

## Roads death toll similar to previous years

Despite reports that scores of people died on the roads over the Easter weekend, the number of fatalities was probably nothing out of the ordinary.



South African road users drive like hooligans every day says Howard Dembovsky. Image: [Road Safety](#)

Gilberto Martins, Chief Operating Officer of the Road Traffic Management Corporation, said there were not necessarily more deaths this weekend than on any other.

He said traffic volumes over the five-day Easter weekend were "immense" on some routes, especially last Thursday (17 April) and on Monday (21 April).

The traffic management corporation will release the weekend's road death statistics on Thursday (24 April).

"Road safety campaigns and law enforcement cannot be an Easter or holiday thing. It has to be done 365 days a year," said Martins.

He praised traffic authorities for visible policing and manning roadblocks over the holiday weekend.

Justice Project South Africa Chairman Howard Dembovsky said that without the efforts of the traffic authorities the death toll would be much higher. But the same level of law enforcement was needed all year round.

### Consistency

"We need consistency if we are going to stand a snowball's chance of reducing road accident fatalities by 50% by 2020, hoped for by the United Nations. People will drive as badly as the authorities allow them to," Dembovsky said.

"For instance, at a recent roadblock in the Northern Cape police had nabbed drunk drivers but there was no nurse to draw blood from them within two hours, as the law requires," he said.

Dembovsky said if people realised how many drivers and passengers were injured on the roads they might drive more cautiously.

More than 100 people are badly injured every day in car crashes and an average of 40 people die every day on South African roads

Dembovsky said it was irrational to expect people to drive better during holidays when they drive like hooligans every day

Martins said speeding, drunk-driving and people not wearing seat-belts were to blame for the high number of road deaths.

He said many children were not strapped in on the back seats of cars, despite a 30% less chance of fatal injury if using a

seat-belt.

Dembovsky said it was a myth that taxi passengers were the most likely victims in a crash, adding that it was usually single drivers in cars.

Source: The Times via I-Net Bridge

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>