

# Part I – General Information

In accordance with Section 56-5-1350 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, a tabulation and analysis of collision reports has been completed for the year 2003 as disclosed in this publication. The cost of printing this publication is on the last page.

The number of traffic fatalities decreased from 1,053 in 2002 to 969 in 2003, a 8.0% decrease. This is the first year since 1997 that number of fatalities has been below 1,000. The mileage death rate (MDR) decreased to an all time low of 2.0 deaths per hundred million vehicle miles of travel.

Traffic fatalities are the most severe consequence of motor vehicle collisions, but even in non-fatal collisions, the cost in human suffering can be severe. There were 51,267 reported traffic injuries in 2003, down 2.1% from 2002.

Traffic collisions are responsible for hundreds of millions of dollars in economic losses to South Carolina each year. Economic losses as estimated in this publication include property damage, medical costs and lost productivity, but do not include intangible costs such as grief and suffering. In 2003, \$2.30 billion dollars in estimated losses were incurred which is a 1.7% decrease from 2002.

What is responsible for the tragedy of motor vehicle collisions and what strategies should concerned individuals employ in the reduction of collisions in the future? On the following pages, statistics are presented which describe the characteristics, causes and effects of traffic collisions in South Carolina. It is hoped that this information will be useful to all persons interested in fostering a safer operating environment for motorists in South Carolina.

All collision statistics included in this publication are based on the Uniform Traffic Collision Reports (Form TR-310) received from investigating officers. By law, any collision that results in at least \$1,000 in total property damage, or results in injury or death and occurs on a public highway must be reported to the South Carolina Department of Public Safety on the appropriate form. If these collisions occur on private property or are reported on any form other than the TR-310, they are excluded.

The statistics contained in the South Carolina Traffic Collision Fact Book are based on the latest available information at the time that they were compiled. Due to the complex nature of the data, occasionally new information is received after the publication cut-off date. It is therefore possible that some discrepancies may exist between the data published here and other sources.

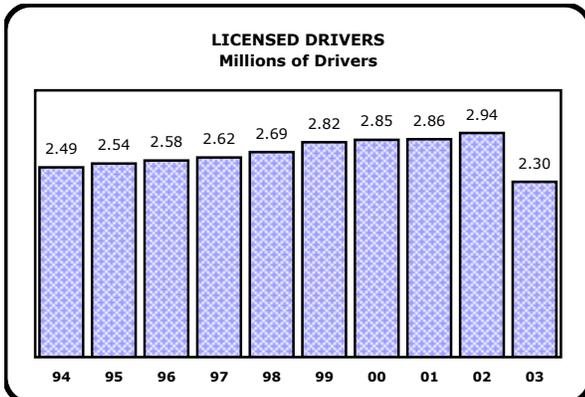
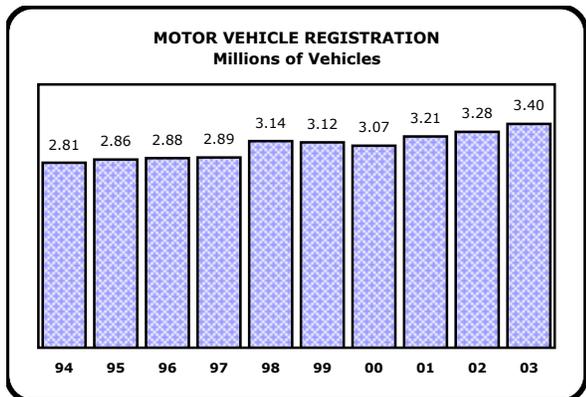
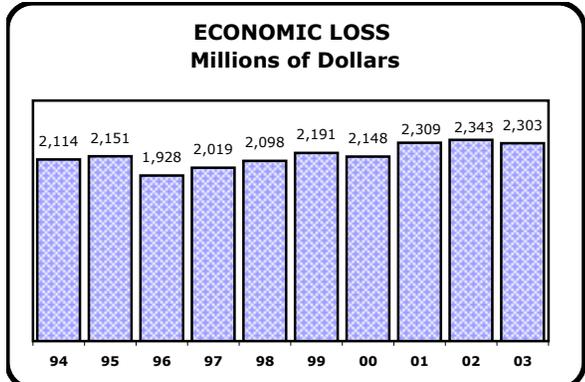
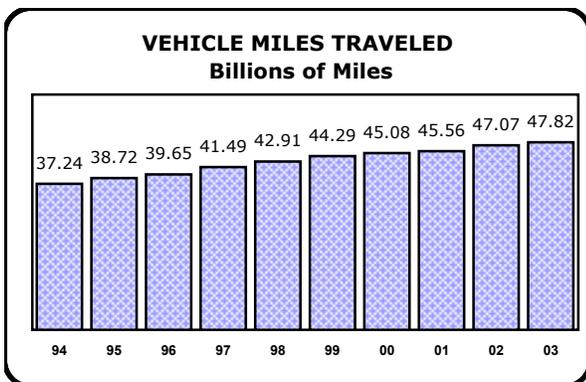
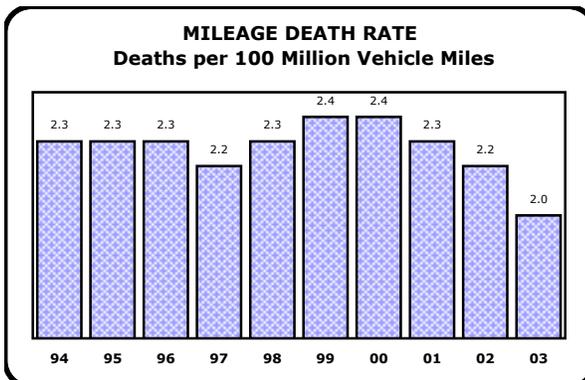
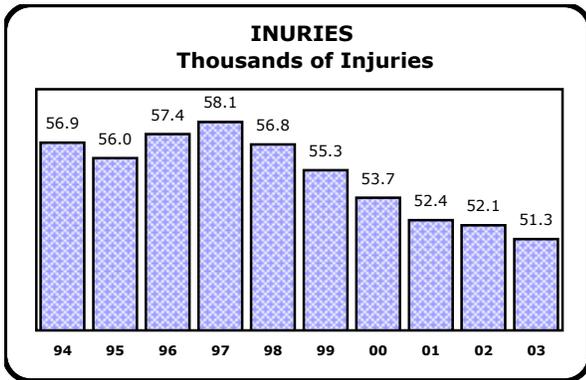
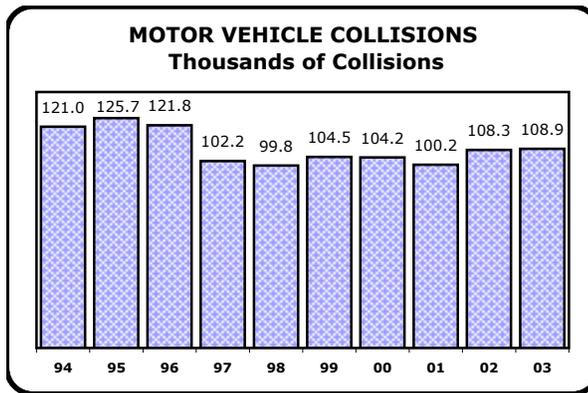
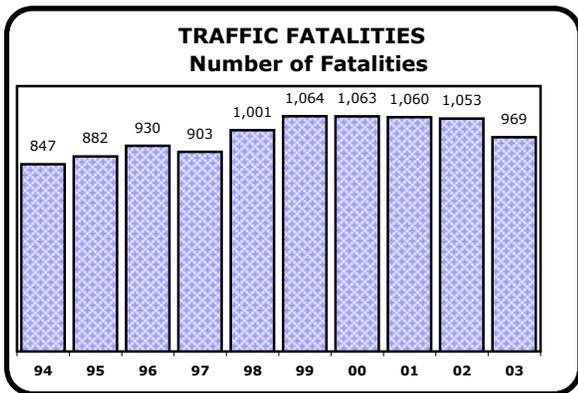
## TRAFFIC COLLISION QUICK FACTS

|  | 2001      | 2002      | 2003      | % Change<br>2001 - 2003 | % Change<br>2002 - 2003 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Fatal Collisions</b>                      | 962       | 949       | 905       | -5.9%                   | -4.6%                   |
| <b>Injury Collisions</b>                     | 32,381    | 32,427    | 32,383    | 0.0%                    | -0.1%                   |
| <b>Property Damage Only Collisions</b>       | 66,822    | 74,904    | 75,598    | 13.1%                   | 0.9%                    |
| <b>Total Collisions</b>                      | 100,165   | 108,280   | 108,886   | 8.7%                    | 0.6%                    |
| <b>Fatalities</b>                            | 1,060     | 1,053     | 969       | -8.6%                   | -8.0%                   |
| <b>Non-fatal Injuries</b>                    | 52,350    | 52,095    | 51,267    | -2.1%                   | -1.6%                   |
| <b>Fatalities From Collisions Involving:</b> |           |           |           |                         |                         |
| <b>Truck Tractor</b>                         | 89        | 86        | 74        | -16.9%                  | -14.0%                  |
| <b>Motorcycle</b>                            | 75        | 88        | 88        | 17.3%                   | 0.0%                    |
| <b>Bicycle</b>                               | 25        | 16        | 15        | -40.0%                  | -6.3%                   |
| <b>Pedestrian</b>                            | 110       | 97        | 79        | -28.2%                  | -18.6%                  |
| <b>Train</b>                                 | 4         | 6         | 4         | 0.0%                    | -33.3%                  |
| <b>Moped/Motorbike</b>                       | 12        | 4         | 3         | -75.0%                  | -25.0%                  |
| <b>School bus</b>                            | 5         | 4         | 0         | -100.0%                 | -100.0%                 |
| <b>SUV</b>                                   | 133       | 161       | 184       | 38.3%                   | 14.3%                   |
| <b>Economic Loss (billions)</b>              | 2.31      | 2.34      | 2.30      | -0.2%                   | -1.7%                   |
| <b>Vehicle Miles Traveled (millions)</b>     | 45.56     | 47.07     | 47.82     | 5.0%                    | 1.6%                    |
| <b>Roadway Miles</b>                         | 66,168    | 66,195    | 66,231    | 0.1%                    | 0.1%                    |
| <b>Motor Vehicle Registrations</b>           | 3,210,578 | 3,276,722 | 3,394,066 | 5.7%                    | 3.6%                    |
| <b>Licensed Drivers</b>                      | 2,855,690 | 2,931,697 | 2,982,926 | 4.5%                    | 1.7%                    |
| <b>Mileage Injury Rate*</b>                  | 115       | 111       | 107       | -6.8%                   | -3.4%                   |
| <b>Mileage Death Rate**</b>                  | 2.3       | 2.2       | 2.0       | -12.9%                  | -9.4%                   |

\*Traffic Injuries per 100 million vehicle miles of travel

\*\*Traffic Fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel

### TEN YEAR TRAFFIC TRENDS 1994-2003



**TRAFFIC COLLISIONS, FATALITIES, NON-FATAL INJURIES, MILEAGE DEATH RATE & VEHICLE MILES OF TRAVEL (1969– 2003)**

| <b>YEAR</b>   | <b>COLLISIONS</b> | <b>FATALITIES</b> | <b>NON-FATAL INJURIES</b> | <b>MILEAGE DEATH RATE*</b> | <b>VEHICLE MILES OF TRAVEL**</b> |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1969          | 59,033            | 996               | 20,203                    | 6.4                        | 15,512                           |
| 1970          | 67,808            | 1,033             | 19,864                    | 6.2                        | 16,558                           |
| 1971          | 74,607            | 1,023             | 19,347                    | 5.8                        | 17,763                           |
| 1972          | 81,525            | 1,099             | 20,283                    | 5.6                        | 19,472                           |
| 1973          | 85,071            | 967               | 20,440                    | 4.7                        | 20,428                           |
| 1974          | 76,986            | 873               | 18,863                    | 4.4                        | 20,012                           |
| 1975          | 80,740            | 821               | 18,407                    | 4.0                        | 20,603                           |
| 1976          | 86,944            | 820               | 21,201                    | 3.7                        | 21,961                           |
| 1977          | 91,485            | 949               | 21,382                    | 4.2                        | 22,689                           |
| 1978          | 97,880            | 898               | 23,223                    | 3.7                        | 24,254                           |
| 1979          | 97,394            | 900               | 23,815                    | 3.7                        | 24,074                           |
| 1980          | 91,016            | 859               | 22,599                    | 3.8                        | 22,658                           |
| 1981          | 88,425            | 846               | 22,355                    | 3.7                        | 23,056                           |
| 1982          | 88,798            | 730               | 23,019                    | 3.0                        | 24,222                           |
| 1983          | 92,277            | 845               | 23,458                    | 3.4                        | 24,978                           |
| 1984          | 102,617           | 915               | 28,135                    | 3.5                        | 25,900                           |
| 1985          | 111,077           | 949               | 32,388                    | 3.6                        | 26,679                           |
| 1986          | 116,573           | 1,059             | 34,689                    | 3.7                        | 28,247                           |
| 1987          | 119,344           | 1,087             | 37,287                    | 3.6                        | 30,227                           |
| ***1988       | 117,723           | 1,033             | 50,713                    | 3.3                        | 31,672                           |
| 1989          | 123,252           | 996               | 49,905                    | 3.0                        | 32,781                           |
| 1990          | 118,989           | 983               | 48,337                    | 2.9                        | 34,377                           |
| 1991          | 110,780           | 890               | 47,472                    | 2.6                        | 34,452                           |
| 1992          | 110,058           | 807               | 47,820                    | 2.3                        | 34,953                           |
| 1993          | 112,983           | 845               | 50,348                    | 2.3                        | 36,126                           |
| 1994          | 120,947           | 847               | 56,868                    | 2.3                        | 37,238                           |
| 1995          | 125,694           | 882               | 56,008                    | 2.3                        | 38,723                           |
| ****1996      | 121,791           | 930               | 57,387                    | 2.3                        | 39,646                           |
| 1997          | 102,226           | 903               | 58,057                    | 2.2                        | 40,590                           |
| 1998          | 99,817            | 1,001             | 56,801                    | 2.3                        | 42,912                           |
| 1999          | 104,484           | 1,064             | 55,322                    | 2.4                        | 44,287                           |
| 2000          | 104,203           | 1,063             | 53,721                    | 2.4                        | 45,083                           |
| 2001          | 100,165           | 1,060             | 52,350                    | 2.3                        | 45,558                           |
| 2002          | 108,280           | 1,053             | 52,095                    | 2.2                        | 47,074                           |
| 2003          | 108,886           | 969               | 51,267                    | 2.0                        | 47,816                           |
| <b>TOTALS</b> | <b>3,282,712</b>  | <b>30,973</b>     | <b>1,192,067</b>          | <b>NA</b>                  | <b>967,691</b>                   |

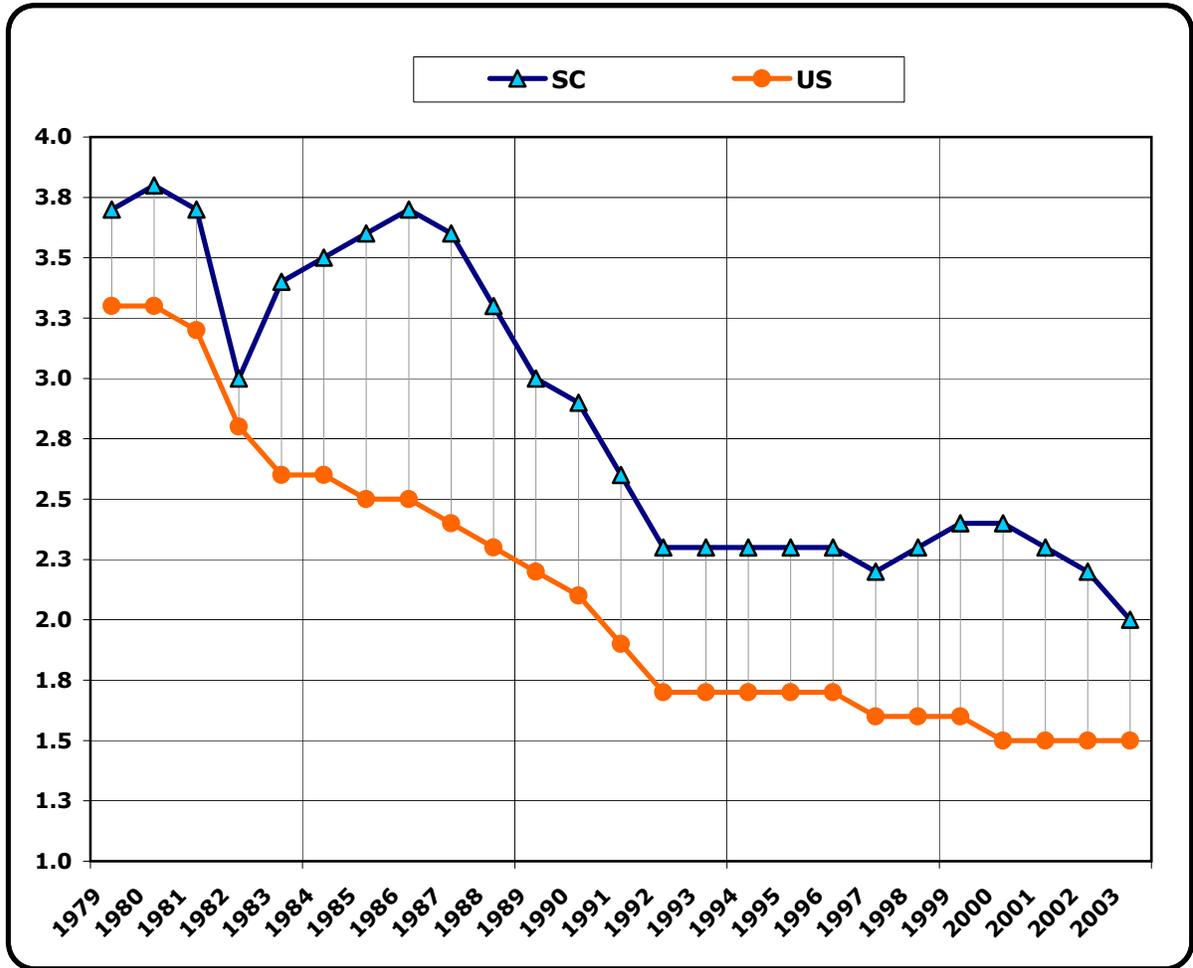
\*Mileage Death Rate per 100 million vehicle miles of travel.

\*\*Vehicle Miles of Travel in millions of miles.

\*\*\*Due to a new reporting format, more 'possible injuries' were reported than in previous years.

\*\*\*\*Reporting threshold changed midyear to \$1,000 from \$400.

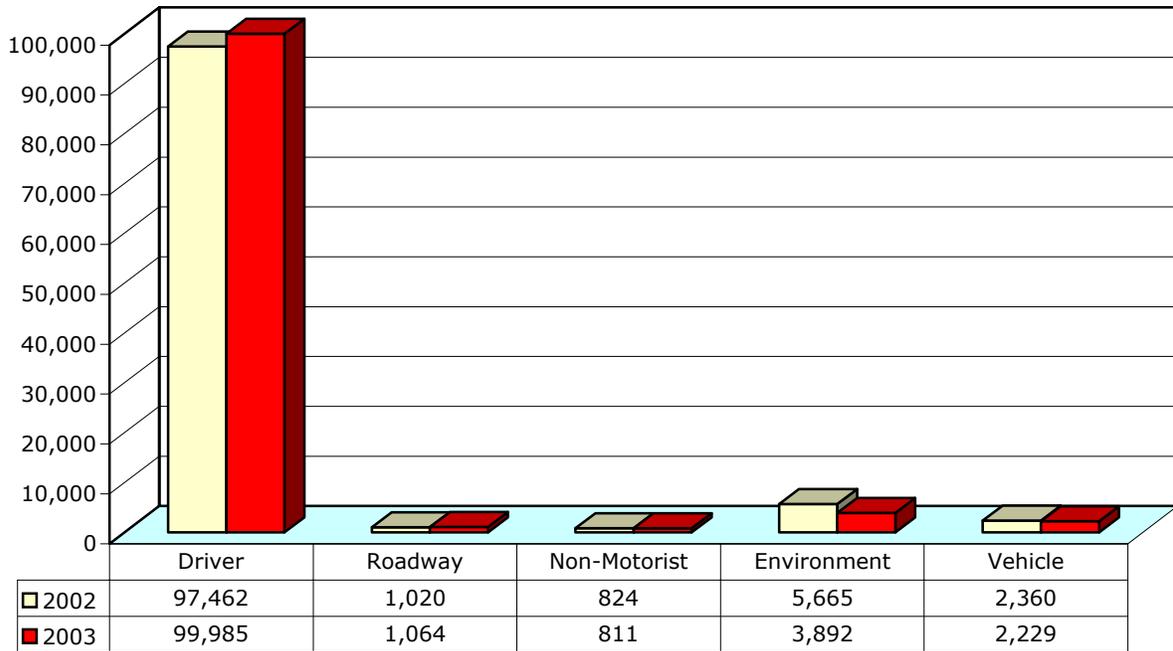
## MILEAGE DEATH RATE SOUTH CAROLINA vs. NATIONAL AVERAGE 1979-2003



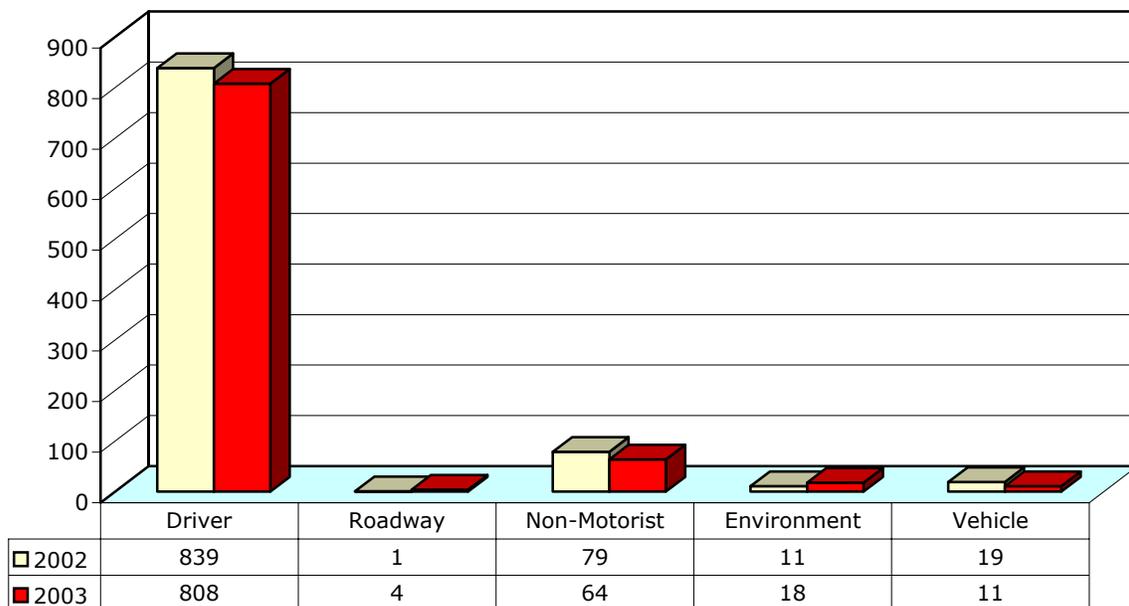
Source for U.S. data: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (NHTSA)

South Carolina's mileage death rate, MDR, (defined as the number of traffic fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel) shows a declining trend similar to the national trend. In 2003, South Carolina achieved an all time low of 2.0 MDR.

### NON FATAL COLLISIONS BY PRIMARY CONTRIBUTING FACTOR



### FATAL COLLISIONS BY PRIMARY CONTRIBUTING FACTOR

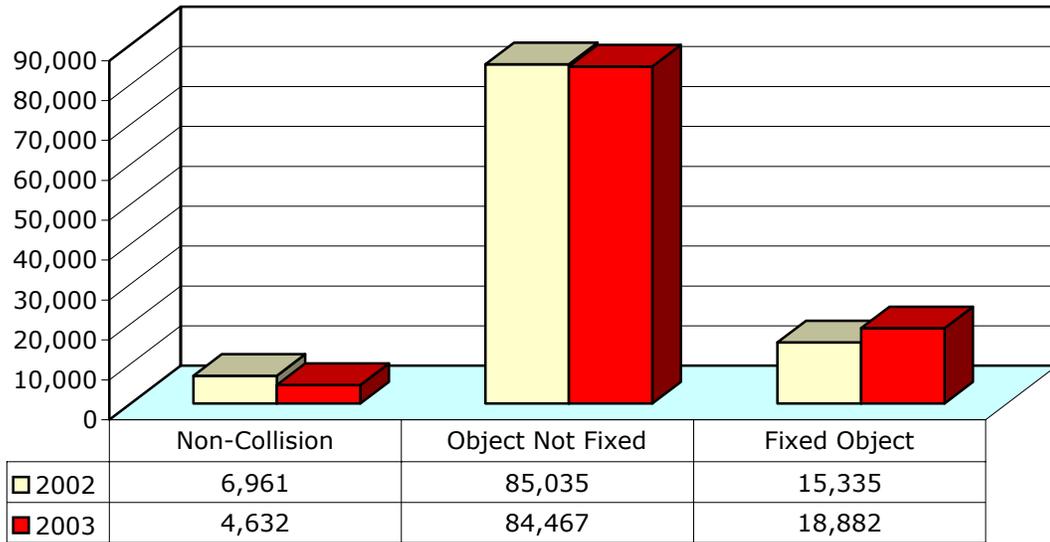


**TRAFFIC COLLISIONS BY PRIMARY CONTRIBUTING FACTOR**

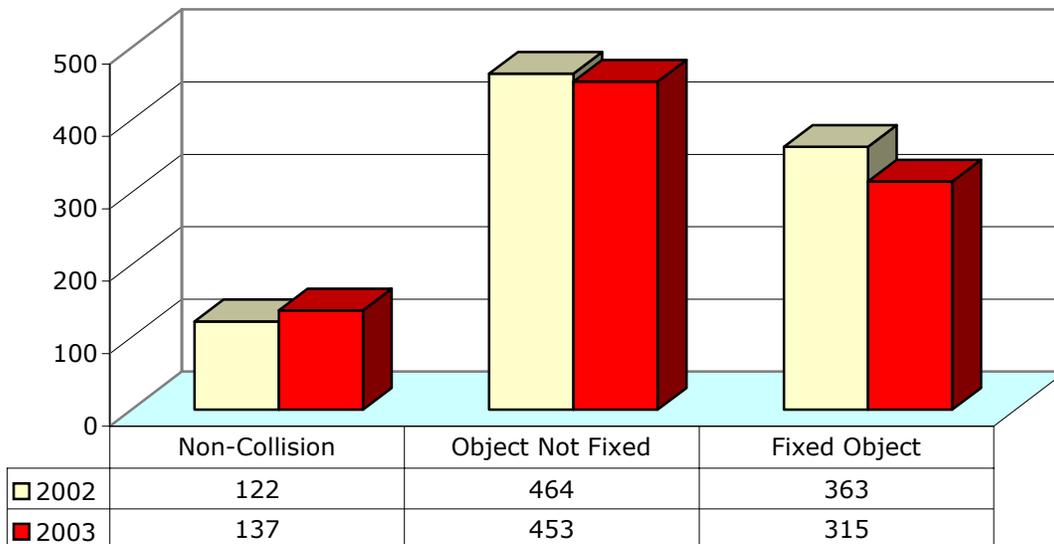
| PRIMARY CONTRIBUTING FACTOR            | COLLISION TYPE |               |               |                | PERSONS    |               |
|--|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|------------|---------------|
|  | Fatal          | Injury        | PDO*          | Total          | Killed     | Injured       |
| Disregarded Signs, Signals             | 54             | 2,329         | 3,391         | 5,774          | 57         | 4,264         |
| Distracted / Inattention               | 29             | 3,032         | 8,434         | 11,495         | 30         | 4,586         |
| Driving Too Fast for Conditions        | 159            | 7,794         | 19,469        | 27,422         | 170        | 11,619        |
| Exceeded Authorized Speed Limit        | 78             | 334           | 438           | 850            | 87         | 527           |
| Failed to Yield Right-of-Way           | 112            | 7,301         | 15,222        | 22,635         | 121        | 12,977        |
| Ran Off Road                           | 57             | 456           | 935           | 1,448          | 60         | 655           |
| Fatigued/Asleep                        | 21             | 373           | 556           | 950            | 21         | 547           |
| Followed Too Closely                   | 4              | 1,891         | 5,379         | 7,274          | 4          | 2,946         |
| Made an Improper Turn                  | 5              | 423           | 1,876         | 2,304          | 5          | 672           |
| Medical Related                        | 13             | 399           | 182           | 594            | 13         | 497           |
| Aggressive Operation of Vehicle        | 22             | 363           | 640           | 1,025          | 24         | 564           |
| Over-correcting/Over-steering          | 11             | 129           | 254           | 394            | 11         | 205           |
| Swerving to Avoid Object               | 1              | 131           | 288           | 420            | 1          | 181           |
| Wrong Side or Wrong Way                | 58             | 592           | 972           | 1,622          | 66         | 1,083         |
| Under the Influence                    | 131            | 2,105         | 1,840         | 4,076          | 141        | 3,165         |
| Vision Obscured (within Unit)          | 0              | 31            | 143           | 174            | 0          | 37            |
| Improper Lane Usage/Change             | 11             | 784           | 4,512         | 5,307          | 13         | 1,162         |
| Cell Phone                             | 1              | 25            | 61            | 87             | 1          | 41            |
| Other Improper Action                  | 13             | 697           | 3,223         | 3,933          | 13         | 1,040         |
| Unknown                                | 28             | 868           | 2,113         | 3,009          | 30         | 1,286         |
| <b>DRIVER SUBTOTAL</b>                 | <b>808</b>     | <b>30,057</b> | <b>69,928</b> | <b>100,793</b> | <b>868</b> | <b>48,054</b> |
| Debris                                 | 1              | 49            | 210           | 260            | 1          | 73            |
| Non-Highway Work                       | 0              | 0             | 2             | 2              | 0          | 0             |
| Obstruction In Road                    | 0              | 45            | 158           | 203            | 0          | 64            |
| Road Surface Condition (i.e., Wet)     | 2              | 86            | 312           | 400            | 2          | 130           |
| Rut Holes, Bumps                       | 0              | 11            | 27            | 38             | 0          | 11            |
| Shoulders (None, Low, Soft, High)      | 0              | 3             | 15            | 18             | 0          | 3             |
| Traffic Control Device (i.e., Missing) | 1              | 10            | 20            | 31             | 1          | 23            |
| Work Zone (Constr./Maint./Utility)     | 0              | 8             | 11            | 19             | 0          | 10            |
| Worn Travel-Polished Surface           | 0              | 1             | 3             | 4              | 0          | 1             |
| Other                                  | 0              | 25            | 68            | 93             | 0          | 47            |
| <b>ROADWAY SUBTOTAL</b>                | <b>4</b>       | <b>238</b>    | <b>826</b>    | <b>1,068</b>   | <b>4</b>   | <b>362</b>    |
| Inattentive                            | 3              | 91            | 57            | 151            | 3          | 153           |
| Lying &/or Illegally in Roadway        | 25             | 112           | 15            | 152            | 25         | 120           |
| Failed to Yield Right-of-Way           | 7              | 98            | 19            | 124            | 7          | 103           |
| Not Visible (Dark Clothing)            | 13             | 28            | 3             | 44             | 13         | 30            |
| Disregarded Sign/Signal                | 0              | 13            | 7             | 20             | 0          | 24            |
| Improper Crossing                      | 6              | 96            | 5             | 107            | 6          | 100           |
| Darting                                | 5              | 64            | 5             | 74             | 5          | 66            |
| Wrong Side of Road                     | 2              | 34            | 7             | 43             | 2          | 40            |
| Other                                  | 2              | 51            | 68            | 121            | 2          | 63            |
| Unknown                                | 1              | 17            | 21            | 39             | 1          | 20            |
| <b>NON-MOTORIST SUBTOTAL</b>           | <b>64</b>      | <b>604</b>    | <b>207</b>    | <b>875</b>     | <b>64</b>  | <b>719</b>    |
| Animal in Road                         | 8              | 630           | 2,275         | 2,913          | 11         | 825           |
| Glare                                  | 0              | 44            | 98            | 142            | 0          | 75            |
| Obstruction                            | 2              | 30            | 114           | 146            | 2          | 43            |
| Weather Condition                      | 0              | 108           | 430           | 538            | 0          | 158           |
| Under the Influence                    | 8              | 39            | 10            | 57             | 8          | 47            |
| Other                                  | 0              | 19            | 80            | 99             | 0          | 25            |
| Unknown                                | 0              | 5             | 10            | 15             | 0          | 9             |
| <b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUBTOTAL</b>          | <b>18</b>      | <b>875</b>    | <b>3,017</b>  | <b>3,910</b>   | <b>21</b>  | <b>1,182</b>  |
| Brakes                                 | 0              | 150           | 315           | 465            | 0          | 217           |
| Steering                               | 0              | 36            | 66            | 102            | 0          | 47            |
| Power Plant                            | 0              | 13            | 41            | 54             | 0          | 17            |
| Tires/Wheels                           | 8              | 165           | 483           | 656            | 8          | 297           |
| Lights                                 | 2              | 23            | 40            | 65             | 3          | 32            |
| Signals                                | 0              | 2             | 5             | 7              | 0          | 2             |
| Windows/Shield                         | 0              | 4             | 4             | 8              | 0          | 6             |
| Restraint Systems                      | 0              | 1             | 6             | 7              | 0          | 1             |
| Truck Coupling                         | 0              | 5             | 34            | 39             | 0          | 8             |
| Cargo                                  | 1              | 15            | 131           | 147            | 1          | 21            |
| Fuel System                            | 0              | 2             | 7             | 9              | 0          | 3             |
| Other                                  | 0              | 40            | 146           | 186            | 0          | 56            |
| Unknown                                | 0              | 153           | 342           | 495            | 0          | 243           |
| <b>VEHICLE DEFECT SUBTOTAL</b>         | <b>11</b>      | <b>609</b>    | <b>1,620</b>  | <b>2,240</b>   | <b>12</b>  | <b>950</b>    |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                          | <b>905</b>     | <b>32,383</b> | <b>75,598</b> | <b>108,886</b> | <b>969</b> | <b>51,267</b> |

\*Property Damage Only

### NON FATAL COLLISIONS BY FIRST HARMFUL EVENT



### FATAL COLLISIONS BY FIRST HARMFUL EVENT



## TRAFFIC COLLISIONS BY FIRST HARMFUL EVENT

| FIRST HARMFUL EVENT (FHE)             | COLLISION TYPE |               |               |                | PERSONS    |               |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|------------|---------------|
|                                       | Fatal          | Injury        | PDO*          | Total          | Killed     | Injured       |
| Cargo/Equip Loss or Shift             | 2              | 45            | 135           | 182            | 2          | 60            |
| Cross Median/Center                   | 8              | 97            | 134           | 239            | 10         | 170           |
| Downhill Runaway                      | 0              | 8             | 16            | 24             | 0          | 9             |
| Equipment Failure                     | 1              | 53            | 131           | 185            | 1          | 82            |
| Fire/Explosion                        | 1              | 4             | 20            | 25             | 2          | 5             |
| Immersion                             | 3              | 17            | 46            | 66             | 3          | 36            |
| Jackknife                             | 0              | 11            | 72            | 83             | 0          | 12            |
| Overturn/Rollover                     | 88             | 1,261         | 1,370         | 2,719          | 95         | 1,868         |
| Ran off Road Left                     | 0              | 46            | 78            | 124            | 0          | 56            |
| Ran off Road Right                    | 0              | 60            | 124           | 184            | 0          | 71            |
| Separation of Units                   | 0              | 8             | 32            | 40             | 0          | 26            |
| Spill (Two-Wheeled Vehicle)           | 11             | 143           | 24            | 178            | 11         | 170           |
| Overcorrecting/Over steering          | 0              | 1             | 2             | 3              | 0          | 1             |
| Other Non-collision                   | 13             | 221           | 338           | 572            | 14         | 307           |
| Unknown Non-collision                 | 10             | 58            | 77            | 145            | 13         | 78            |
| <b>NON-COLLISION SUBTOTAL</b>         | <b>137</b>     | <b>2,033</b>  | <b>2,599</b>  | <b>4,769</b>   | <b>151</b> | <b>2,951</b>  |
| Animal (Deer Only)                    | 2              | 232           | 1,362         | 1,596          | 2          | 285           |
| Animal (All Other)                    | 2              | 94            | 342           | 438            | 3          | 124           |
| Motor Vehicle (In Transport)          | 354            | 20,464        | 51,187        | 72,005         | 387        | 34,819        |
| Motor Vehicle (Stopped)               | 9              | 2,164         | 6,125         | 8,298          | 10         | 3,422         |
| Motor Vehicle (Other Roadway)         | 1              | 191           | 293           | 485            | 1          | 389           |
| Motor Vehicle (Parked)                | 3              | 119           | 691           | 813            | 3          | 152           |
| Pedalcycle                            | 12             | 229           | 7             | 248            | 12         | 237           |
| Pedestrian                            | 64             | 419           | 12            | 495            | 64         | 469           |
| Railway Vehicle                       | 3              | 14            | 18            | 35             | 5          | 23            |
| Work Zone Maint. Equipment            | 0              | 10            | 17            | 27             | 0          | 11            |
| Other Movable Object                  | 3              | 56            | 365           | 424            | 3          | 88            |
| Unknown Movable Object                | 0              | 4             | 52            | 56             | 0          | 5             |
| <b>OBJECT NOT FIXED SUBTOTAL</b>      | <b>453</b>     | <b>23,996</b> | <b>60,471</b> | <b>84,920</b>  | <b>490</b> | <b>40,024</b> |
| Bridge Overhead Structure             | 1              | 8             | 39            | 48             | 1          | 16            |
| Bridge Parapet End                    | 0              | 12            | 6             | 18             | 0          | 26            |
| Bridge Pier or Abutment               | 3              | 16            | 34            | 53             | 3          | 30            |
| Bridge Rail                           | 4              | 70            | 188           | 262            | 4          | 93            |
| Culvert                               | 14             | 175           | 233           | 422            | 15         | 241           |
| Curb                                  | 9              | 133           | 256           | 398            | 9          | 166           |
| Ditch                                 | 73             | 1,606         | 2,788         | 4,467          | 73         | 2,082         |
| Embankment                            | 24             | 537           | 772           | 1,333          | 24         | 709           |
| Equipment                             | 1              | 17            | 35            | 53             | 1          | 22            |
| Fence, Other Than Median              | 3              | 192           | 615           | 810            | 3          | 231           |
| Guardrail End                         | 5              | 84            | 184           | 273            | 7          | 120           |
| Guardrail Face                        | 6              | 188           | 714           | 908            | 7          | 256           |
| Highway Traffic Sign Post             | 4              | 110           | 359           | 473            | 4          | 131           |
| Impact Attenuator/Crash Cushion       | 0              | 16            | 30            | 46             | 0          | 25            |
| Light/Luminaire Support               | 0              | 18            | 38            | 56             | 0          | 23            |
| Mailbox                               | 6              | 149           | 343           | 498            | 6          | 184           |
| Median Barrier                        | 1              | 194           | 1,282         | 1,477          | 1          | 263           |
| Overhead Sign Support                 | 0              | 6             | 22            | 28             | 0          | 6             |
| Other (Post, Pole, Support, etc..)    | 7              | 131           | 341           | 479            | 7          | 171           |
| Other (Wall, Building, Tunnel, etc..) | 4              | 124           | 273           | 401            | 4          | 161           |
| Tree                                  | 122            | 1,852         | 2,528         | 4,502          | 130        | 2,454         |
| Utility Pole                          | 24             | 451           | 780           | 1,255          | 24         | 558           |
| Work Zone Maint. Equipment            | 1              | 5             | 18            | 24             | 2          | 9             |
| Other                                 | 3              | 218           | 567           | 788            | 3          | 265           |
| Unknown                               | 0              | 42            | 83            | 125            | 0          | 50            |
| <b>FIXED OBJECT SUBTOTAL</b>          | <b>315</b>     | <b>6,354</b>  | <b>12,528</b> | <b>19,197</b>  | <b>328</b> | <b>8,292</b>  |
| <b>YEAR TOTALS</b>                    | <b>905</b>     | <b>32,383</b> | <b>75,598</b> | <b>108,886</b> | <b>969</b> | <b>51,267</b> |

\*Property Damage Only

## PRIMARY CONTRIBUTING FACTOR

***The 2003 South Carolina Traffic Collision Fact Book reports on the primary contributing factor in a traffic collision. This information comes directly from the collision report form filled out by the investigating officer. It is important to realize that while the report form has a field for primary contributing factor; it can also report up to four (4) other contributing factors for each collision (see appendix page 130). Thus we rely on the investigating officer's judgment as to the primary contributing factor for a collision.***

Some action (or inaction) by one or more of the drivers was cited as the primary contributing factor in 100,793 of the 108,886 reported traffic collisions in 2003. This accounted for 92.6% of all primary contributing factors, a percentage slightly higher than the previous year of 90.8%. In fact, all the nine leading primary contributing factors were driver-related. Environmental factors accounted for the next largest category of collision causes with 3,910 or 3.6% of the total. The vast majority of these (2,913) involved an "Animal in the Roadway," accounted for 2.7% of all collisions. The "Non-Motorist", "Road" and "Vehicle" categories together accounted for only 3.8% of all reported traffic collisions in 2003.

For fatal collisions in 2003, some type of driver error was considered the primary contributing factor in 808 of the 905 collisions, accounting for 89.3% of all collisions in which someone was killed. This percentage is lower than that of all collisions, which is 92.6%. The specific causes of fatal collisions were quite different from all collisions. The leading primary contributing factor of fatal collisions was "Driving too Fast for Conditions" with 159 collisions (17.6%) and "Driving Under the Influence" was a close second with 131 collisions (14.5%). The next leading factors were "Failed to Yield Right of Way," "Exceeded Speed Limit," and "Wrong Side of Road" with 112, 78, and 58 fatal collisions respectively. The proportion of "Non-Motorist" (mostly "Pedestrian in Roadway") causes was much higher in fatal (7.1%) compared to property damage only collisions (2.1%).

## FIRST HARMFUL EVENT

The first harmful event (FHE) in a traffic collision is defined by the National Safety Council as the first occurrence of injury or damage in a collision. In 2003, the FHE in 84,920 of the 108,886 reported traffic collisions (78.0%) involved some type of collision between a motor vehicle in transit and an object not fixed. The top two FHEs, both involving a collision with an object not fixed, were "Collision with Motor Vehicle in Transport," 72,005 (66.1%) and "Collision with Stopped Vehicle," 8,298 (7.6%). The third FHE was "Ditch" in the "Collision with Fixed Object" group, with 4,467 collisions (4.1%). Combined, these three accounted for more than 3/4 of all reported collisions.

"Collisions with an Object not Fixed" accounted for a substantially smaller percentage of the fatal collisions (46.6%) than the property damage only collisions (80.0%). Collisions involving a "Collision with a Fixed Object" accounted for a substantially greater percentage of the fatal collisions (34.8%) than for property damage only (16.6%). The leading FHE in fatal collisions was "Collision with Motor Vehicle in Transport" with 354 (39.1%); the second leading FHE in fatal collisions was "Collision with Tree" 122 (13.5%).