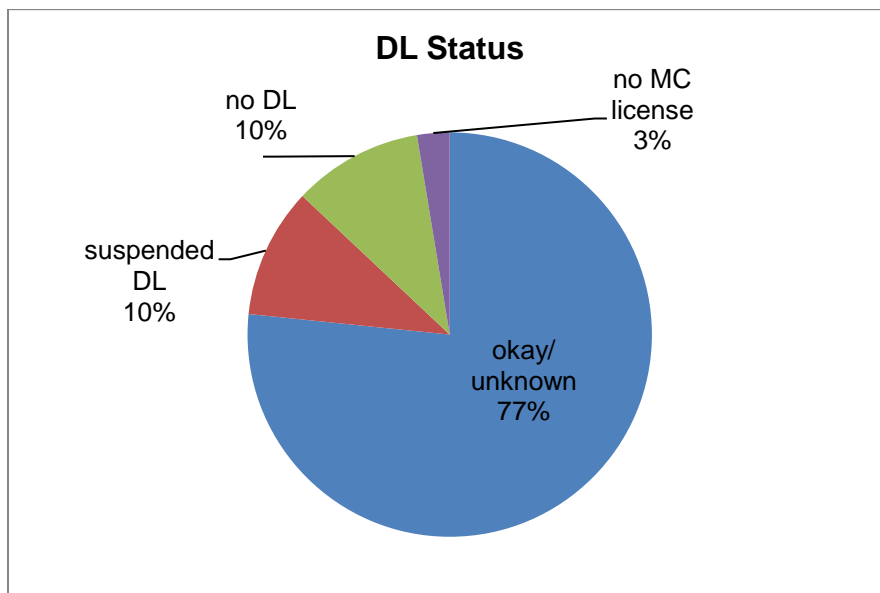
Impairment

Over half (57%) of 2016 fatal crashes involved impairment.



License Status

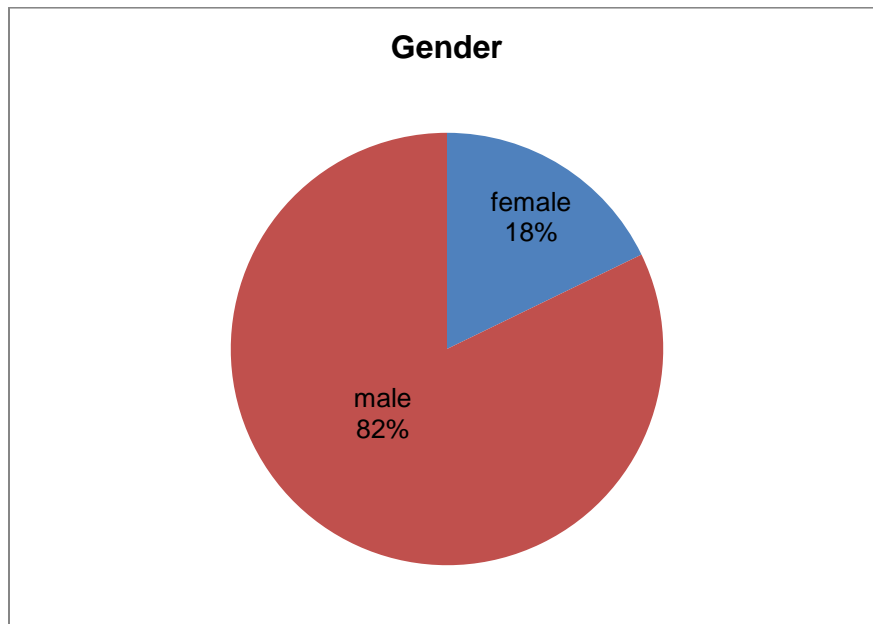
Eighteen crashes (23%) involved a driver with either a suspended or no license.



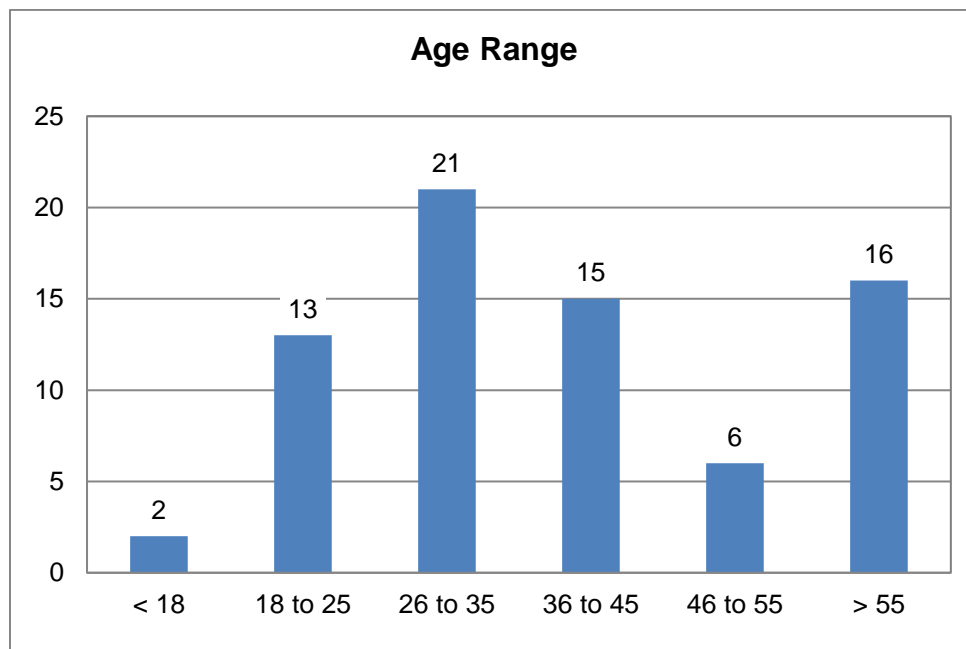
Gender and Age

In 73 of the fatal crashes, someone was found to be at fault. In four crashes, no one was found to be at fault.

The majority of those at fault were male.

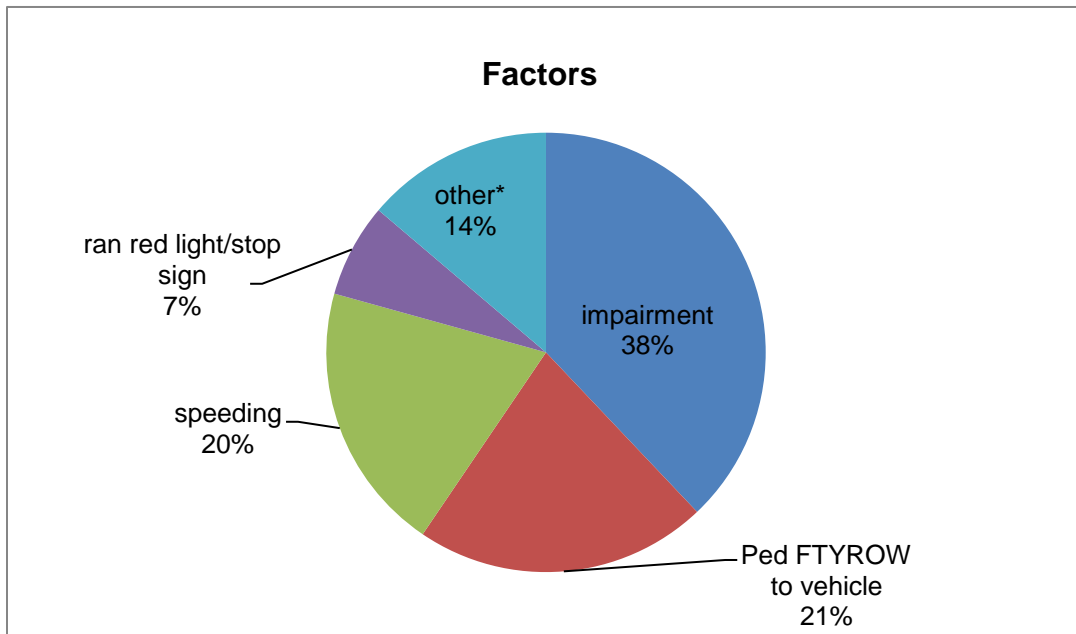


Twenty-nine percent were between the ages of 26 and 35.



Reasons for Crash

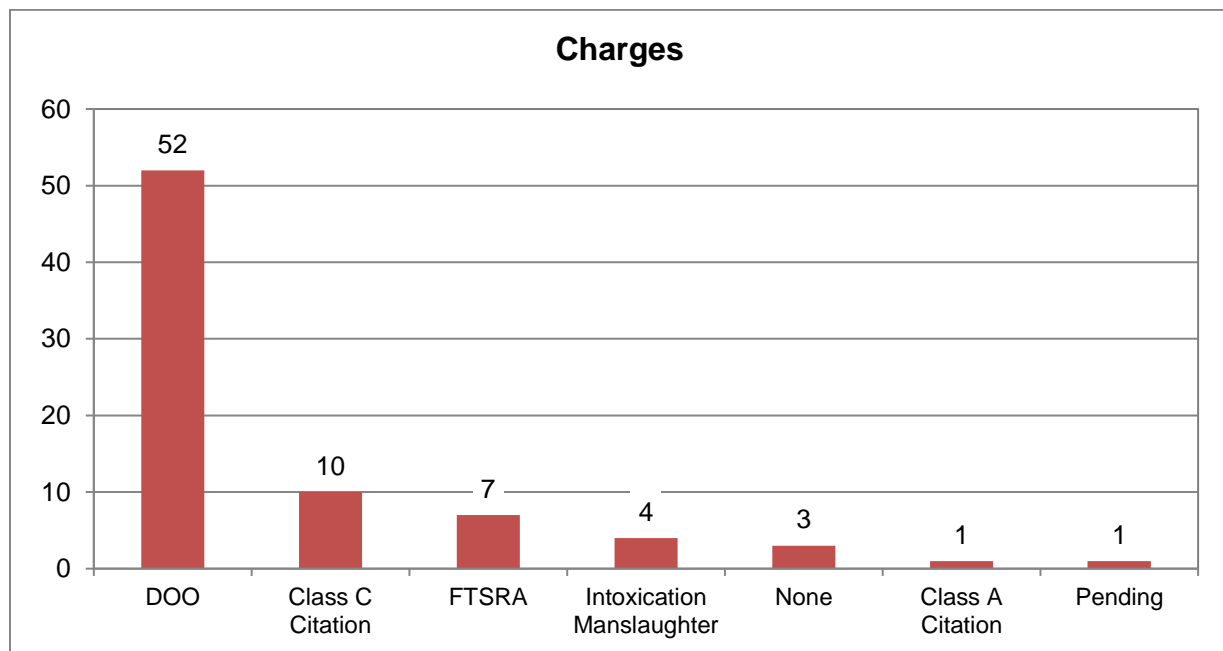
Most crashes have multiple contributing factors, as identified by the investigating detective. Impairment, pedestrian FTYROW and speeding were the primary factors contributing to most fatal crashes.



*other includes: unsafe backing, FTMACD, lost control, visibility, FTYROW, distraction and blow out

Charges

More than two-thirds (52 or 68%) involved Death of Offender (DOO). Twenty-two fatal crashes (29%) involved criminal charges, including Class C citations.

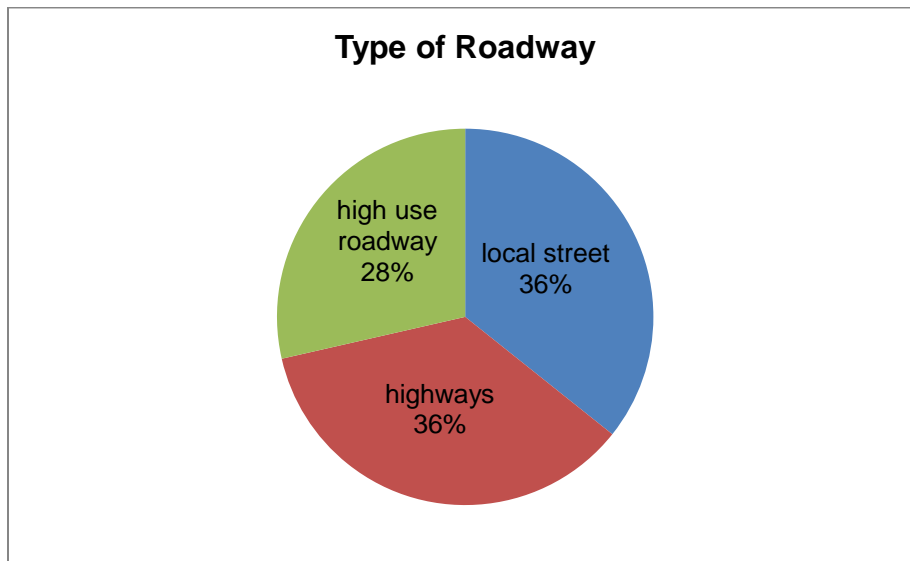


Pedestrian Fatalities

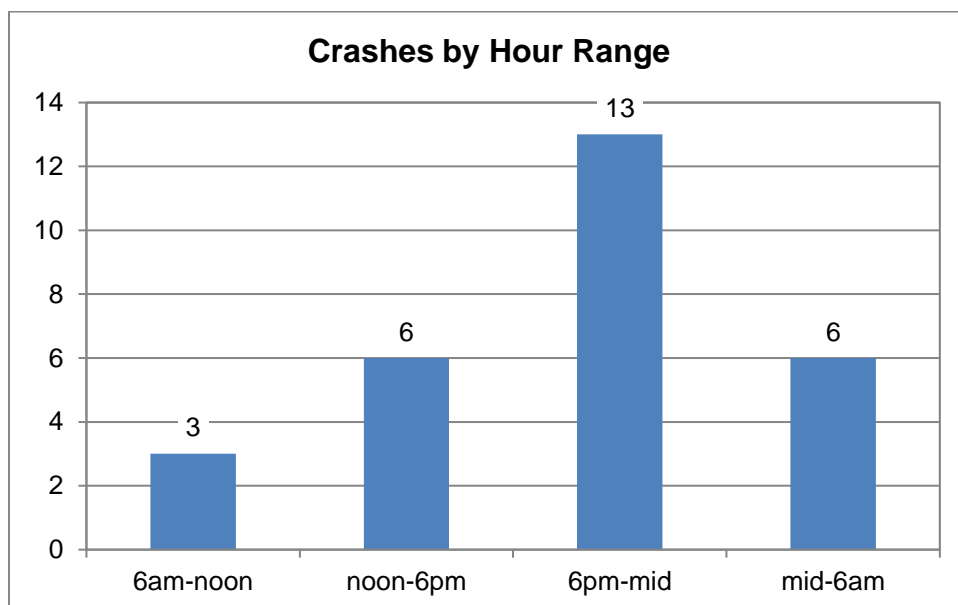
There were 28 fatal pedestrian crashes involving 28 fatalities.

Incident Characteristics

Local streets and highways had ten crashes each (36%).

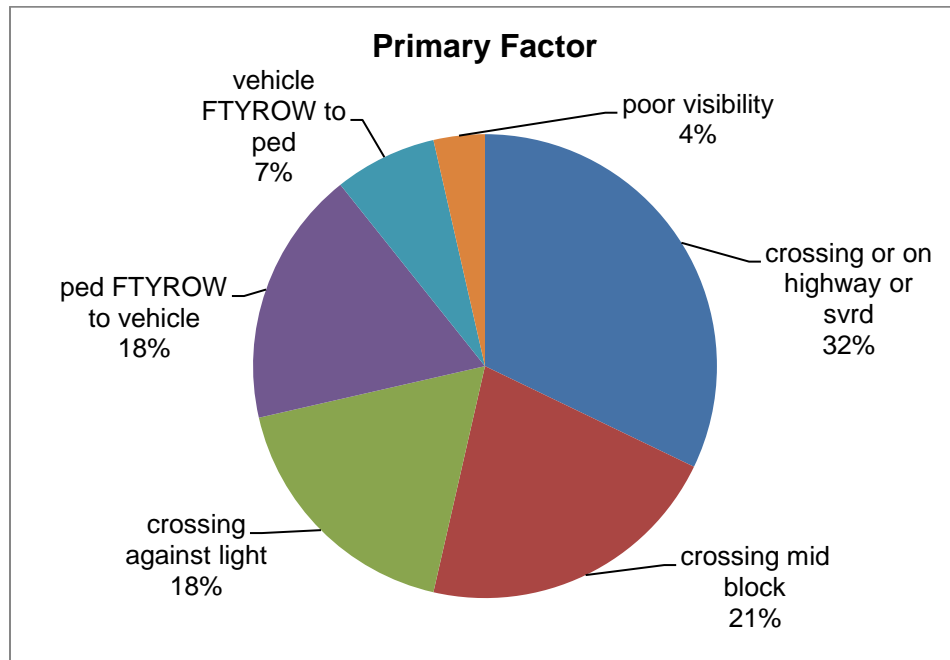


The majority of fatal pedestrian crashes (13 or 46%) occurred between 6 PM and midnight.

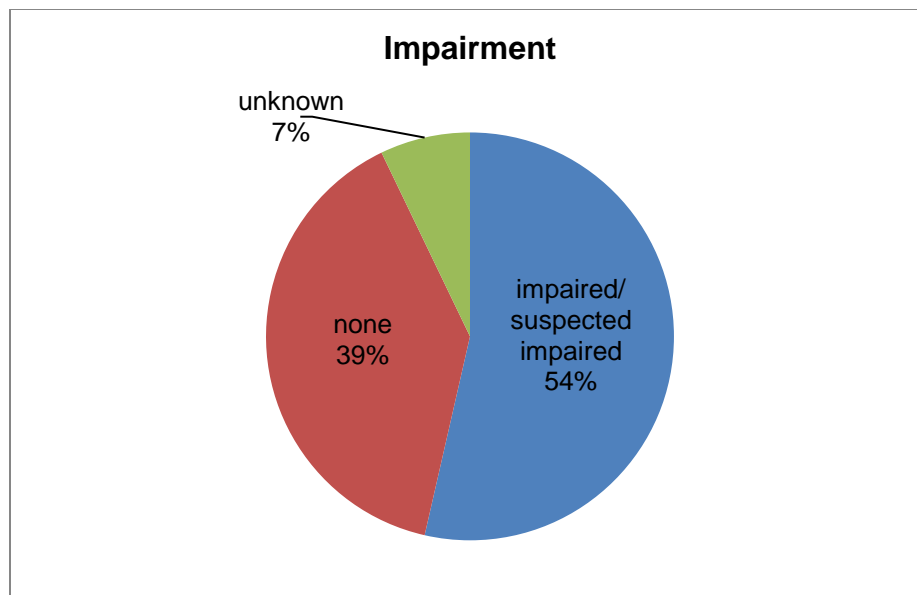


Contributing Factors

Eighty-nine percent of fatal pedestrian crashes involved a pedestrian crossing when or where prohibited or failing to yield to a vehicle (FTYROW). Four of the deceased had been given at least one prior citation or warning for pedestrian in the roadway.



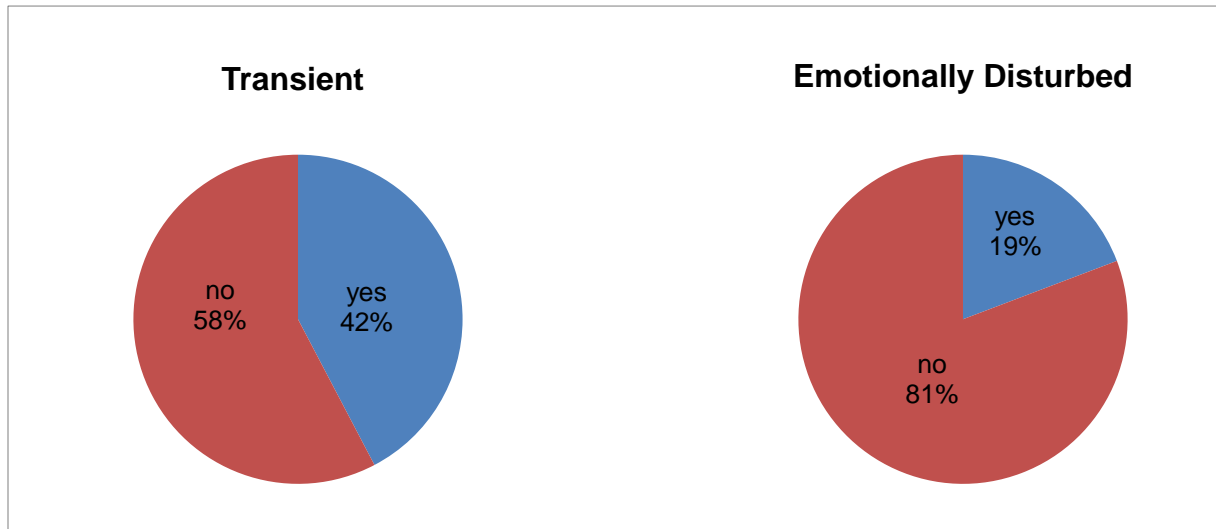
Fifteen fatal pedestrian crashes (54%) involved impairment or suspected impairment.



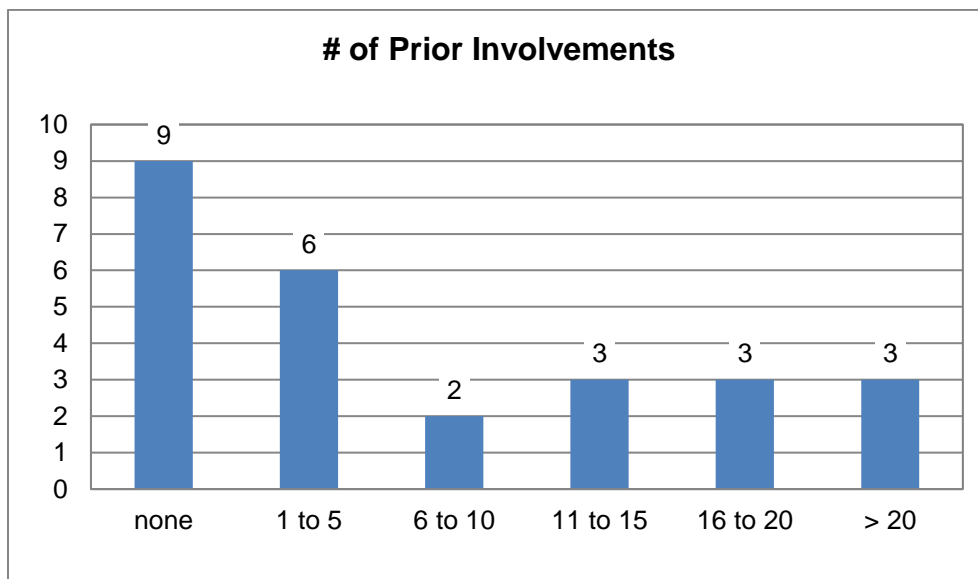
Person Characteristics

Of the 28 fatal crashes, 26 people were determined to be at fault: Twenty-four were the pedestrian themselves, two were drivers of vehicles. There were two incidents where no fault was determined.

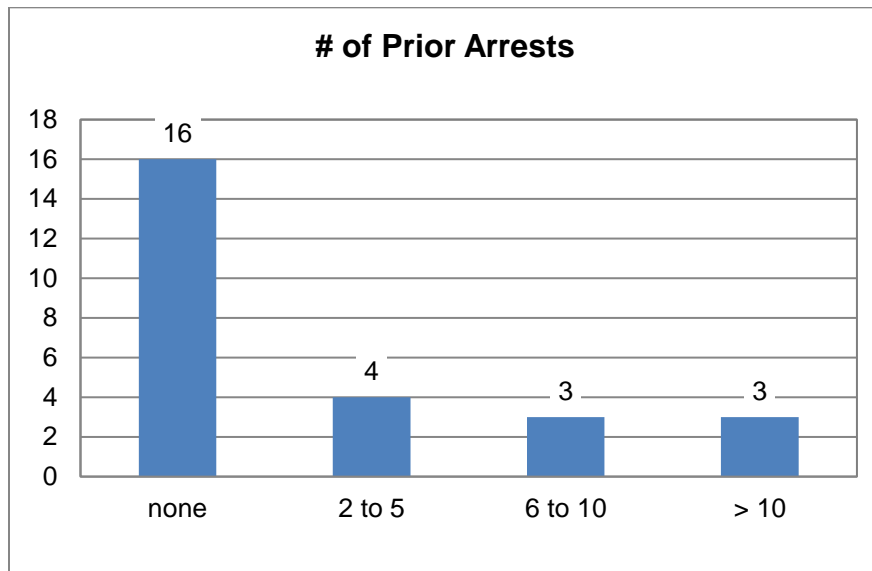
There were 11 pedestrians (42%) identified as transient and five (19%) considered emotionally disturbed.



The majority (17 or 65%) of those at fault in fatal pedestrian crashes had prior APD involvement.



Ten of those at fault (38%) had been previously arrested at least twice.

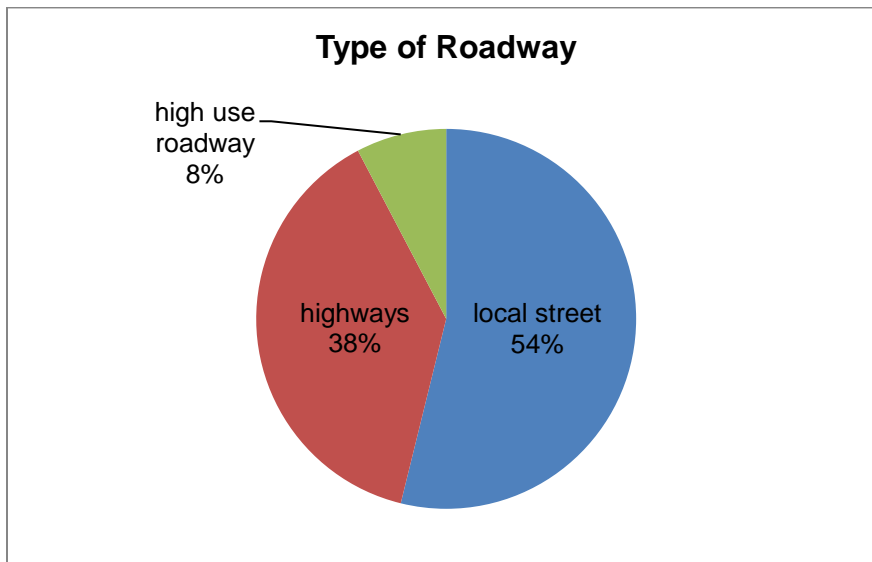


Motorcycle Fatalities

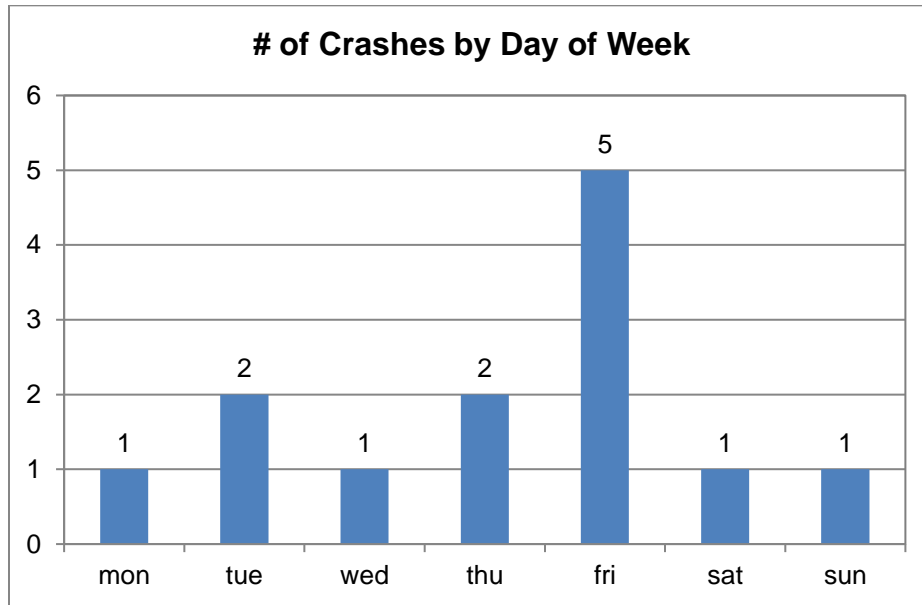
There were 13 fatal crashes involving 13 motorcycle fatalities.

Incident Characteristics

Over half (54%) of fatal motorcycle crashes happened on local streets.

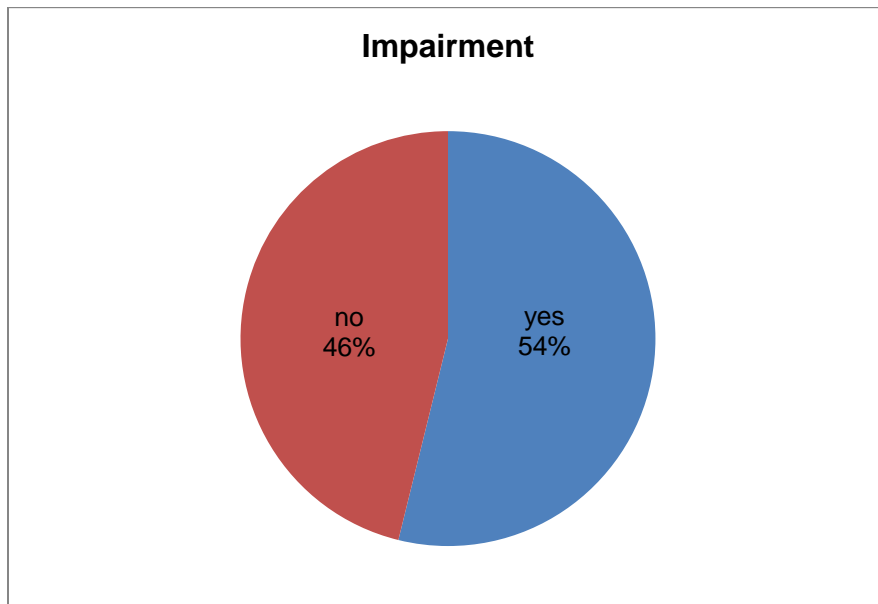


Fatal motorcycle crashes occurred most often on Fridays (38%).

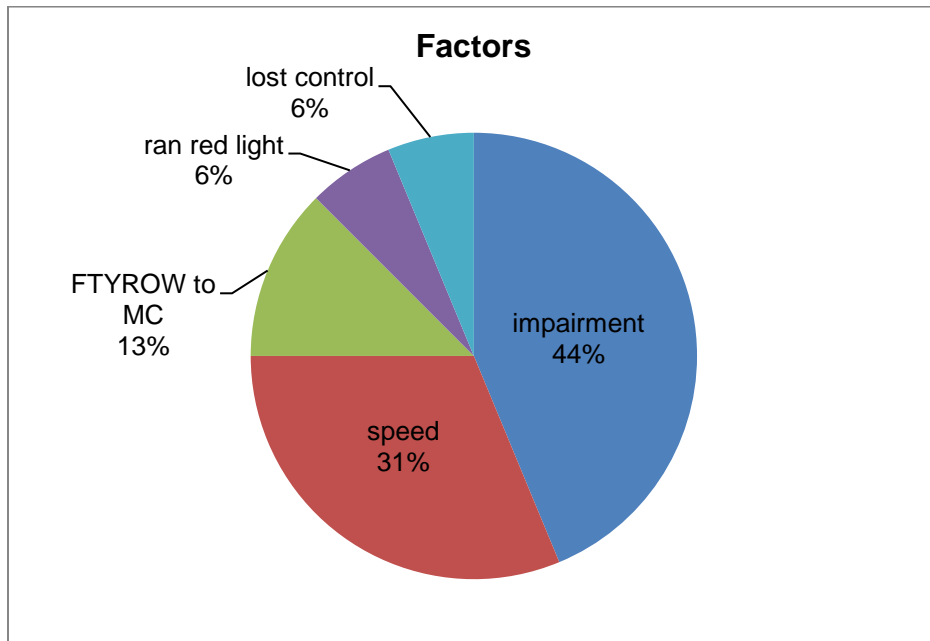


Contributing Factors

Most motorcycle fatal crashes involved impairment (54%).



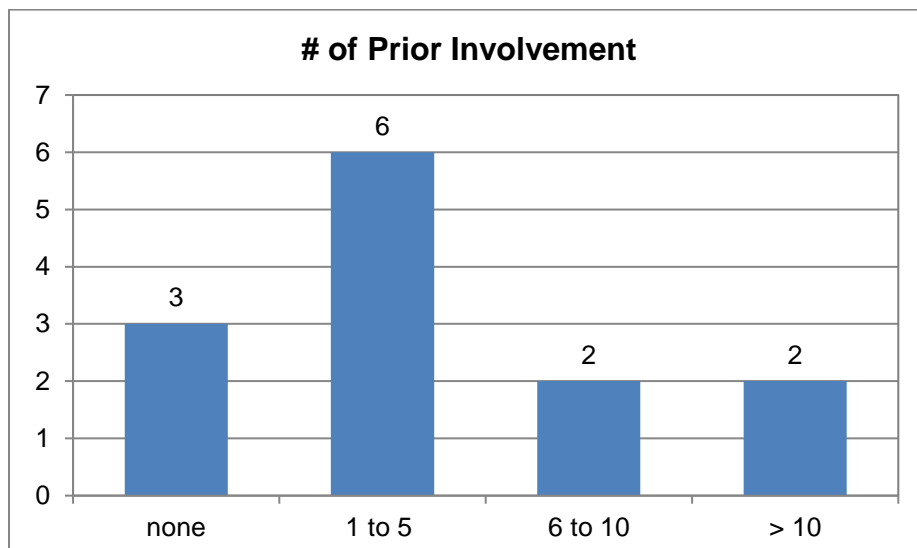
Factors contributing to fatal motorcycle crashes were primarily impairment and speed.



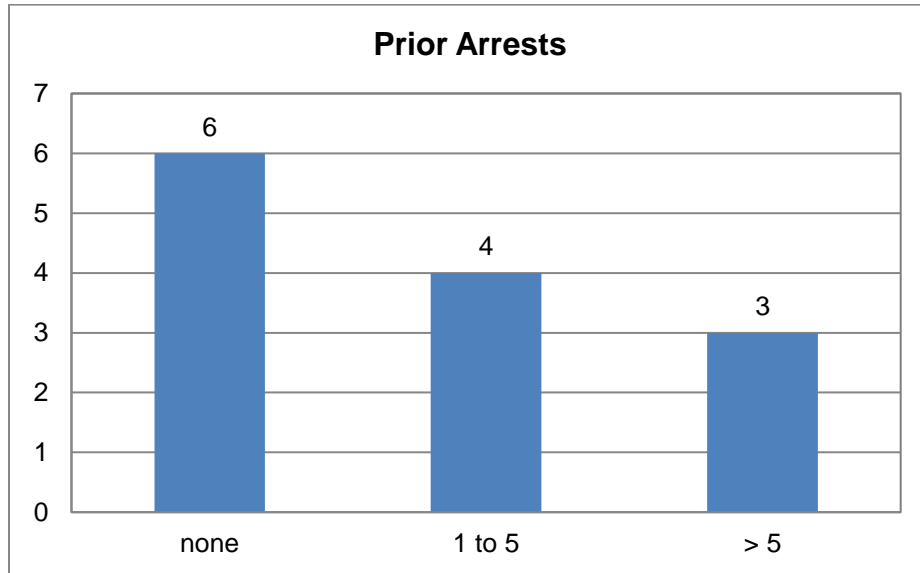
Person Characteristics

There were nine motorcyclists and four motor vehicle drivers at fault in the 13 motorcycle fatal crashes.

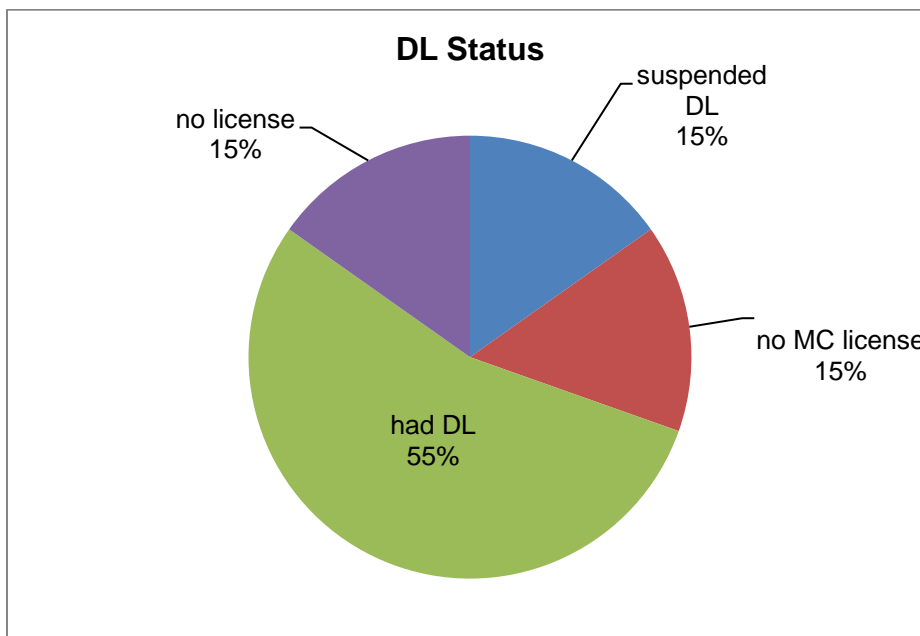
Over three-quarters (10 or 77%) of those at fault had prior APD involvement.



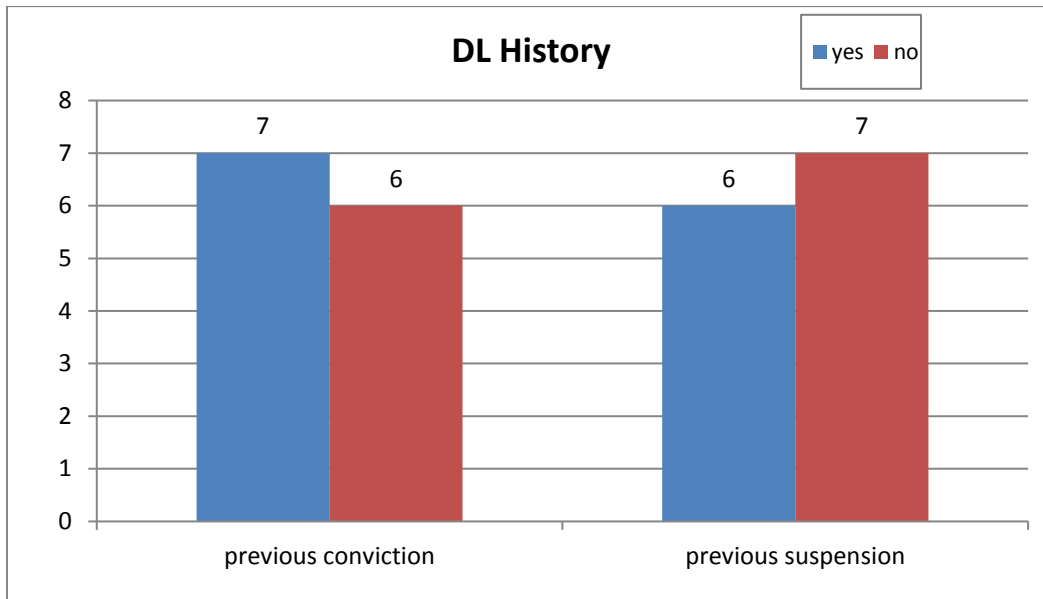
Seven of the thirteen people at fault (54%) had at least one prior arrest with APD.



Nearly half (45%) of those at fault had either no valid driver's license or no motorcycle endorsement.



Seven people (54%) had at least one previous conviction and six (46%) had at least one previous suspension. Previous convictions ranged from one to ten and one driver had over 20 previous suspensions.

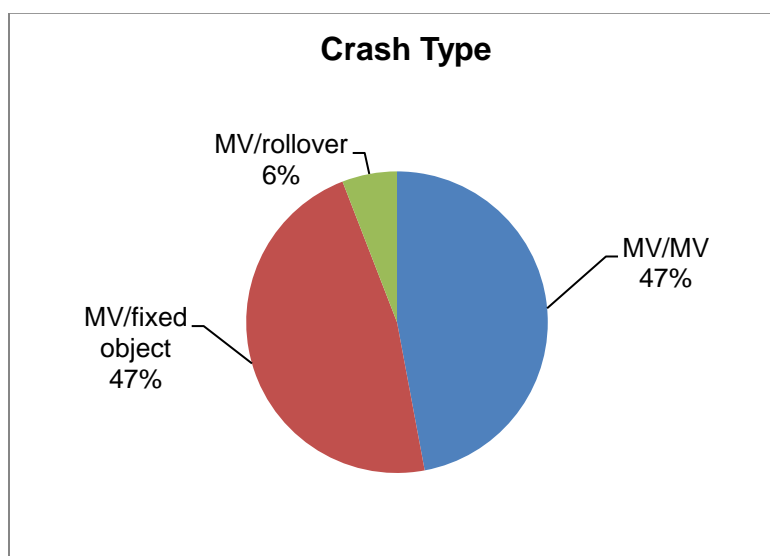


Motor Vehicle Fatalities

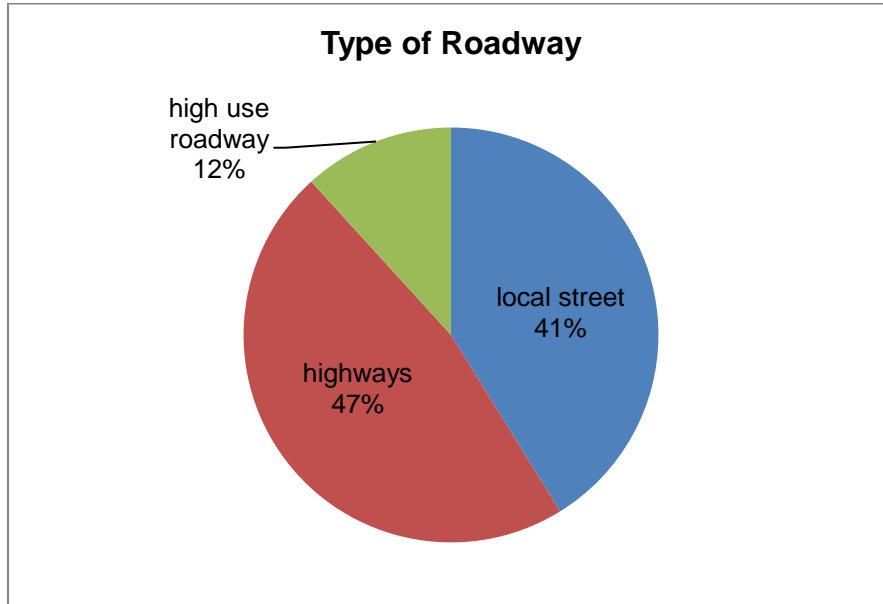
There were 34 fatal motor vehicle crashes involving 36 fatalities.

Incident Characteristics

Sixteen incidents (47%) each involved another motor vehicle or a fixed object. Two incidents were rollover crashes.

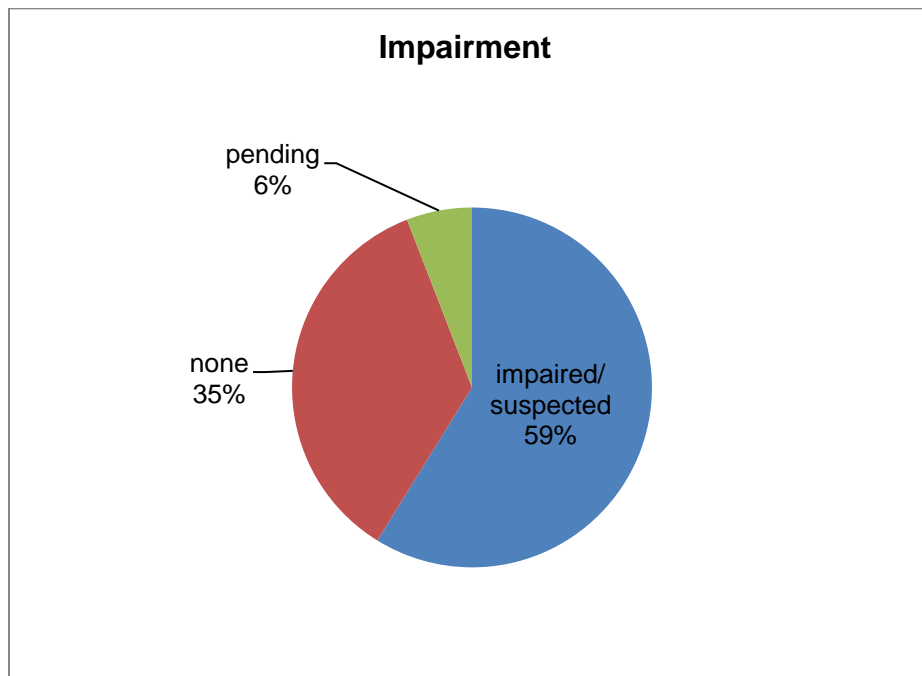


Nearly half (47%) of fatal motor vehicle crashes occurred on highways.

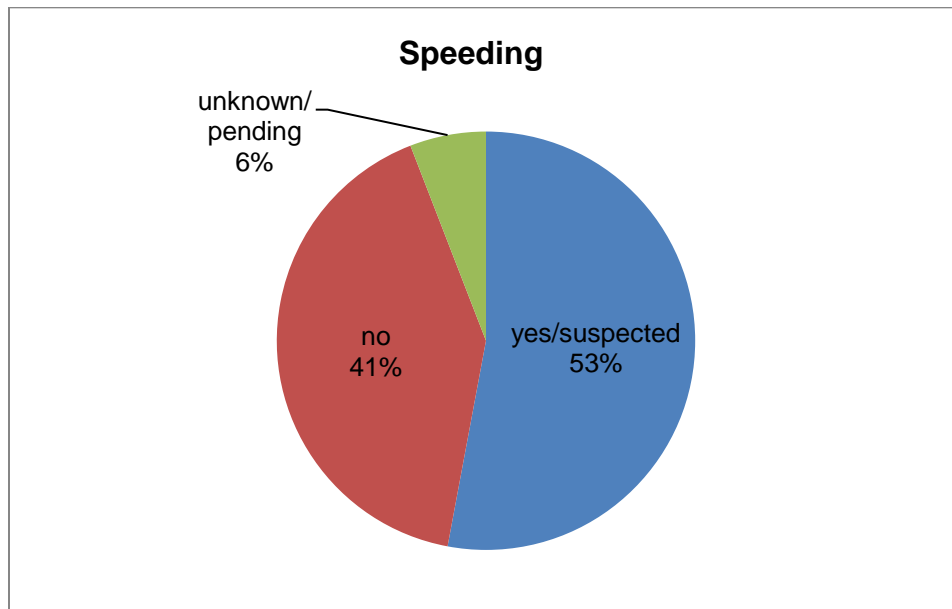


Contributing Factors

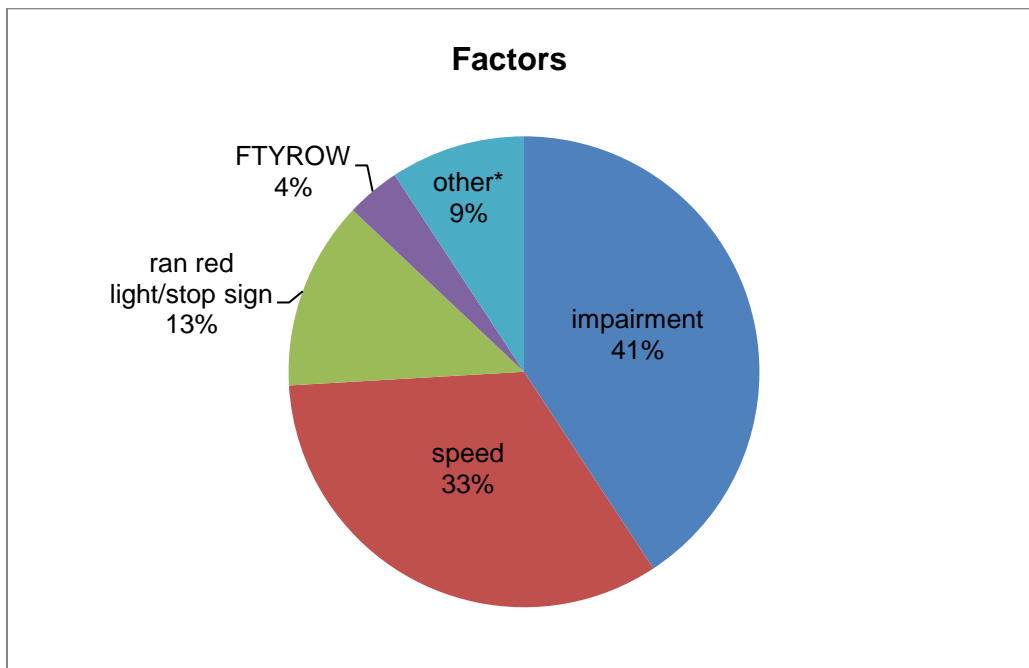
The largest portion of fatal motor vehicle crashes involved impairment or suspected impairment (59%). Four people (12%) who were impaired at the time of the fatal crash had at least one prior DWI.



Speeding was involved in just over half (18 or 53%) of motor vehicle fatal crashes. Nine were drivers who had as many as eleven previous speeding convictions.



Primary factors found to contribute to motor vehicle fatality crashes were impairment and speed.

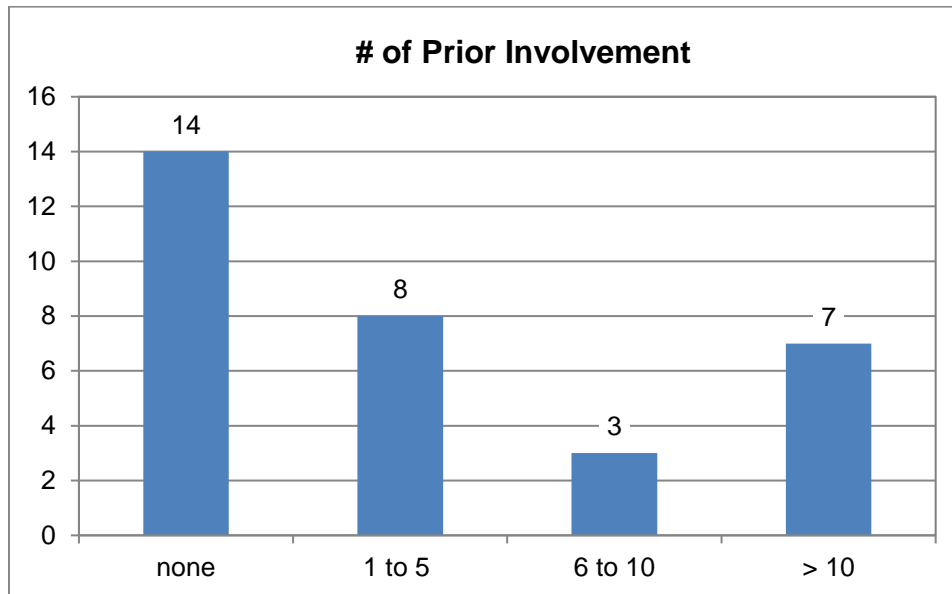


*other includes: possible falling asleep, distraction, FTMACD, unsafe backing and blow out.

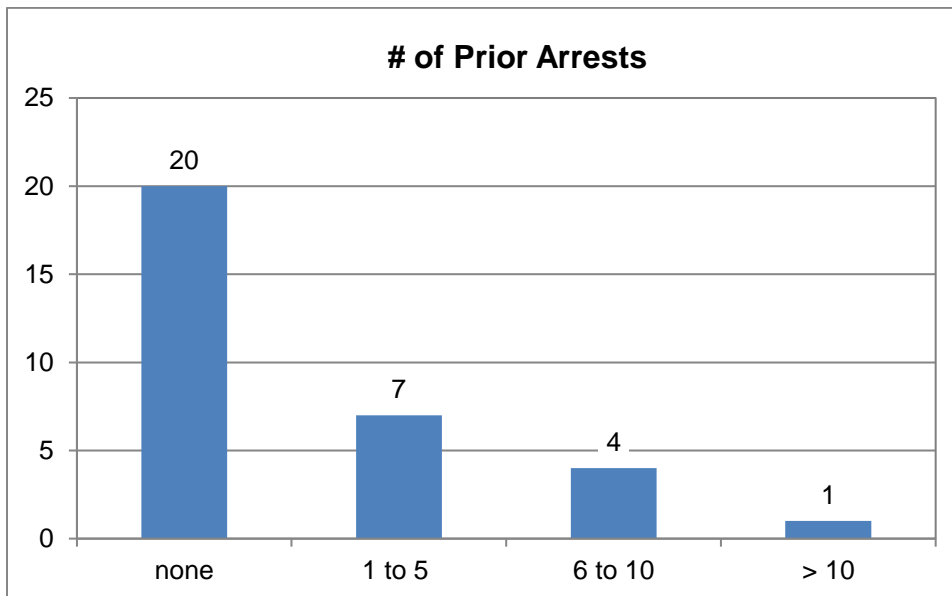
Person Characteristics

Of the 34 fatal motor vehicle crashes, 32 people were found to be at fault. No one was found at fault in two crashes.

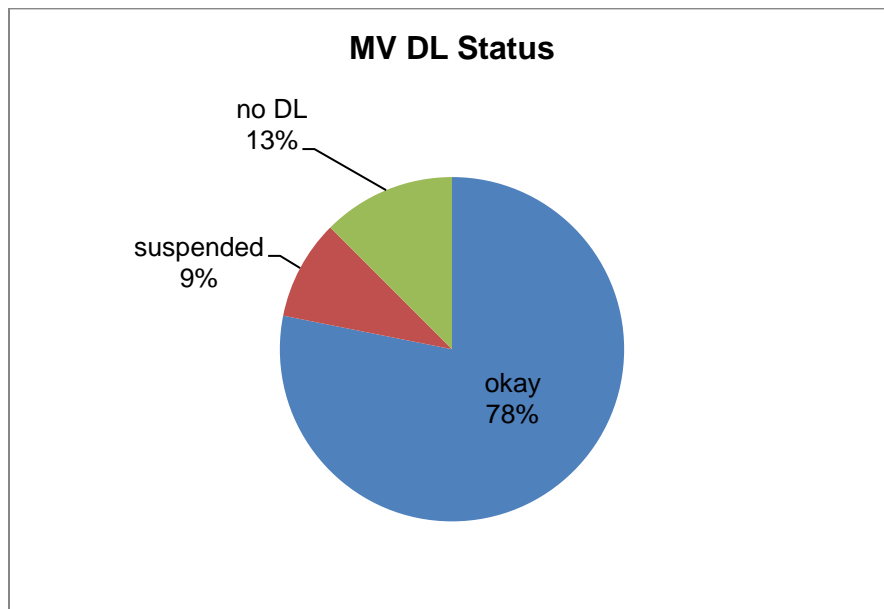
Over half (18 or 56%) of those at fault had prior involvement with APD.



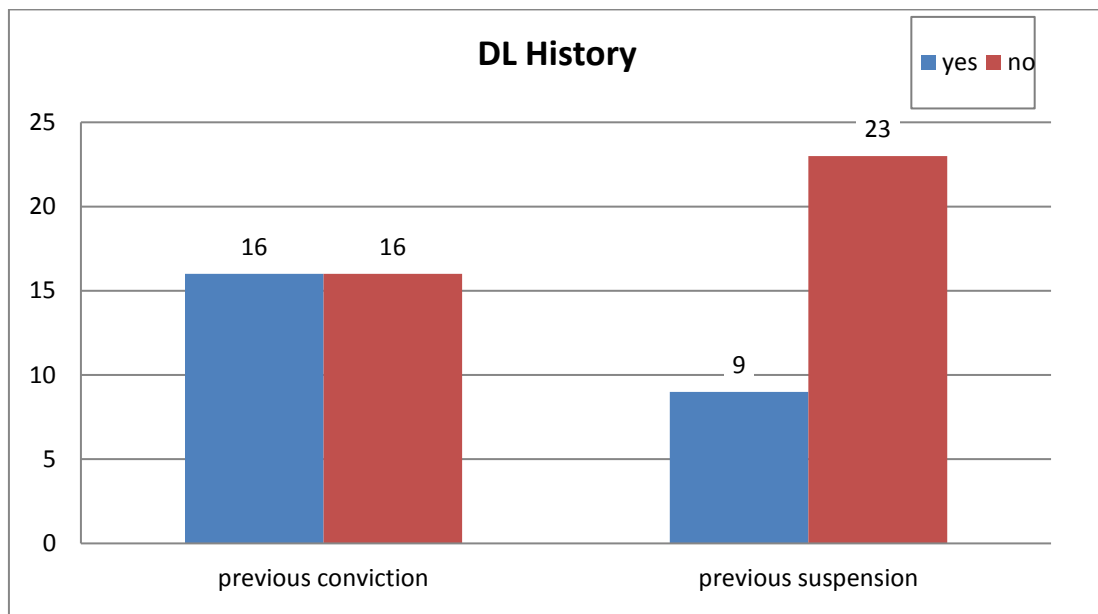
The majority (20 or 63%) had no prior arrest with APD.



Twenty-two percent of those at fault had either no driver's license or a suspended driver's license at the time of the fatal crash.



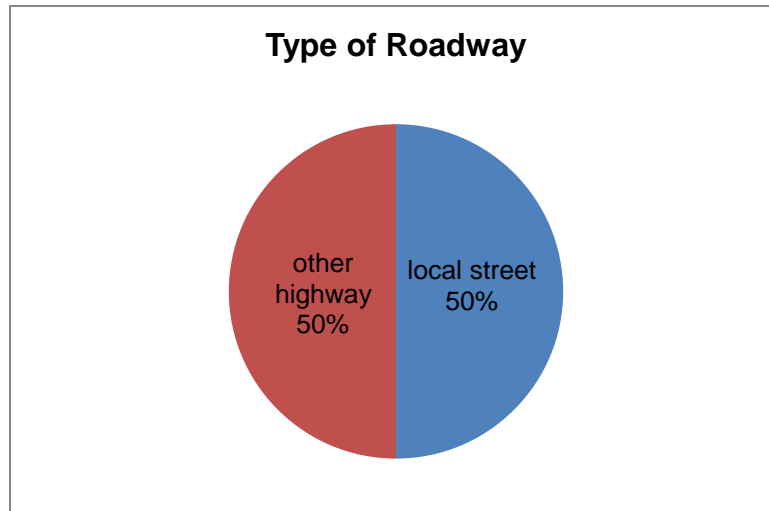
Sixteen of those at fault (50%) had a previous conviction on their driver's license. Nine people (28%) had a previous suspension, four of them with more than 10 suspensions.



Bicycle Fatalities

In 2016, like 2015, there were two fatal bicycle crashes involving two fatalities.

- One occurred on a highway, one on a local street.



- Both crashes involved Failure to Stop and Render Aid by the motor vehicle driver.
- One motor vehicle driver had a suspended license at the time of the crash.
- Impairment was not a factor in either crash.
- One victim was wearing a helmet, one was not.

