



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590

DRIVER INATTENTION IS A MAJOR FACTOR IN SERIOUS TRAFFIC CRASHES

Using all the available data, the researchers assigned a crash type and identified pre-existing conditions (such as driver, roadway, vehicle, and environment) that may have contributed to the crash and the critical event that precipitated the crash occurrence. The critical event can be an action (a pedestrian darted into roadway, for example) or it can be a point in time (the driver entered the curve without reducing travel speed).

HOW TO ORDER

For a copy of *The Relative Frequency of Unsafe Driving Acts in Serious Traffic Crashes*, Short Technical Report (28 pages) or the Final Report, *The Relative Frequency of Unsafe Driving Acts in Serious Crashes* (45 pages plus appendices), write to the Office of Research and Traffic Records, NHTSA, NTS-21, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590 or fax (202) 344-7046. Paul J. Tremont, Ph.D., was the contract manager.

Causal Category	Assignment Level	Percentage of Drivers Contributing to Causation
Driver Inattention	Primary (Sole Factor)	16.7
	Secondary (in Combination)	5.9
	Contributory	22.8
	Total	45.4
Vehicle Speed	Primary (Sole Factor)	4.6
	Secondary (in Combination)	3.8
	Contributory	8.1
	Total	16.7
Alcohol Impairment	Primary (Sole Factor)	4.0
	Secondary (in Combination)	1.1
	Contributory	6.9
	Total	12.0
Perceptual Errors (Looked, did not see)	Primary (Sole Factor)	6.9
	Secondary (in Combination)	0.1
	Contributory	0.1
	Total	7.1
(Accepted inadequate gap)	Primary (Sole Factor)	4.0
	Secondary (in Combination)	0.1
	Contributory	0.1
	Total	4.2
Decision Errors (Turned with obstructed view)	Primary (Sole Factor)	4.7
	Secondary (in Combination)	2.1
	Contributory	2.8
	Total	9.6
(Misjudged best passing spot)	Primary (Sole Factor)	0.7
	Secondary (in Combination)	0.1
	Contributory	0.1
	Total	0.9
Incapacitation (Fell asleep)	Primary (Sole Factor)	4.4
	Secondary (in Combination)	2.0
	Contributory	0.1
	Total	6.5

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