



## Oman crash deaths break all records



Ambulance heading to the scene of a crash on Sultan Qaboos highway.

### Where is our sense of outrage?

Oman 2008 crash death and injury levels break all records. 2009 toll so far 16% higher than 2008!

*This is a phenomenal 30 deaths per 100,000 population, one of the highest in the world*

### Dear Road Safety Subscriber

We welcome all new subscribers and thank existing subscribers for the positive feedback and for those who have volunteered as road safety champions. We are exploring ways to work together over the coming year.

Road Deaths 2008 (per 100,00 population)	
UK	5.4
US	13
Global average	19 (est)
Oman	30

### Oman 2008 crash death and injury levels break all records

So far in 2009 the world has witnessed war and natural disaster bringing death, destruction and suffering to countless families around the world. Less visible perhaps, but just as tragic in a country as peaceful and blessed as Oman, are the violent and untimely deaths of so many in vehicle crashes on Oman's roads.

Since January 2008, *over 1080 families* have buried loved one, often innocent victims of someone else's reckless or careless behaviour

Statistics recently issued by the Royal Oman Police reveal that 951 men, women and children lost their lives at the scene of crashes and 10,558 were injured in 7,982 crashes in 2008. 140 more have died from January 1 to February 13 2009.

This is a **16% increase** over the same record-breaking period in 2008. In both cases, the real toll is even higher as ROP statistics do not include those who die of their injuries later in hospital. Most of these deaths are preventable, the result of speed, machismo and poor driving skills. Read more at <http://www.salimandsalimah.org/NewsletterNovember2008.htm>



Funeral of young boy who died in a speeding car driven by his brother who now faces a lifetime of regret



*Not posed by models*

### *Oman 2008 crash death cont....*

Alarming, this surge in Oman takes place against a background of dramatic reductions in road crash fatalities elsewhere in the world including the neighbouring UAE where an aggressive anti-speed campaign combined with stricter penalties for driving offences (longer prison terms, heavier fines and increased sentencing powers for judges), more rigorous policing and the introduction of sophisticated new radars are credited with a 15% drop in recorded death and serious injury in 2008



Do we really accept that road crash death and injury on this scale is the price that society must pay for unrestricted mobility?

### Has the time come?

If this upward trajectory continues unchecked, by 2010 few families in Oman will have been spared the pain of the sudden, violent death or disabling injury of an immediate family member. Despite this, public and private apathy prevail. Oman is repeating the pattern experienced by rapidly motorizing high income countries in 1970s when death on the roads claimed 1 life in every 3000. The trend was reversed only when people including victims, media and public personalities began to react and to speak out against passive acceptance of the carnage.

### Road safety, not rocket science

The World Report 2004 spells out, for the entire global community, low-cost, tried and tested measures successfully used by high income countries to reduce road crash fatalities starting with a ***national road safety plan*** which:-

- sets targets;
- allocates budget;
- defines roles and responsibilities of all sectors

Read more at <http://www.salimandsalimah.org/NewsletterNovember2008.htm#Solutions>

#### ***Enormous cost***

Oman's road safety situation is undeniably critical. In some hospitals, traffic-related injuries represent up to 90% of all admissions and are an enormous tax on the health care system. Add to this the cost of prolonged medical care for the injured, disabled and often forgotten survivors or support for widows and orphans left to cope with the loss of the family breadwinner.

The enormous economic and social cost of road crashes is a price we cannot afford to pay. Allowed to continue unchecked, these costs will cancel all other gains from economic development.



Rapid action should be taken now to implement the key recommendations of the World Report starting with a national road safety plan for Oman

## Sponsorship

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Communicate direct through our newsletter with engaged road safety professionals and educators interested in hearing about your road safety event

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## Creating a crash-free culture

What lies ahead for 2009? Soaring death and injury rates are not inevitable. Countries which have targeted one or more of the main risk factors have succeeded in reducing road crash fatalities by **20-40 per cent** within a few years even when the trend was previously rising sharply. These factors include

- Driving at excessive or inappropriate speeds
- Reckless driving: negligent overtaking in on-coming traffic, with poor field of vision, from the slow lane, tailgating, racing
- Failure to wear seat belts or child restraints for children
- Distracted driving: using mobile phone, eating, drinking, changing music, interacting with passengers
- Impaired driving under influence of drugs, alcohol
- Inattention/non-observance of traffic rules - non-use of signals when changing lanes, careless merging onto highway

## Whose responsibility?

Apart from government, many sectors have a role to play in road safety in the prevention of crashes, deaths and injuries. The business sector bears a heavy responsibility as more than **1 in 3 crashes** involve vehicles driven for or to and from work. For tips on driving for better business see <http://www.roadsafe.com/programmes/work.aspx>

Each one of us can play a part in creating a crash-free culture by adopting and advocating safe driving habits among family, colleagues and community. Download free materials on some of the main risk factors such as seatbelts and child safety seats <http://www.salimandsalimah.org/safety.htm>



## Contact details

### Al Mustadaama (Sustainability)

P.O. Box 500  
Mina Al Fahal 116, Sultanate of Oman

email [almustadaama@ecologyfund.net](mailto:almustadaama@ecologyfund.net)

website [www.salimandsalimah.org](http://www.salimandsalimah.org)

web mail [info@salimandsalimah.org](mailto:info@salimandsalimah.org)

**Skill donation** - Are you passionate about road safety and looking to make a contribution? Do you have skills especially in the visual arts and multimedia, web-design, graphic design, photography, delivering presentations or fundraising, then do not hesitate to [volunteer](#). As always we welcome your feedback

Al Mustadaama Sustainability is a non-profit organisation working as a road safety advocate in Oman since 2005. We are the developer of the Salim and Salimah, Safe and Sound campaign and producer of award-winning film *"Doesn't your child deserve a safe ride?"* Al Mustadaama is a 'partner in health' of the World Health Organisation, an observer member of the Global United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, member of the European Road Safety Charter, NHTSA Safe Communities Network and RTIRN

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