

Confidentiality Statement

Overview

This document contains information on the Research Department of the RSA's approach to ensuring confidentiality when developing reports using the road traffic collision database. Section 8 (1) of the Road Safety Authority Act 2006 provides the legislative basis for the production of road safety information and statistics using the road traffic collision database by the RSA.

The Minister may direct the Authority to collect, compile, prepare, publish or distribute to such persons (including the Minister) such information and statistics relating to road safety and the functions of the Authority, as the Minister considers appropriate, for national or international planning, policy research and development, monitoring and reporting purposes and may specify any matter concerning the collection, compilation, preparation, publication and distribution of such data and statistics, as the Minister considers appropriate.

General Information - Confidentiality

The Research Department is committed to protecting the confidentiality of the data of living persons who have been involved in road traffic collisions that occurred on a public road in Ireland. This is primarily achieved through a variety of statistical disclosure control (SDC) measures which are based on CSO guidance. Please note that such measures do not apply to fatality data. However, our policy is to not publish fatality data if it is overly disclosive and if it might not already be in the public domain. Some examples of the types of fatality data that we may publish include:

- Total number of fatalities within a road user group
- Total number of fatalities by county
- Total number of fatalities within a road user group by broad age categories

In general, the risk of identification will be assessed and evaluated prior to publication of a statistical report, and we will apply SDC measures where there is a reasonable risk of individuals being identified. Where SDC measures are deemed to be necessary to protect confidentiality, the most appropriate method of control will be applied in order to minimise the risk of disclosure while maximising the utility and usefulness of the statistics. To further reduce the risk of identification, details of the SDC methodology are not published.

Examples

The data in published reports is presented in aggregated format and uses broad classifications, such as age and time bands, which help to protect against disclosure of information pertaining to an individual.

However, sometimes even when presenting data and information in aggregated form, particular combinations of variables can lead to small cell sizes. In these instances, it could be possible to identify an individual based on the published data, either directly or by comparing it with other data that is already available in the public domain, including media reports. In cases where such a risk exists, techniques are employed to safeguard the confidentiality of the information pertaining to individuals. The main technique used to achieve this is to suppress values with cell sizes less than 3. This may reduce the overall level of detail published or alter the data in a minor way, but it ensures that personal information is not identifiable.