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Tragic toll ticks up

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A MOTORCYCLIST was killed in a crash in the North-West yesterday, prompting further dismay at the state's soaring road toll.

One senior police officer said a core of drivers continued to put lives in danger by flouting road rules.

Thirty-four people have been killed on the state's roads this year — a 55 per cent increase on the toll at the same time last year and a figure rapidly closing on the total of 40 deaths for the whole of 2008.

In yesterday's crash, a 43-year-old Smithton man lost control of his 750cc Suzuki

Biker's death spurs renewed safety call

motorcycle on Metaira Rd at Ridgley, south of Burnie, and hit a wire fence.

Early on Sunday morning 42-year-old disqualified motorcyclist Christopher Wayne Williams, of Glenorchy, was killed in a single-vehicle accident at Kettering. He had earlier evaded a police intercept after being spotted travelling at excessive speed on the Southern Outlet.

Police yesterday said despite

last week's triple fatality at New Norfolk, there were plenty of weekend drivers who still thought they were invulnerable.

The worst incidents included:

- A 16-year-old disqualified and unaccompanied learner driver who was caught driving along the Tasman Highway in Hobart at 95km/h in the 70 km/h zone on Saturday night.
- A 19-year-old provisional



EXASPERATED: Some drivers think they are invulnerable, says Inspector Laurie Huxley.

driver who was caught driving at 123km/h on the Southern Outlet with three passengers early on Sunday morning.

● A 23-year-old provisional driver who was intercepted on the Brooker Highway at Goodwood on Sunday afternoon

after chasing an ambulance at speeds of up to 110km/h, including a drive along the median strip. Charges against him included drink-driving.

From Granton to Southport over the weekend 31 drivers were charged with drink-driving. Ten had previous drink-driving convictions and five were provisional licence-holders.

And 126 motorists were caught speeding by speed cameras over the weekend.

Tasmania Police Inspector Laurie Huxley said too many drivers were simply taking too many risks.

"I think attitude is a real problem. People still have this

belief that it's not going to happen to them ... they take the risks and don't consider the consequences of their actions," Insp Huxley said.

"There is a percentage of people who believe that they are totally invulnerable.

"I have some real concerns about what the total will be at the end of the year.

"It's easy for me to ... talk about totals or statistics or whatever, but we're talking about human lives and that seems not to strike a chord with certain people."

The toll has prompted the Road Safety Taskforce to produce some hard-hitting TV ads due for release this year.