

The debate about older versus younger drivers has continued for many years. Older drivers and their advocates say that their years of experience and other factors make them a lower road safety risk. Some medical experts and others say reaction times are impaired with age. For the purpose of AAMI's research, 'older drivers' are those aged 55+.

FAST FACTS

Older drivers are more likely to agree that other drivers are becoming more aggressive (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)

Older drivers are less likely to be impatient – they are more likely refrain from aggressive behaviour while driving and they take care to avoid driver distractions (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)

Older drivers are more likely to be subjected to road rage or aggressive behaviour by other drivers (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)

Drivers aged 51 and older have the lowest average cost per car accident insurance claim (source: AAMI claims data)

Most older drivers (86 per cent) have experienced a crash as a driver/passenger (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)

DRIVING DISTANCE

- Overall, men and women aged 55+ drive fewer kilometres per annum than other age groups – most travel fewer than 20,000 km annually

SPEEDING

- Older drivers are half as likely as others to frequently exceed the speed limit most of the time – 3 per cent versus 7 per cent (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)
- Older drivers are more likely than others to obey speed limits because it's the law – 35 per cent versus 30 per cent (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)

FATIGUE AND HOLIDAY DRIVING

- Older drivers are just as likely than others to have momentarily fallen asleep while at the wheel – 28 per cent versus 27 per cent (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)
- Older drivers are more likely than others to stop and take a power nap if fatigued while driving – 28 per cent versus 32 per cent (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)

DRIVING WHILE IMPAIRED

- One-third of older drivers (36 per cent) admit to having driven when over the legal drink-driving limit (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)
- One in five older drivers (23 per cent) admit they have driven after taking medicinal drugs although the label warned against doing so (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)
- Older drivers are less likely than others to agree that prescription drugs are a hidden danger on our roads – 67 per cent versus 76 per cent (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)
- Older drivers are half as likely as others to agree that drug-driving is safer than drink-driving – 3 per cent versus 7 per cent (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)

Older Drivers

Continued



DRIVER ETIQUETTE AND ROAD RAGE

- Older drivers are less likely than others to have gestured rudely or shouted at another driver – 44 per cent versus 58 per cent (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)
- Older drivers are less likely than others to agree they are impatient drivers – 9 per cent versus 16 per cent (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)
- Older drivers are almost half as likely as others to have deliberately tailgated another driver – 7 per cent versus 12 per cent (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)
- Most older drivers (84 per cent) have been subjected to rude gestures from other drivers (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)
- More than half of older drivers (62 per cent) have received verbal abuse from other drivers (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)

DRIVER DISTRACTIONS

- Older drivers are less likely to have lost concentration while changing their car stereo – 27 per cent versus 40 per cent of other drivers (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)
- Older drivers are least likely to often use a mobile phone without a hands-free kit while driving – only 8 per cent of them say they do so versus 18 per cent of other drivers (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)

CRASHES AND CLAIMS

- Most older drivers attribute crashes they have had to: inattention (48 per cent), speeding (19 per cent), fatigue and alcohol (each 9 per cent) (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)
- Older drivers are more likely than others to stop and check the condition of an animal they have hit – 68 per cent versus 65 per cent (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)
- Four in 10 older drivers (42 per cent) have had a close call with a pedestrian or cyclist (source: *2007 AAMI Crash Index*)
- Older drivers' crashes cost less and tend to be less serious: the top cause of claims for drivers over 55 is collision with a stationary object (source: AAMI claims data)