RSA research reveals 4 in 5 cyclists injured on urban roads

- More cyclists injured during morning and evening commutes
- Of all collisions involving another vehicle - 4 in 5 cyclists injured by car
- Over half of cyclist injuries occurred at junctions
- 1,056 cyclists injured in collisions in 2018

4 March 2020 – The Road Safety Authority (RSA) is calling for more investment in cycling infrastructure, greater roll out of 30km/h limits in urban areas and for motorists to reduce their speed in response to new research published today on trends in cyclist injuries on Irish roads.

The RSA analysis looked at the leading causes of cyclist injuries from 2006-2018 and shows that cycling injuries increased from 211 in 2006 to 1,056 in 2018. However, caution is advised on interpreting this increase as this is mainly due to two factors. Firstly, the growth in popularity of cycling as a mode of transport. In the ten-year period between 2006-2016, there was a 52 per cent increase in the number of cyclists commuting to work, school or college. Secondly, it is due in part to new reporting mechanisms, introduced in 2014, which have enabled the collection of more detailed data on injury collisions.

The research reveals cycling injuries predominantly occurred as a result of collisions with cars and goods vehicles. Over nine in ten cyclists were injured in a multivehicle collision in which at least one other vehicle was involved. Moreover, cyclist injuries occurred more often during the morning and evening commuting periods (8:00-8:59 and 17:00-18:59) when road use peaks.

The results of the study show that most cyclist injuries occurred as a result of collisions on urban roads (less than or equal to 60 km/h), with just under 87 per cent of cyclist injuries occurring in these locations. More than 4 in 5 cyclist injuries took place on two-way single carriageways. Meanwhile, over half of cyclist injuries occurred at junctions and nearly a quarter of injuries resulted from collisions at T-junctions. Another contributing factor to cyclist injuries was vehicles' manoeuvring. One in five injuries occurred when cars were turning right. However, for goods vehicles, the opposite was true, with one in five cyclist injuries happening while the goods vehicle was turning left.

The most common driver action prior to a collision with a cyclist is 'failure to observe', representing approximately two in five cyclist injuries with cars, and similarly for goods vehicles.

Speaking on publication of the report, Ms Moyagh Murdock**,** CEO of the Road Safety Authority said: "Today's research reveals the majority of collisions involved a cyclist and a vehicle, and we know when a cyclist and car collide, the cyclist always comes out worst. We need to remove the potential for conflict by providing more dedicated and better cycling infrastructure. While the announcement of the creation of a cycle lane on the north quays in Dublin city is a welcome development, much more needs to be done. Ireland is lagging

behind many of our European counterparts in introducing dedicated cycle tracks. We need separate infrastructure for vehicles and bicycles that remove danger points from our roads and reduce conflict between road users. The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) earlier this month called on EU member states to prioritise the provision of separate cycling infrastructure to protect cyclists."

"The same ETSC report also highlights that speed is another critical factor for reducing collisions with cyclists and calls for the greater roll out of 30km/h speed limits in towns and cities. The clear message is motorists need to slow down, particularly in urban areas and during peak travel times. Not only will cyclists, and other vulnerable road users, have greater chances of survival if involved in a collision, slowing down will give drivers time and space to react, especially if they are distracted, and avoid a collision in the first place."

ENDS

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR

Key Findings

Characteristics of injured cyclists and times of occurrence

- Just over 7 in 10 cyclists (73.7%) injured in 2016 were male, while almost 6 in 10 (57.1%) were between the ages of 25-49.
- The primary periods of the day in which cyclist injuries occurred were during the morning and evening commuting periods (8:00-8:59 and 17:00-18:59).
- There was an increase in the incidence of cyclist injuries from the months of May through to September (48% of injuries occurred in this 5-month period).

Road characteristics and collision circumstances

- More than 8 in 10 cyclist injuries (85.4%) took place on two-way single carriageways and more than 8 in 10 (86.7%) were on urban roads.

- Over half of cyclist injuries (51.1%) in 2016 occurred at junctions. Almost 1 in 4 of all cyclists injured in 2016 (24.7%) were injured in collisions that took place at a T-junction.
- Almost half of cyclists injured (47%) were wearing a helmet at the time of the collision, while just over 4 in 10 (41%) were not. In just over 1 in 10 cases (12%), it was not known whether the injured cyclist was wearing a helmet.

Multivehicle collisions

- Just over 9 in 10 cyclists (91.3%) were injured in a multivehicle collision in which at least one other vehicle was involved.
- Less than 1 in 10 cyclists injured in 2016 (7.9%) were injured in a single vehicle collision in which no other person or vehicle was involved.
- Of the cyclists injured in multivehicle collisions, over 8 in 10 (84%) were injured in a collision with a car.
- Of the cyclists injured in multivehicle collisions, over 1 in 10 (11%) were injured in a collision with a goods vehicle (both light and heavy goods vehicles).

Vehicle manoeuvres and driver actions

- The manoeuvre of cars and goods vehicles most associated with cyclist injuries in 2016 was driving forward; approximately 2 in 5 in each case (40.3% and 38.8% respectively).
- For cars, the second manoeuvre most associated with cyclist injuries in multivehicle collisions was turning right (just over 1 in 5 injuries - 20.5%). For goods vehicles, the opposite was true, and left turns were more associated with cyclist injuries (1 in 5 injuries - 20%).
- In over 2 out of 5 cyclist injuries (41.4%) in collisions with cars, it was reported that the car driver failed to observe prior to the collision.
- In 2 out of 5 cyclist injuries (40%) in collisions with goods vehicles, it was reported that the goods vehicle driver failed to observe prior to the collision.

- In just under 1 in 5 cyclist injuries (19.8%) in a collision with a car, it was reported that the cyclist failed to observe.
- In just over 1 in 5 cyclist injuries (22.4%) in a collision with a goods vehicle, it was reported that the cyclist failed to observe.

About the research:

This report provides an overview of trends in cyclist injuries that occurred in road traffic collisions on Irish public roads from 2006-2018 and an in-depth review of cyclist injuries in 2016. Throughout this report, where reference is made to “cyclist injuries”, this refers to all injuries, both serious and minor combined.

The Road Safety Authority (RSA) has a statutory remit to report on all fatal, serious and minor injury collisions on public roads that were reported to An Garda Síochána and where records were subsequently transferred to the RSA. As part of this work, the Road Traffic Collision Database is maintained by the RSA, in collaboration with An Garda Síochána. Prior to 2014, the RSA populated this database with collision data received from An Garda Síochána via a paper form detailing the collision circumstances. The RSA now receives an electronic copy of road traffic collision (RTC) data on a daily basis from An Garda Síochána, which are primarily based on information collected at the scene of the collision. As part of the RSA quality control procedures, this data undergoes a validation procedure designed to ensure the quality and accuracy of the final dataset. The validation procedure introduces a time lag to the date at which the RSA can publish analyses based on the RTC dataset. As a result, data from the Road Traffic Collision Database are used in the current report to provide an overview of the 971 cyclist injuries that occurred in 2016.

Data from the Road Traffic Collision Database is used to summarise individual and location specific characteristics such as the age and gender of injured cyclists, road and junction type, as well as light conditions and road character. The times in which cyclist injuries

occurred are also reported, according to hour of day, day of the week, and month. The report also outlines driver and cyclist actions and vehicle manoeuvres that preceded cyclist collisions.

To view the Cyclists Injury Trends 2006-2016 with an in-depth review of 2016,see here.