

Part III - Collision Consequences

The consequences of traffic collisions extend beyond those persons directly affected and are measured in both human and economic terms. The economic costs consider that portion of financial loss born by society, i.e. medical costs, property damage, lost productivity, etc.. Opposite the economic losses are the intangible human costs associated with the grief and suffering that accompany a traffic death or injury. On the following pages, statistics related to estimated economic cost, traffic injuries, fatalities and restraint usage are presented. Some important observations in the 1999 data are as follows:

- ◆ Economic loss increased by 3.8% in 1999.
- ◆ Males accounted for 67.1% of the traffic fatalities, up from 65.8% in 1998. In 1972, males accounted for 75.3% of all traffic fatalities.
- ◆ The 350 females who died in traffic collisions represent the all-time record for South Carolina.
- ◆ A total of 320 persons under the age of 25 were killed in traffic collisions, accounting for 30.1% of the total persons killed.
- ◆ There were 2,068 automobile and truck occupants totally ejected from the vehicles in which they were riding. Of these, 307 or 14.8% were killed. Of the 243,057 occupants not ejected, 442 or 0.18% were killed. The percentage of fatalities suffered by ejected occupants was more than 80 times that of occupants not ejected.
- ◆ In 1999, there were 12,319 children under the age of six who were occupants of a car or truck that was involved in a traffic collision. Of these, 5,894 were restrained by a child safety seat, 5,700 by some other restraint (seat belt, seat/lap combination), 615 were unrestrained and for 110 restraint usage was unknown. Four of those restrained by a child safety seat were killed compared to ten unrestrained.
- ◆ The latest safety belt survey indicated a 65.2% restraint usage rate for drivers and passengers of motor vehicles. This is up from 64.8% in 1998. However, of the 759 occupant fatalities with known restraint usage 485 (58.6%) were not restrained and 343 (41.4%) were restrained.