

Agenda Item	10
Report No	ECI/19/20

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: **Economy and Infrastructure**

Date: **2 September 2020**

Report Title: **Annual Road Safety Update**

Report By: **Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment**

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates Members on the progress in achieving the road casualty reduction targets set out in Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020 entitled 'Go Safe on Scotland's Roads it's Everyone's Responsibility'.
- 1.2 It highlights the work of by Highland Council Road Safety Team to ensure a lasting reduction in Road Casualties on Highlands Roads. A particular focus is placed on young drivers, motorcyclists, older drivers, safer routes to school and 20mph speed limit schemes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - i. note progress made to the 2020 national road casualty reduction targets;
 - ii. note the work of the Road Safety Team;
 - iii. note there will be an upcoming new Scottish Road Safety Framework and a new Highland Council Road Safety Plan;
 - iv. note the significant increase in the SRTS Grant funding awarded to Highland Council this year. SRTS budget for financial year 2020/21 is £1,037,000; and
 - v. note the planned implementation of both temporary and permanent 20mph speed limits.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – The Highland Council Safer Routes to School programme for 2020/21 is grant funded directly from Scottish Government with a budget of £1,037,000.

- 3.2 Legal – 20mph speed limits require to be supported by formal Road Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – There is no adverse impact on Equality, Poverty and Rural considerations arising from this report.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – SRTS and 20mph Speed Limit Schemes have a positive effect on the environment and carbon emissions as they support and promote a modal shift from vehicle usage to walking/wheeling.
- 3.5 Risk – There is no adverse impact on Risk considerations arising from this report.
- 3.6 Gaelic - There is no adverse impact on Gaelic considerations arising from this report.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Highland Council has a statutory duty, under the Road Traffic Act 1991, to prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote Road Safety.
- 4.2 The cost in suffering and economic terms caused by road accidents is enormous and the human cost of a life simply cannot be valued. In Great Britain, in 2018, the average cost of each Fatality was £1,958,303, each serious casualty was £220,058 and each slight casualty was £16,964. The average cost of all casualties is £70,791. The estimated total cost of all injury road accidents in Scotland in 2018 was £1,029.1 million. (Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2018)
- 4.3 This report details the progress in achieving the road casualty reduction targets set out in Scotland’s Road Safety Framework to 2020 entitled ‘Go Safe on Scotland’s Roads it’s Everyone’s Responsibility’. It also highlights the work of Highland Councils Road Safety team along with the road safety partnership working that exists in Highland with the goal of achieving the ambitious targets.

5. Scottish Road Safety Targets to 2020 (and beyond) and Local Collision Statistics

- 5.1 As agreed at TECS Committee on 13th August 2009 (TECS 55/09) Highland Council is working towards achieving the road casualty reduction targets set out in Scotland’s Road Safety Framework to 2020. The Council also agreed to share the Scottish Governments vision that there will be:

“A steady reduction in the numbers of those killed and those seriously injured, with the ultimate vision of a future where no-one is killed on Scotland’s roads and the injury rate is much reduced.”

- 5.2 The Highland’s (Local Authority and Trunk Road) the Road Safety Targets to 2020, including the 2015 milestones set by the Scottish Government, are represented in the table below. Their associated reduction percentage is based on targets to be achieved against the baseline which is the average casualty figures for 2004 to 2008 (The Scottish Government target is the percentage shown in brackets):

Target	2015 milestone reduction	2020 target reduction
Killed	20 (30%)	17 (40%)

Seriously injured	91 (43%)	72 (55%)
Children (aged <16) killed	1 (35%)	1 (50%)
Children (aged<16) seriously injured	6 (50%)	4 (65%)

5.3 The following table show the Highland Council statistics for the last 5 years (2015-2020) of the 2010-2020 target cycle, these figures include Local and Trunk roads:

Target	2004 to 08 Average	2015 Milestone Target	2015 Highland	2016 Highland	2017 Highland	2018 Highland	2019 Highland	2020 Target
Killed	28	20	14	18	15	20	21	17
Seriously injured	160	91	61	83	68	90		72
Seriously injured Adjusted for CRaSH					128 CRaSH data	158* CRaSH data	142* CRaSH data	
Children (aged <16) killed	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Children (aged <16) seriously injured	12	6	4	2	4	4	6* CRaSH data	4

* From Summer 2019 Police Scotland started using a new National System called CRaSH to record all collision data. Prior to this the classification of an injury as either serious or slight was down to the individual officer's own judgment, based on official guidance. The new CRaSH system automatically converts the injuries to a severity level, either serious or slight. The change to this new system has corrected the previous subjective recording, this has resulted in more collisions being classed as serious than would have previously been reported. Appendix 2 shows the trend of what this new way of reporting looks like over a few years.

5.4 Due to the change in the reporting system as detailed * above, it will be difficult quantify the achievement of the 2020 target. Pre-CRaSH figures will be interpolated from the new reporting data as is identified above for 2017 and 2018.

5.5 As shown in the table in 5.3 since 2015 the number of fatalities has increased slightly above the target. Analysis of fatal collision causation carried out at the bi-annual Partnership review boards shows that whilst there are some common factors generally these collisions are stand alone accidents with no common pattern emerging. Analysis of the accidents on the Highland Council road network, show that in 2018 there were 10 fatalities whilst in 2019 there were 9. Generally 50% of the fatalities occur on the Trunk Road network with a similar number on the Highland Council road network.

5.6 Common factors identified are powered 2 wheelers, foreign motorists, young and older drivers, including fitness to drive. Programmes targeting these vulnerable road user

categories have and are being developed in conjunction with partners as described later in the report.

- 5.7 Similar factors apply to the serious collisions.
- 5.8 Both the child national casualty reduction targets are currently on course to being achieved. It should be noted that where a target is very low, a single accident can be sufficient for non-realisation of the target.
- 5.9 Appendices 1 – 4 detail the casualty statistics for Highland, in relation to the 2004-2008 average casualty figures and Scottish Government 2020 national targets. These figures are from the Transport Scotland Publication detailed in 'Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2018', 'Key Reported Road Casualties 2019' (2019 and new CRaSH trend figures only) and the Highland Council's own collision database (Young Drivers, Motorcyclists and Older Driver Figures).
- 5.10 The Scottish Road Safety Framework to 2020 can be viewed at: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/29622/j243698.pdf>
- 5.11 Highland Council's Road Safety Team are responsible for managing the Council's Road Collision Data System and utilising the data to ensure any clusters or areas of concern are identified. They are also responsible for undertaking Collision Investigation on all Fatal Road Crashes that take place on the Local Authority Road Network. This work is key in the drive towards reducing collision on Highlands roads.

6. North Coast 500

- 6.1 The establishment of the North Coast 500 in 2015, and the popularity of the Highlands as a Tourist destination (COVID aside), has seen a significant increase in traffic volumes to the Highland Area over the last few years. Appendix 5 shows that growth in traffic figures on the NC500 since 2015 is between 5% and 28%, whilst Appendix 6 outlines the encouraging downward trend in injury collisions on this route over the last few years.
- 6.2 In 2018 there were 5 fatal accidents on the local road network section of the NC500 representing 50% of all fatalities on the Highland Council Local Road network, none of which involved tourists. In 2019 there were 2 fatalities on the local road network section of the NC500 both involving tourists, there is no discernible trend, however action is being taken to increase signage and road markings, including keep left arrows on the route.

7. Priority Areas

- 7.1 The Scottish Governments Road Safety Framework identifies the following priority areas to focus on in an effort to achieve their challenging targets:

Priority	Action being undertaken
Leadership, Sharing Intelligence and Good Practice	Information can be found in the Highland Road Safety Group Action Plan
Children & Drivers aged 17-25	This is a key area for Highland Council, see item 9 for the work being undertaken in this area and Appendix 7 for the collision statistics in this area.
Rural Roads	Highland Council provides Engineering solutions where applicable and actively

	supports local and national campaigns led by Police Scotland. In order to mitigate driver overrun and stress the Council are currently working with Transport Scotland to improve the signage used at passing places on the Council network.
Drink Drive	Highland Council support the Police Scotland led campaigns.
Seatbelts	Child Car Seat Checking Clinics are run annually in the Council Area.
Speed	The Council work with the North Safety Camera in identifying locations of concern. See item 9.4.

7.2 In addition to this the following 2 areas have also been identified, following local collision analysis, as priority areas for Highland Council.

Priority	Action being undertaken
Motorcyclists	See Appendix 8 for Highland motorcyclist collision statistics. Highland Council are part of the multi Council and Police Partnership 'Rider Refinement North'. This partnership delivers a number of rider improvement courses in the Highland Area per year.
Older Drivers	This is a newly emerging trend, see appendix 9 for collision statistics, and one that the Council will work together with partners on.

8. Highland Council Road Safety Plan and the new Scottish Road Safety Framework Beyond 2020

- 8.1 A Road Safety Plan for Highland Council is currently being written, and it is planned to be brought to this Committee on completion in the new year. This plan will provide a strategy, focus and drive going forward in the continuing goal of casualty reduction on Highland Councils roads.
- 8.2 Later than originally anticipated, Scotland's Road Safety Framework beyond 2020 is about to enter the consultation phase of development. Covid19 has had a significant impact on bringing this new Road Safety Framework forward however the up to date information is that the consultation will be out by the end of August with responses analysed by the end of the year and the new Framework to 2030 published in mid-January.
- 8.3 The expectation is that this new strategic document, produced by the Scottish Government, will provide new national casualty reduction targets for the next 10 years and will fully embrace the Safe Systems approach to road safety.

9. Education and Partnership Working

- 9.1 Road Safety Education work undertaken by Highland Council Road Safety Team and wider partners has been severely impacted by COVID 19. The following reflects activity that takes place in this area in a typical year:

Education Resource	Age Range	Narrative
Go Safe with Ziggy	Nursery/P 1	Resource available to all English & Gaelic Medium nurseries in Highland.
Streetsense	P2 – 7	Resource available to all Primary Schools in Highland.
Bikeability (Cycle Training)	P5, 6 & 7	See 9.3 for details.
Junior Road Safety Officer Scheme	P5, 6 & 7	Annual Induction events held to train over 300 new JRSO's per year. 2020 event postponed due to COVID 19. www.irso.com .
Safe Highlander	P7	Multi agency annual safety event for P7 pupils held in different locations around Highland.
Your Call	S1 – S3	In all Highland Schools
Crash Magnets	S4 – S5	In all Highland Schools
Safer Routes to School Programme	P1 – S6	Open to all Schools in Highland – see 10 for details.
Driving Ambition	S5 & S6	Key year round activity providing vital road safety input to our senior pupils.

For additional info. on any of the road safety education resources mentioned visit <https://roadsafety.scot/learning/> or contact road.safety@highland.gov.uk

- 9.2 Partnership Working is key to achieving the ambitious road casualty reduction targets, they cannot be realised without a proactive multi-agency approach. Highland Council is an active partner on the Highlands and Islands Road Casualty Reduction Partnership Group chaired by Police Scotland. Representatives from Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Highland and Road Safety Scotland also sit on this group with information exchange and delivering on key road safety priority areas the aim of this strategic group.
- 9.3 In addition to this Highland Council is also a member of the Highland Road Safety Group. The action plan of which can be found [online](#) and will be updated once the new national framework document (para 8.1) has been published.
- 9.4 Highland Council Road Safety Team representatives also attend a bi-annual Fatal Collision Review Group along with Police Scotland, Transport Scotland, Bear Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service where all fatal collisions that happen in the Highland Area are looked at and any patterns/trends can be determined.
- 9.5 The Road Safety Intervention method of Education, Engineering, Encouragement, Enforcement and Partnership Working is applied in all activities.
- 9.6 **Bikeability**

In 2019 The Council were successful in their bid to Cycling Scotland and awarded a Grant to employ a dedicated Bikeability Co-ordinator. This Bikeability Scotland Coordinator has been in post since November 2019, supporting Highland Councils 171 primary schools so they are able to participate in the Bikeability Scotland programme. The post is embedded within the Road Safety Team and is funded by a Support Plus grant from Cycling Scotland. The main grant conditions are to increase the number of schools undertaking Level 2 on road training from 21% to 40% and Level 1 to 40%. These conditions were set to be met before the outbreak of COVID-19 which resulted in school closures and the cancelling of planned Bikeability sessions. Throughout the school closure period the Bikeability Scotland Coordinator offered and delivered socially distanced playground-based cycle training to the children attending the Highland Council childcare hubs. Funding has been successfully secured to enable the post to continue for a second year.

9.7 North Safety Camera Unit Sites

9.7.1 Following Transport Scotland agreement to change the national criteria used to determine the deployment of Safety Camera Van's the following sites in Highland have been identified as having a need for Safety Camera presence.

9.7.2 New Mobile Deployment Locations have been identified for:

- A835 north of Morefield, near Ullapool
- A832 Station Road, Avoch

9.7.3 New Flexible Deployment Location identified for:

- A836 at Ardgay, within the 30mph limit

9.7.4 The flexible deployment scheme allows the North Safety Camera Unit to enforce at locations of concern identified by local residents, Police Scotland and the Local Authority, that meet the criteria, for a maximum of 3 months.

9.7.5 Signage plans have been developed and implementation should be completed in the current financial year, enabling enforcement to commence.

10. Safer Routes to School Programme 2020/21

10.1 The Road Safety Team has been managing the Council's Safer Routes to School (SRTS) Programme for many years now. The aim of the programme is to provide both hard and soft measures to remove barriers to active travel and encourage pupils to walk and wheel to school. The scheme is open to all Schools in Highland and actively promoted to all. Schools produce a School Travel Plan which looks at all aspects of School Travel and Engineering measures are implemented to help make routes to school safer.

10.2 This is a Scottish Government Grant Funded programme and for the financial year 2020/21, Highland Council has been awarded £1,037,000 which is a significant increase on previous years. The Road Safety Team are currently working on over 60 different SRTS projects with new project requests being submitted by schools on a monthly basis. Development works is continuing with the PDU and Area Roads Teams to deliver schemes.

10.3 COVID restrictions have proved significant in terms of impeding SRTS scheme delivery with Service Point closure halting the progress of all statutory consultation with regards to schemes and construction of projects ceasing for a period.

10.4 More information on the scheme can be found at www.highland.gov.uk/srts

11. 20mph Speed Limit Schemes

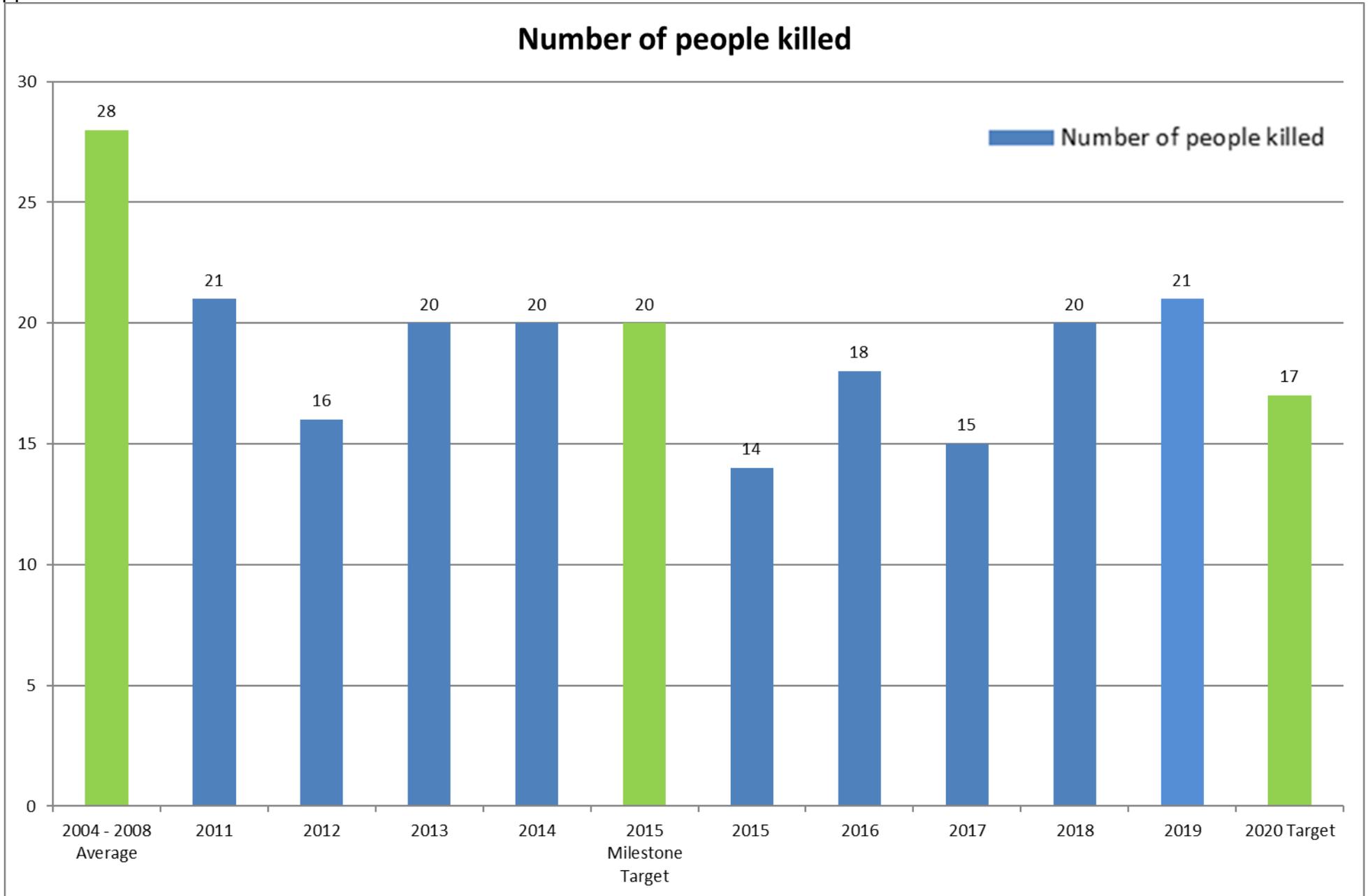
- 11.1 The current guidance used in Scotland for setting local speed limits, including all 20mph limits, is 'Setting Local Speed Limits: Guidance for Local Authorities: Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department (ETLLD) Circular No 1/2006'. The 'Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions' (TSRGD) document is used to design the details of each scheme and the Transport Scotland 'Good Practice Guide on 20mph Speed Restrictions, Review June 2016, Version 2' document is used to ensure the most effective implementation of each scheme. To date 21 schemes have been delivered throughout the council area via this programme.
- 11.2 The implementation of any 20 mph speed limit follows a systematic and legal process which includes the analysis of Collision Data, existing speed surveys, development of the proposal, public consultation, formalisation of legal Road Traffic Regulation Order (RTRO), implementation on the ground (signs, lining and other works) and making of the legal RTRO.
- 11.3 In September 2018, Mark Ruskell MSP put forward a Private Members Bill to the Scottish Parliament which proposed to reduce the general speed limit on restricted roads (C and U class roads in built up areas) to 20mph. Highland Council was called to give evidence at the Scottish Parliaments Rural Communities & Connectivity Committee meeting held on Thursday 28th February 2019 in relation to this. Highland Council supported the proposal put forward by the MSP, this support was tempered by the need for the Scottish Government to make available suitable funding for Local Authorities to enable implementation. MSP's voted against the Bill in the Scottish Parliament in June 2019. To date there has been no further official communication on the issue from the Scottish Government or Transport Scotland.
- 11.4 With the additional funding allocated to the SRTS programme for the current financial year, as detailed in 10.2, it is hoped several outstanding 20mph schemes can be delivered via this funding source.
- 11.5 Highland Council's successful bid to the Sustrans Spaces for People funding source, for the introduction of temporary Engineering measures to enable social distancing when travelling actively, will see the implementation of 4 new Temporary 20mph limit schemes. COVID legislation dictates that temporary speed limits are allowed to go in without the usual statutory consultation. These new limits will be in place for a period of 18 months at which time they will be reviewed and either made into permanent limits (assuming full consultation as per para 11.5 is successful) or removed. These new temporary 20mph speed limits are being delivered in Dingwall, Portree, Aviemore and Kingussie.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment

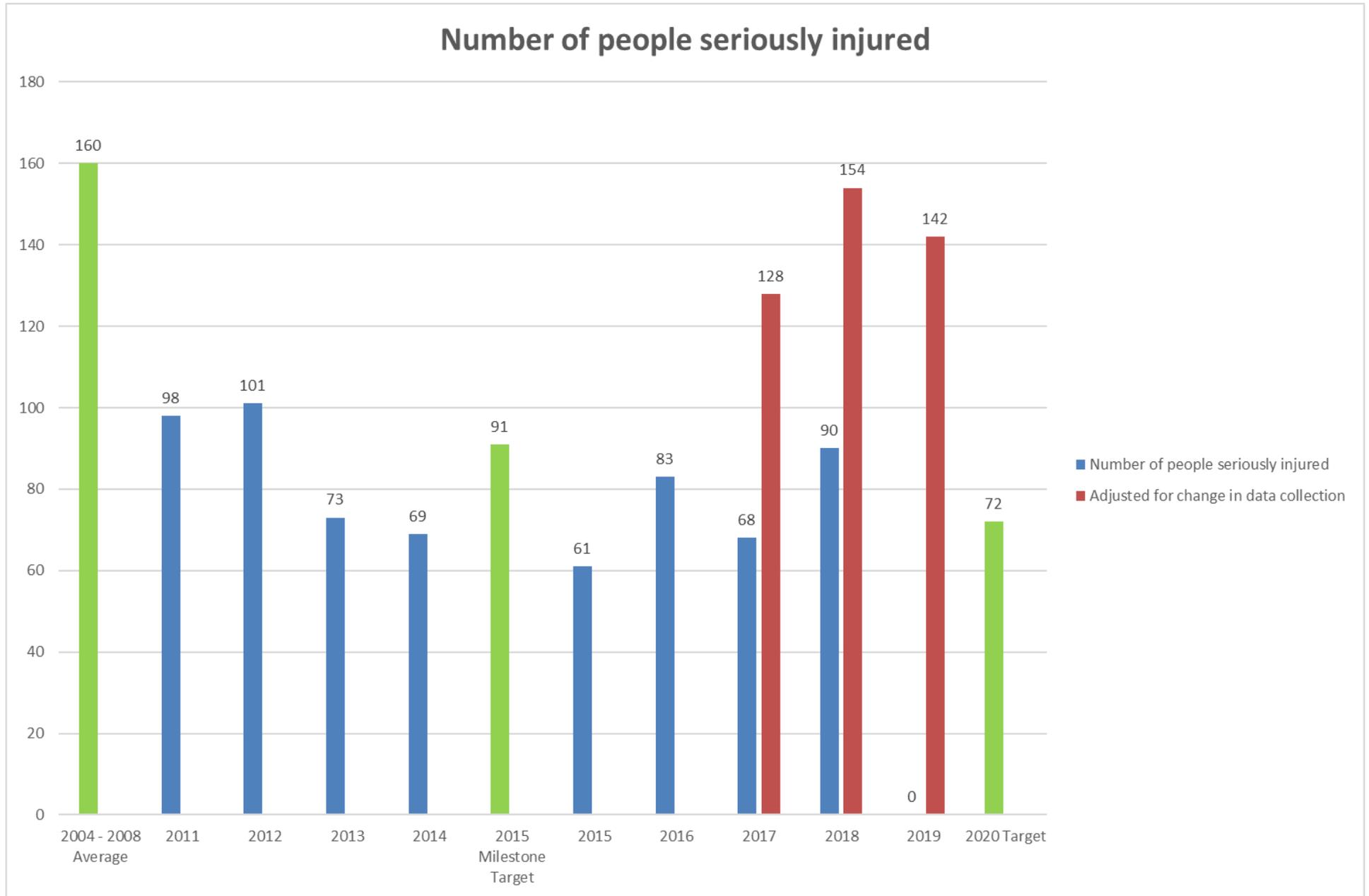
Date: 4 August 2020

Author: Lisa MacKellaich

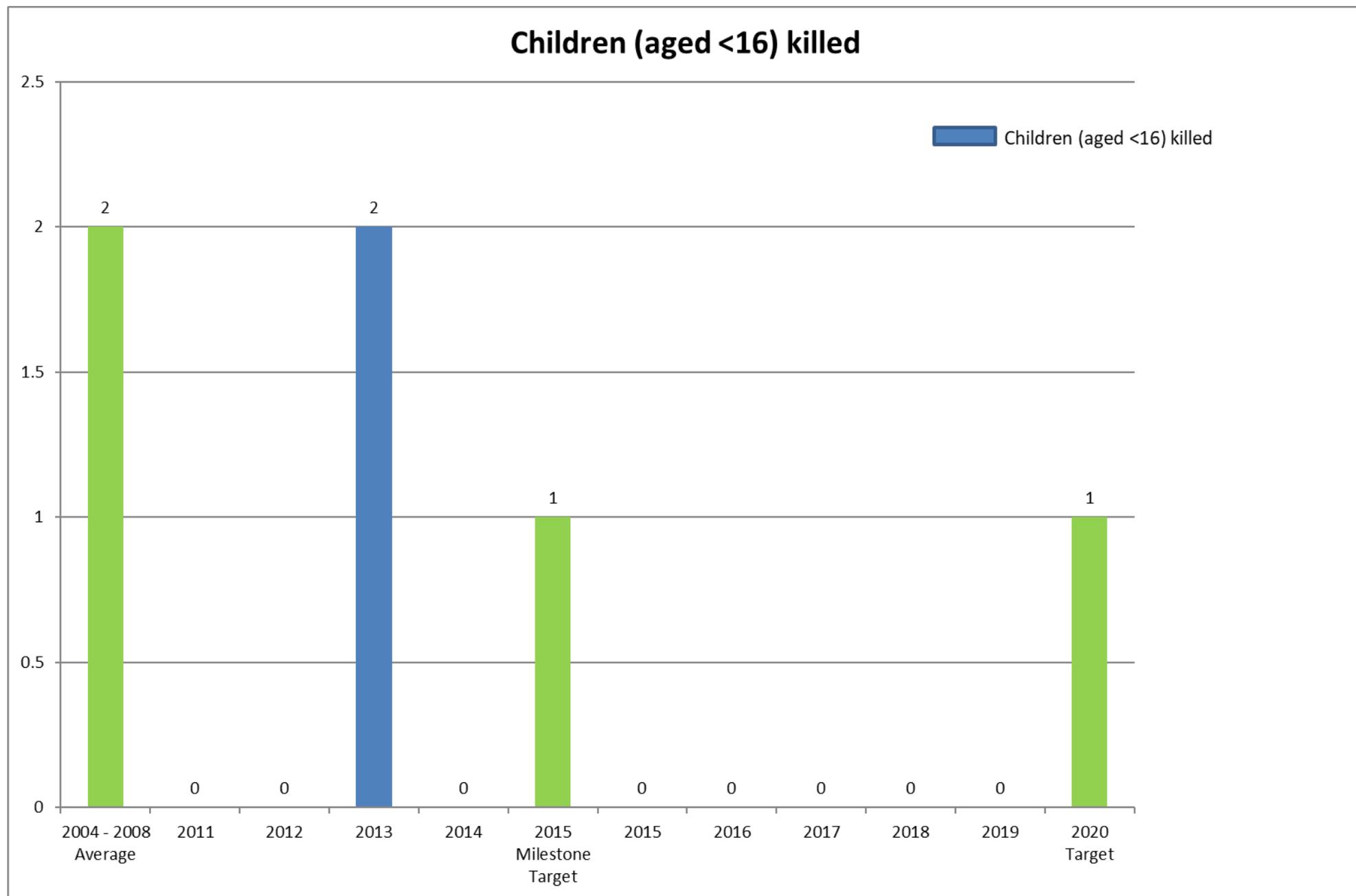
Appendix 1



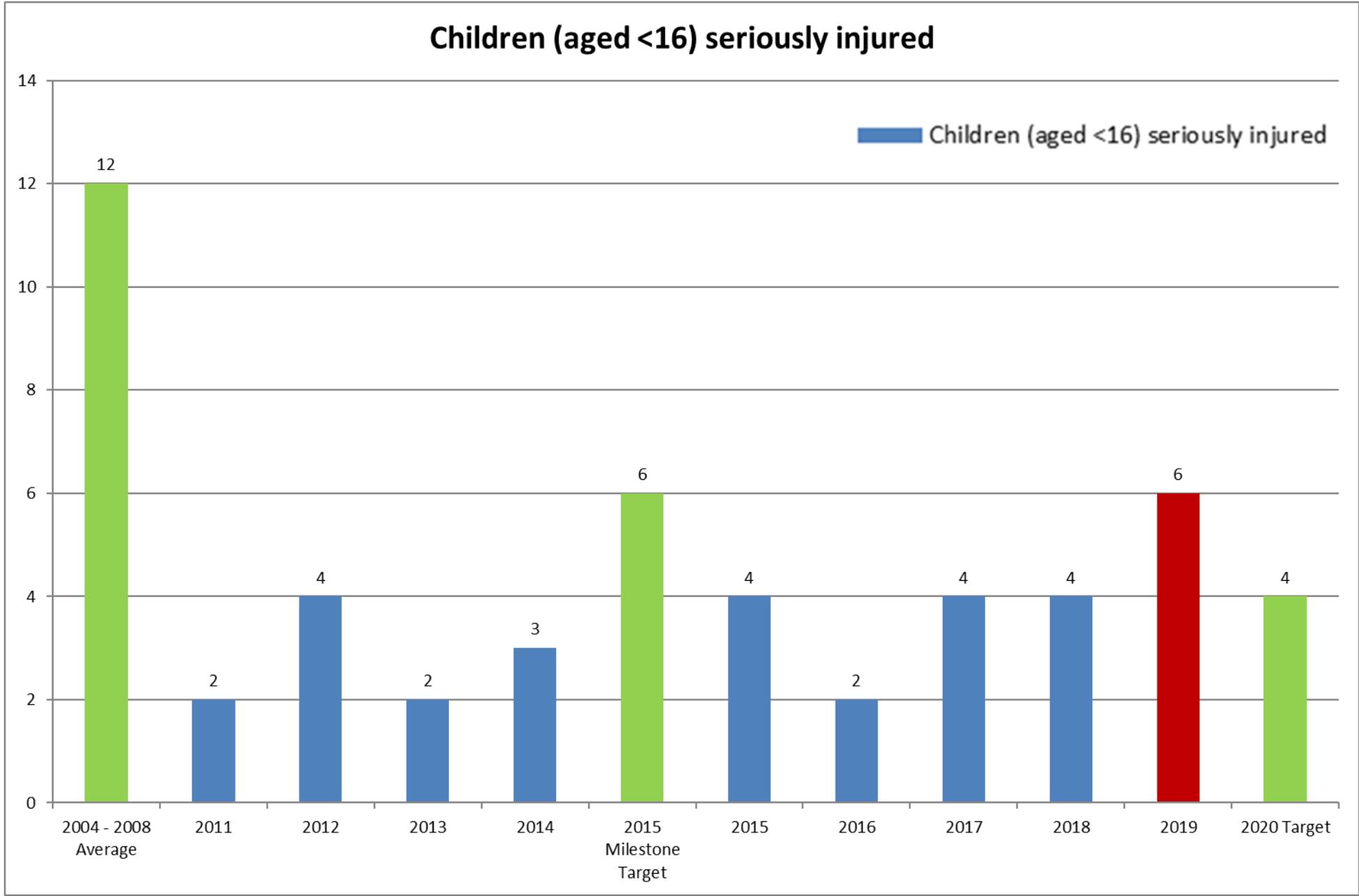
Appendix 2



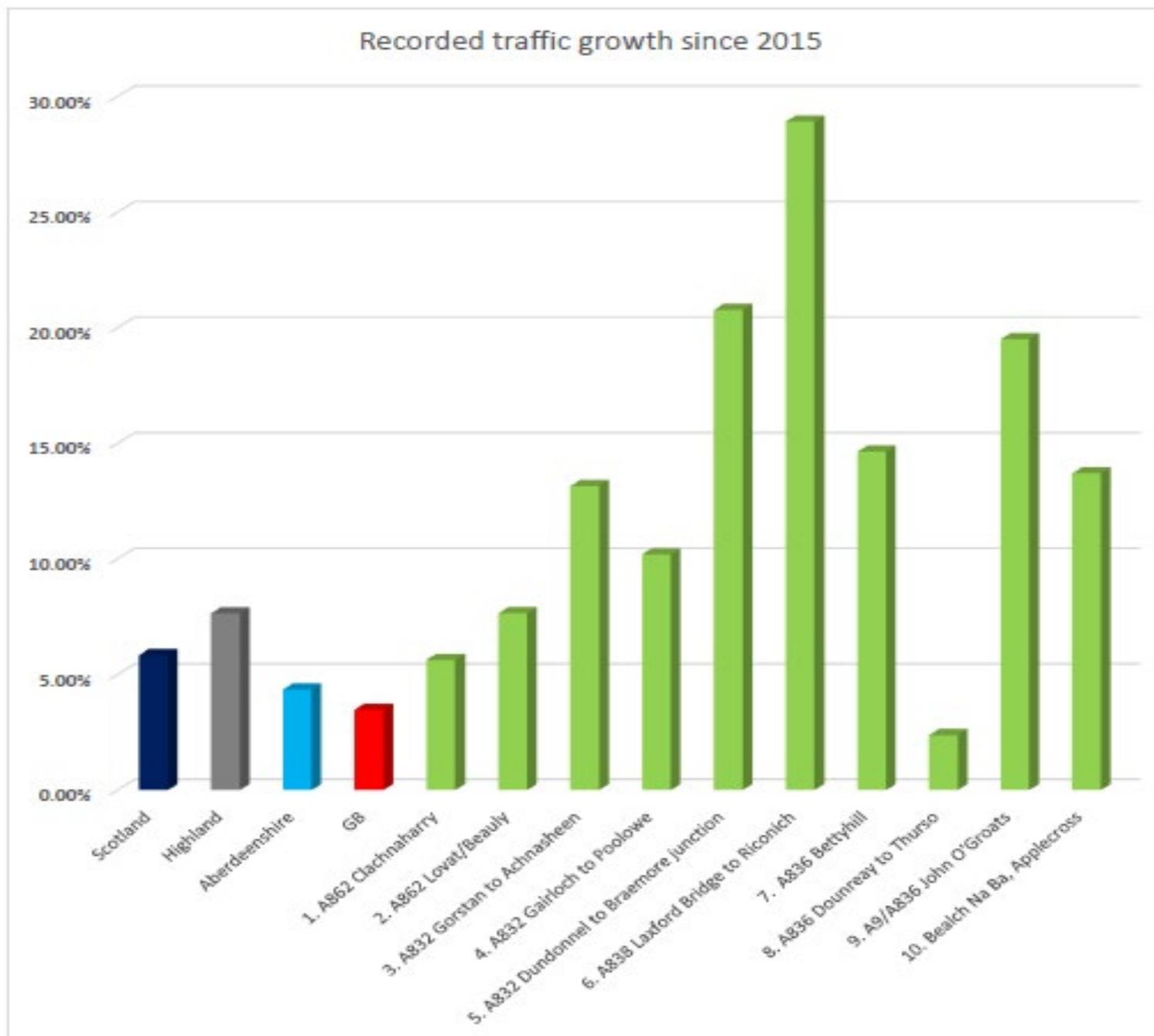
Appendix 3



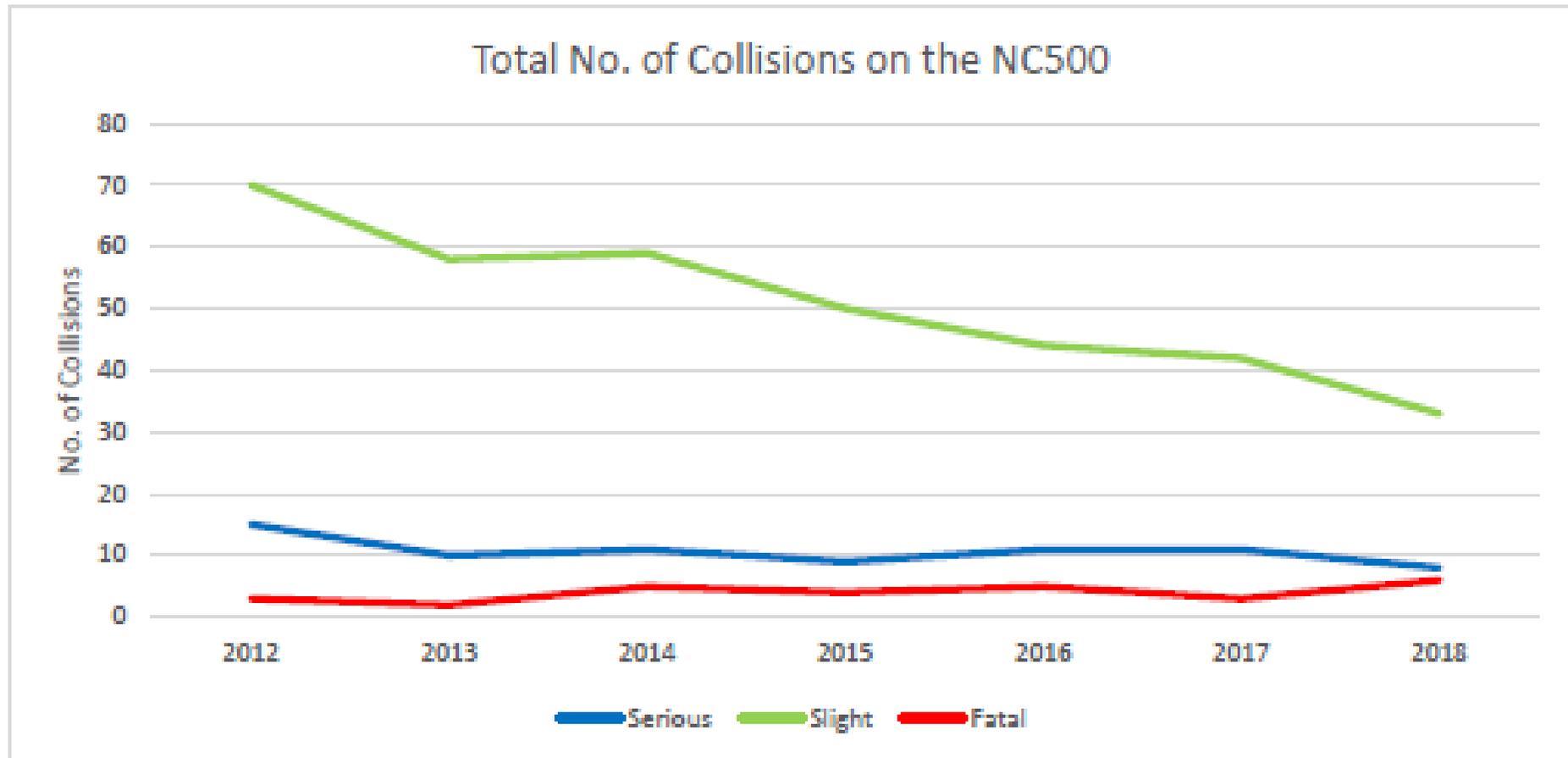
Appendix 4



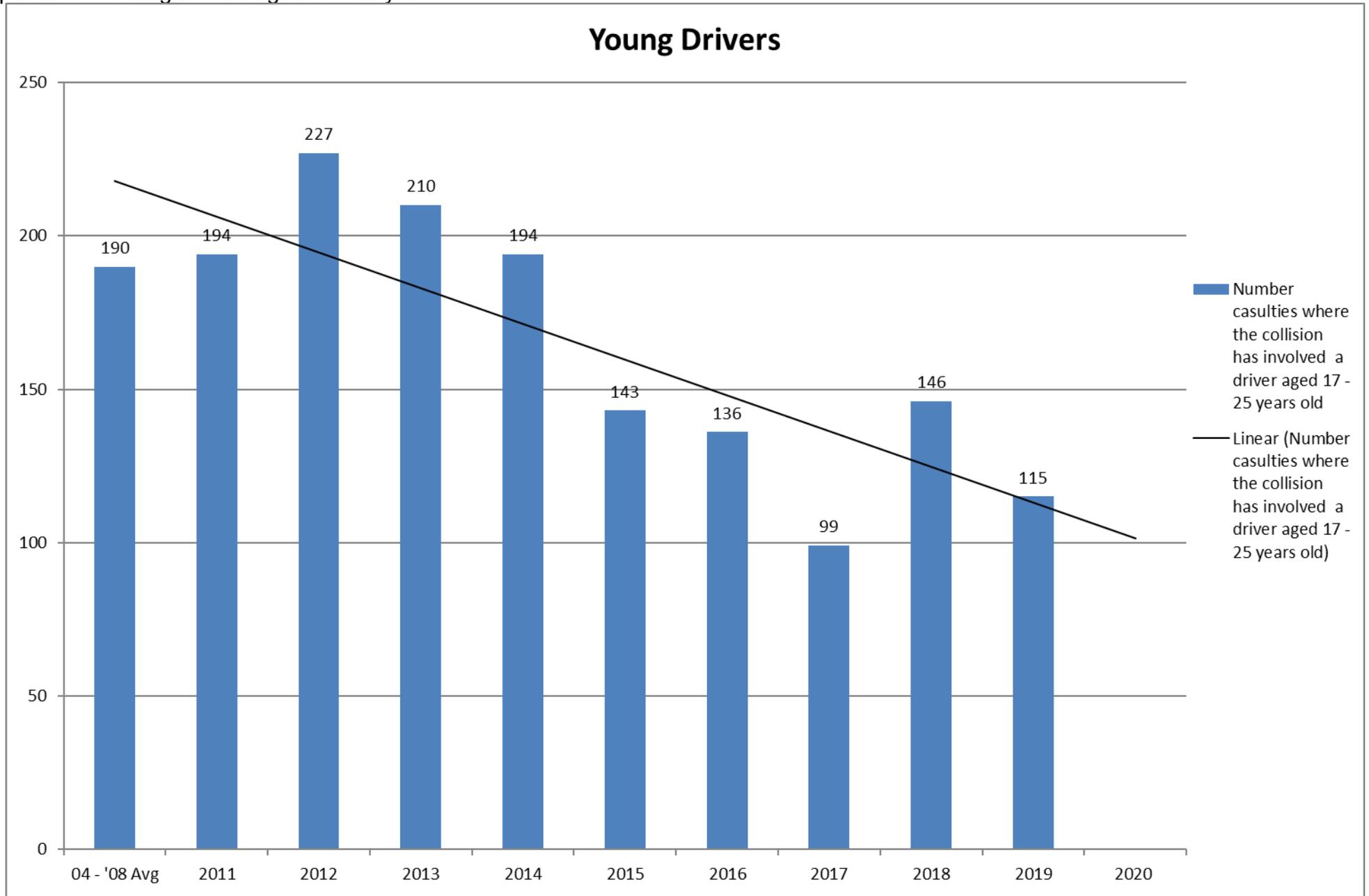
NC500 traffic growth since 2015 (excluding impact of COVID 19)



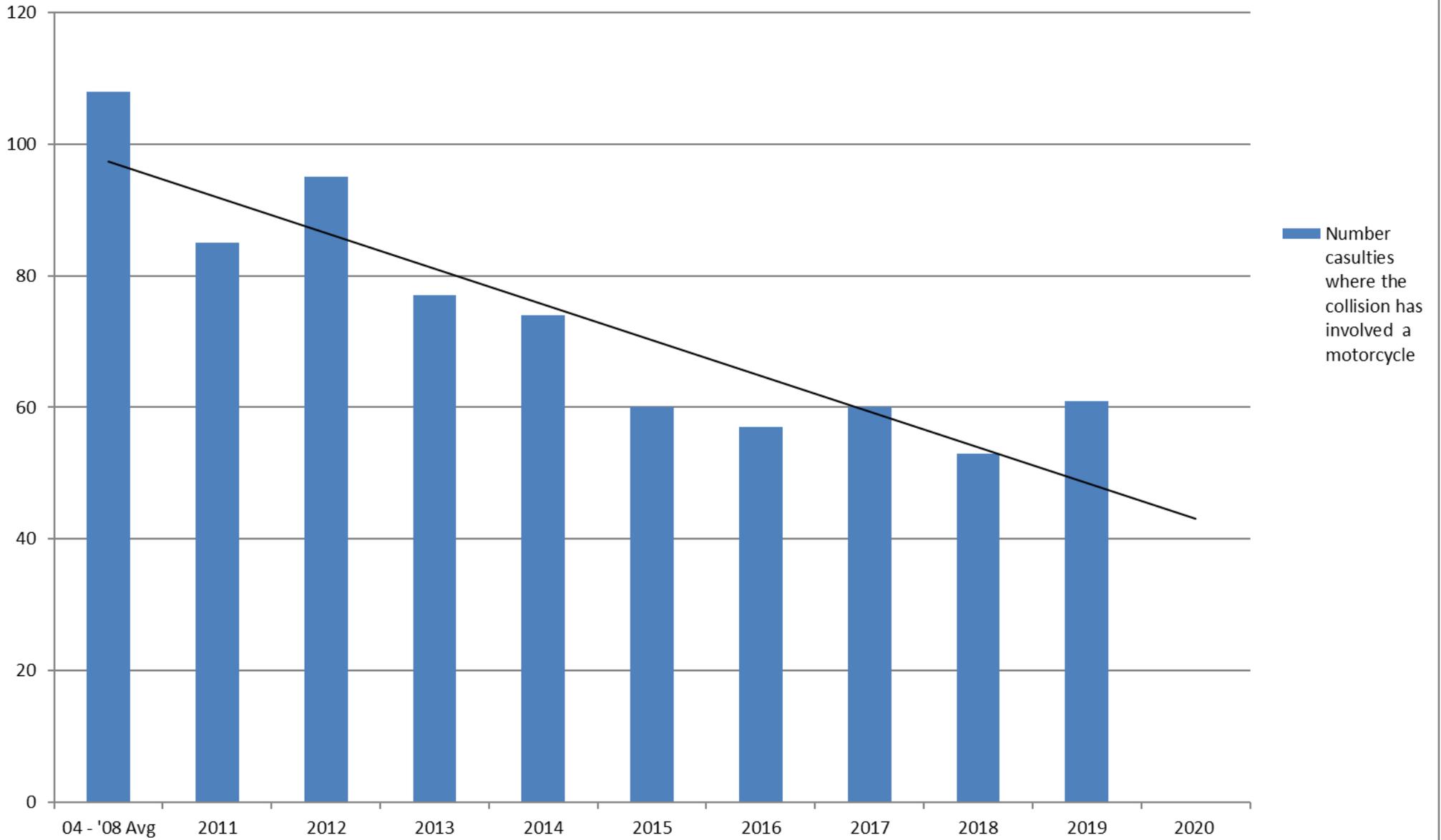
Appendix 6



Appendix 7 – Young Drivers aged 17 – 25yrs



Motorcyclists



Older Drivers

