



Occupant Fatalities in Crashes Involving Large Trucks, 2013

In 2013, 30,057 fatal crashes took place on our Nation’s roadways, with 11.8 percent (3,541) involving at least one large truck.¹ The majority of large truck fatal crashes (63 percent) involved two vehicles, while 22 percent were single-vehicle crashes, and 15.1 percent were multi-vehicle crashes (see Figure 1). In 2013, there were 3,536 total vehicle occupant fatalities in crashes involving large trucks (see Table 1). In 2013 large truck fatal crashes:

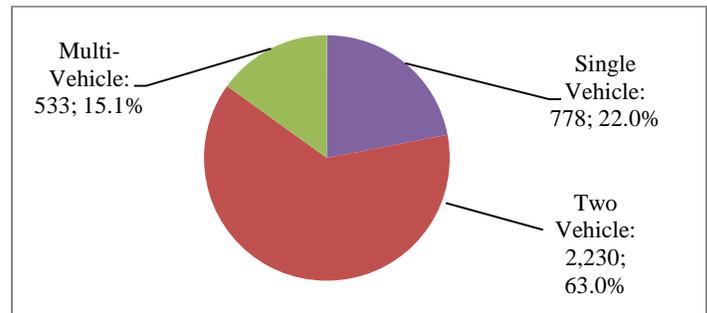
- The largest proportion (40.7 percent) was passenger car occupants, followed by occupants of light trucks (32.9 percent) and occupants of large trucks (19.5 percent).
- Since 2010, nearly half (47.4 percent) of large truck occupants killed in crashes were not wearing a shoulder and/or lap belt (on average).
- In 2013, 39.4 percent of large truck occupant fatalities occurred between midnight and 10 a.m. Nineteen percent took place prior to 6 a.m. and 20.3 percent occurred during the morning rush hour (6–10 a.m.).

In 2013, 83 percent of fatalities in crashes that involved large trucks and buses were not the large truck or bus

¹ Fatal crash statistics in this report are taken from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s (NHTSA’s) Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), which defines a large truck as a truck with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 10,000 pounds. Not all of the large trucks in FARS are regulated by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

drivers. Approximately 12 percent of all fatal crashes involved a large truck.²

Figure 1. Large truck fatal crashes by number of vehicles involved, 2013.

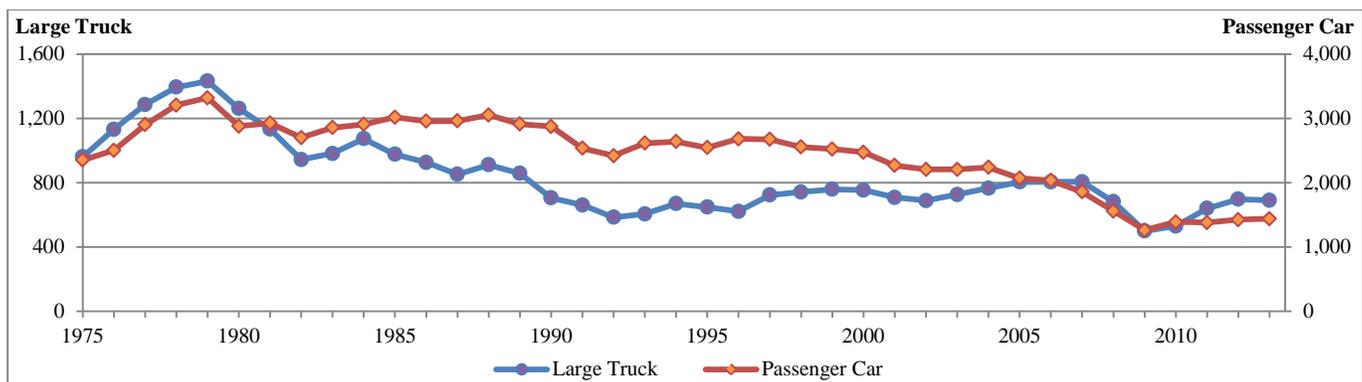


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), available at: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>.

Figure 2 depicts the number of large truck and passenger car occupant fatalities from 1975 to 2013 in crashes involving large trucks. Large truck occupant fatalities reached an all-time low in 2009, with 499 fatalities. However, by 2012 the number of large truck occupant fatalities had risen 39.7 percent with 697 fatalities. In 2013, the number of large truck occupant fatalities decreased by 0.9 percent with 691 fatalities.

² Statistics based on Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data. For more information, refer to: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>.

Figure 2. Occupant fatalities in crashes involving large trucks by vehicle type, 1975–2013.



SOURCE: USDOT, NHTSA, FARS, available at: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>

Occupant fatalities in large trucks have largely been driver fatalities (see Table 2). In 2013, 86.8 percent of occupant fatalities were drivers and 13.2 percent were large truck passengers. On average, since 2009, 12.9 percent of large truck occupant fatalities were passengers.

The majority of occupants killed in passenger vehicle crashes involving large trucks have historically been drivers (see Table 3). In 2013, 77.7 percent of passenger vehicle occupant fatalities in large truck crashes were drivers and 22.3 percent were passengers.

Table 1. Occupant fatalities in crashes involving large trucks by vehicle type, 2009–13.

Vehicle Type	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Passenger Car	1,260	1,390	1,380	1,423	1,438
Light Truck	1,094	1,213	1,082	1,153	1,164
Large Truck	499	530	640	697	691
Motorcycle	176	162	221	251	204
Bus	2	4	11	10	16
Other/Unknown	28	36	28	31	23
Total	3,059	3,335	3,362	3,565	3,536

SOURCE: USDOT, NHTSA, FARS, available at: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>.

Table 2. Occupant fatalities in large trucks, 2009–13.

Occupant Type	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Number	Percent								
Driver	434	87.0%	476	89.8%	551	86.1%	590	84.9%	600	86.8%
Passenger	65	13.0%	54	10.2%	88	13.8%	103	14.5%	91	13.2%
Unknown	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	4	0.6%	0	0.0%
Total	499	100.0%	530	100.0%	640	100.0%	697	100.0%	691	100.0%

SOURCE: USDOT, NHTSA, FARS, available at: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>.

Table 3. Occupant fatalities in passenger vehicles in large truck crashes, 2009–13.

Occupant Type	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Number	Percent								
Driver	963	76.4%	1,033	74.3%	1,037	75.1%	1,062	74.6%	1,118	77.7%
Passenger	297	23.6%	357	25.7%	343	24.9%	356	25.0%	320	22.3%
Unknown	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	0.4%	0	0.0%
Total	1,260	100.0%	1,390	100.0%	1,380	100.0%	1,423	100.0%	1,438	100.0%

SOURCE: USDOT, NHTSA, FARS, available at: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>.

Figure 3 displays the number of large truck occupant fatalities by time of day from 2009 to 2013 and includes the distribution of fatal crashes involving large trucks and all vehicle fatal crashes.³ Over the past 5 years, 25.6 percent of large truck occupant fatalities occurred between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. As seen in Figure 3, there was a steady increase in the number of large truck occupant fatalities from midnight to 6 a.m. This is followed by a decrease in large truck

occupant fatalities during the afternoon rush hour (2–6 p.m.).

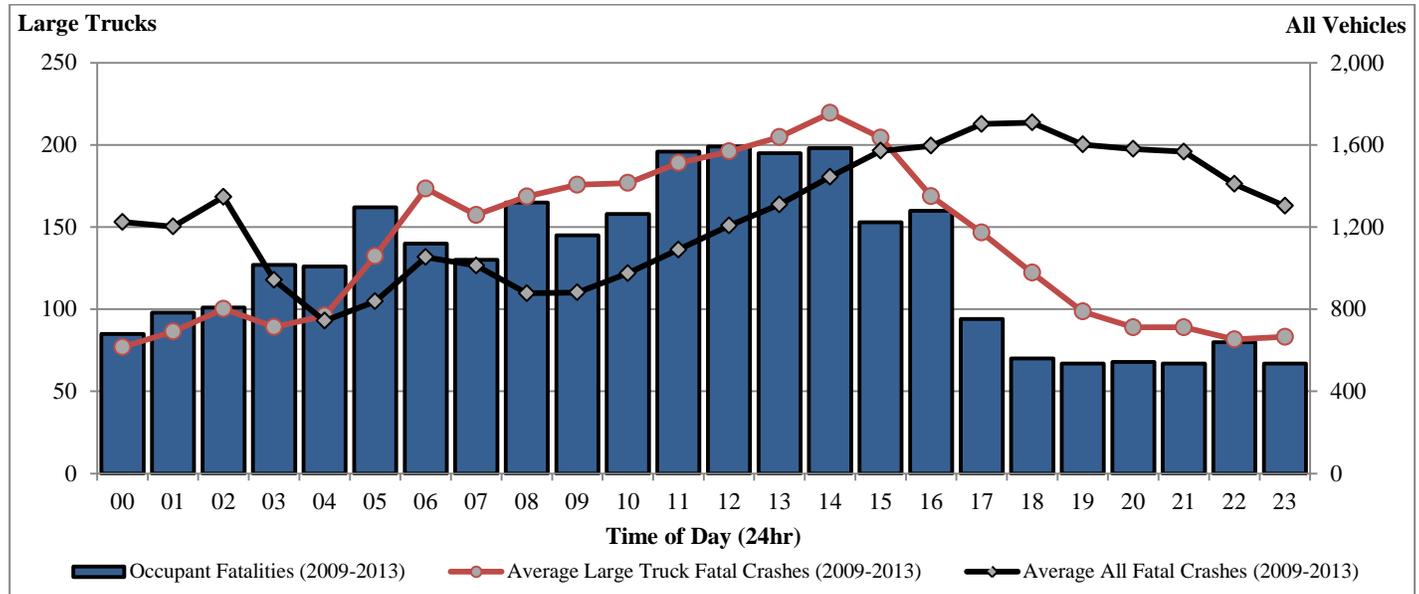
Table 4 displays the number of large trucks between 2009 and 2013 that had at least one occupant fatality by gross weight rating of the truck. In 2013, the majority (79.2 percent) of large trucks with occupant fatalities weighed more than 26,000 pounds. Since 2009, the number of large trucks with a weight rating of more than 26,000 pounds with an occupant fatality has increased by 33.6 percent while the number of large trucks with a weight rating of 26,000 pounds or less has increased by 63.2 percent.

³ The average number of fatal crashes involving a large truck and all fatal crashes by time of day are used for years 2008–12.

In 2013, 42.1 percent (291) of large truck occupant fatalities were wearing a shoulder and lap belt (see Table 5); 33.4 percent (231) of large truck occupant fatalities were not using a restraint. For crashes where

seat belt use was known, approximately half (47.4 percent) of large truck occupants killed in crashes since 2010 were not wearing a shoulder and/or lap belt (on average).

Figure 3. Large truck occupant fatalities and average number of fatal crashes by type and time of day, 2009–13 (combined).



SOURCE: USDOT, NHTSA, FARS, available at: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>

Table 4. Large trucks with at least one occupant fatality by truck weight rating, 2009–13.

Gross Weight Rating	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Number	Percent								
10,001–26,000 lb	76	17.4%	93	19.5%	102	18.4%	119	20.1%	124	20.6%
26,001 lb or more	357	81.9%	382	80.3%	451	81.6%	472	79.9%	477	79.2%
Unknown	3	0.7%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
Total	436	100.0%	476	100.0%	553	100.0%	591	100.0%	602	100.0%

SOURCE: USDOT, NHTSA, FARS, available at: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>

Table 5. Occupant fatalities in large trucks by restraint type used, 2009–13.

Restraint Type Used	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Shoulder Belt Only Used	1	1	0	2	1
Lap Belt Only Used	6	4	10	9	10
Shoulder and Lap Belt Used	181	184	247	264	291
None Used—Motor Vehicle Occupant	0	208	223	236	231
Restraint Used—Type Unknown	1	0	0	0	2
Other	0	0	3	5	2
Not Reported	0	0	2	4	4
Not Applicable*	223	11	32	41	33
Unknown	87	122	123	136	117
Total	499	530	640	697	691

* Not applicable refers to individuals who were not an occupant of a motor vehicle.

SOURCE: USDOT, NHTSA, FARS, available at: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS>