

FAST FACT | 295 people lost their lives on Victorian roads in 2009

Hume among state's 10 worst areas for traffic deaths, and sixth-highest since 2005

Eight die on roads

Fatal crashes | **Kelly Sammut**

THE messages of speed and drink-driving are not getting through in Hume as the area finished the year with eight fatalities, leaving it among the state's 10 worst municipalities for road deaths.

Over the past five years Hume has had 41 fatal crashes – the sixth highest overall – Traffic Accident Commission figures show.

Fawkner traffic management unit

Acting Sen-Sgt Darren Paterson said major collisions in the area often involved speed or drink-driving.

"One of our problems in the Hume area is that there are such wide roads with high speed limits because we're on the outskirts of the city," he said. "We're also seeing more prevalence of drug driving in random testing."

Acting Sen-Sgt Paterson said illegal street racing was a problem.

"Last year we ran Operation Liquor-ice which saw in excess of 100 officers target the Tullamarine area and that has helped hoon driving there."

He said the unit had applied for TAC to run more night operations focusing on speed this year.

TAC road safety manager Samantha Cockfield said the council area statistics were a stark reminder of the many people affected by road trauma in Victoria.

In Sunbury, the number of fatal accidents decreased from three in 2008 to two last year, not including the two deaths on the Calder Freeway at Diggers Rest. Last year a Glenhope woman, 19, died in a single car collision in Rees Rd and a Sunbury motorcyclist, 32, died in a head-on collision on Bulla Rd.

Acting Sen-Sgt Paterson said the TAC figures related only to fatal collisions and not the high number of injuries and serious injuries.