

FARS Encyclopedia VMT Changes

Note: In August 2011, starting with 2009 data, the Federal Highway Administration implemented an enhanced methodology for estimating registered vehicles and vehicle miles traveled by vehicle type. In addition, revisions were made to 2008 and 2007 data using this enhanced methodology. As a result of the Federal Highway Administration's changes, involvement rates may differ, and in some cases significantly, from previously published rates.

The passenger vehicle (passenger cars and light trucks) registration data contained in this FARS Encyclopedia was obtained from R.L. Polk's National Vehicle Population Profile (NVPP), which is a compilation of all passenger vehicles that have been registered in compliance with State requirements. Polk recently improved the data quality of NVPP, which resulted in a complete rewrite of the data. They 1) enhanced their business rules for vehicles on the road, 2) have more consistent reporting/processing across States, and 3) upgraded their basis for vehicle coding.

Due to the enhancement in the passenger vehicle registration data for 2011 and 2012, registration counts for those years changed considerably from the counts provided for 2010 and earlier years. A comparison of Polk's Old NVPP and New NVPP for 2011 shows that Polk's enhancements have resulted in over a 3 percent increase in passenger vehicle registration counts from what was previously reported – passenger car registrations decreased by 5.6 percent and light truck registrations increased by 14.6 percent. This FARS Encyclopedia uses 2012 data, as well as 2011 data updated from the data presented in the 2011 FARS Encyclopedia, for passenger car and light truck registrations based on Polk's New NVPP. Consequently, the 2011 and 2012 data for vehicle registrations and fatality rates are not strictly comparable with the data for all prior years, which were based on Polk's Old NVPP.