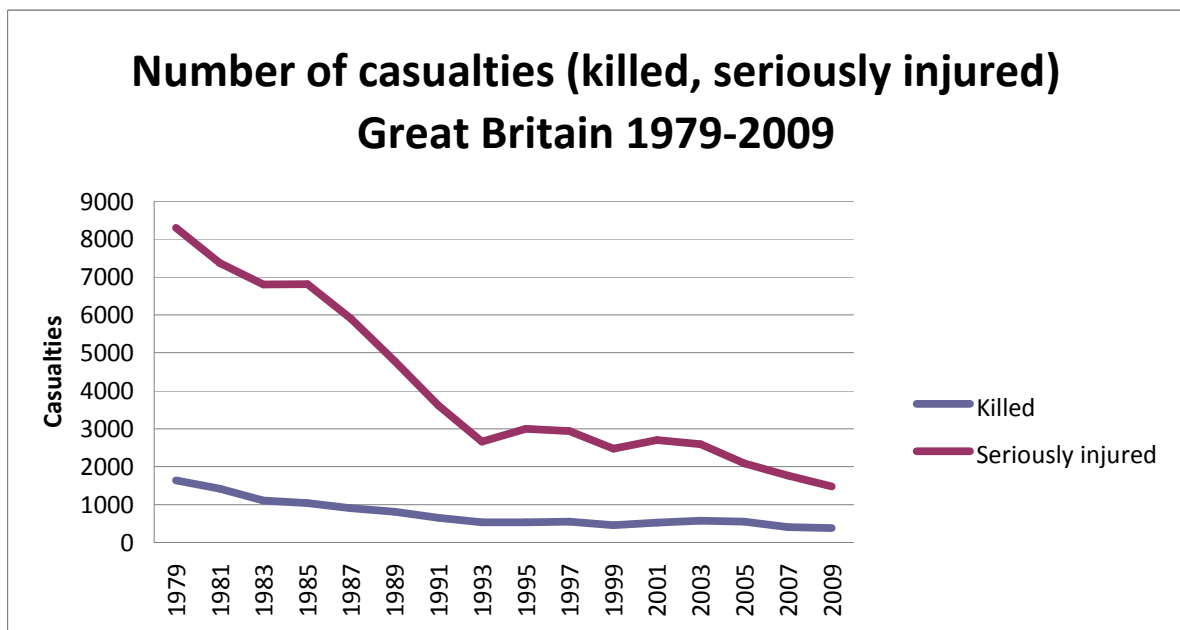


## DRINKING AND DRIVING

### Headline findings 2009<sup>1</sup>

- In 2009, it was estimated that 11,990 reported casualties (5 per cent of all road casualties) occurred when someone was driving whilst over the legal alcohol limit.
- The provisional number of people estimated to have been killed in drink drive accidents was 380 in 2009 (17 per cent of all road fatalities), a decrease of 20 fatalities compared to 2008.
- The provisional number of seriously injured casualties in 2009 was estimated to be 1,480, a decrease of 140 compared to 2008.



### Trend data

- The number of drink drive fatalities has declined from an all time high of 1,640 in 1979, when records began, to an all time low of 380 in 2009.

<sup>1</sup> "Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2009 provisional estimates for accidents involving illegal alcohol levels" published 5/08/2010 by the Department for Transport. Please note that all figures for 2009 are provisional (based on a reduced sample of coroners' returns).

- The number of seriously injured drink drive casualties has declined from an all time high of 8,300 in 1979 to an all time low of 1,480 in 2009.
- Total number of drink drive casualties has declined from an all time high of 31,430 in 1979 to an all time low of 11,990 in 2009.

## Characteristics of drink drive accidents<sup>2</sup>

- Young car drivers (aged 17-24) have more drink drive accidents per 100 thousand licence holders and per 100 million miles driven than any other age group
- Women are much less likely to be involved in reported drink drive accidents as drivers than men although nearly a third of total casualties in drink drive accidents were women
- Drinking and driving is a year round problem but the first few months of the year generally have lower numbers of drink drive accidents and casualties than other months of the year; in 2007 there was a peak in both number of casualties and accidents in May

## Breath testing<sup>3</sup>

- Breath testing at reported road accidents involving injuries has remained in the range of 50-55% for the last ten years
- The percentage of all drivers/riders involved in accidents who have subsequently failed a breath test has remained at close to 2% for the past ten years
- Overall in 2008, 2.7% of men involved in an accident failed a breath test, well over twice the rate for women (1.2%)
- The rate of failure of breath tests generally declined with age, although those aged 17-19 had slightly lower rates than those aged 20-24 and significantly lower rates than the high proportion recorded by a few (illegal) drivers aged less than 17.

## Drink-drive legal limit

- The legal limit for driving in the UK is 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood. A recent review conducted by Sir Peter North recommended that this limit be reduced to 50mg. The government is still considering this matter.

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<sup>2</sup> Based on 2007 data

<sup>3</sup> "Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain 2008" published 24/09/2009 by the Department for Transport.