0140 **ROAD TRAFFIC INJURIES IN THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA, 1951–2008**

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Background Road traffic injuries (RTIs) have become the leading cause of injury deaths in the P.R. China. We analysed the trends and characteristics of RTIs from 1951 to 2008.

Methods Road traffic crash data from 1951 to 2008 were obtained from the Bureau of Traffic Management at the Ministry of Public Security. All fatal traffic crashes and non-fatal traffic crashes that result in medically treated injuries are required to be reported to the Bureau of Traffic Management using a standardised traffic crash data collection form.

Results Over the past 5 decades, road traffic injuries have increased substantially in China. From 1951 to 2008, the total number of traffic crash events, traffic-related deaths and non-fatal traffic-related injuries increased by 86-fold, 125-fold and 92-fold, respectively. The traffic-related death rate increased substantially in the past 10 years and reached 5.56 per 100 000 population in 2008. Road traffic injuries in China disproportionately affect the following populations: persons 21–50 years of age, pedestrians and motorcyclists/bicyclists. RTIs among individuals older than 65 years also increased in recent years. Provinces in northern China have significantly higher traffic-related death rates than other areas of China.

Conclusion Road traffic injuries have become a burgeoning public health problem in China. Programs need to be developed to prevent injuries and fatalities caused by road traffic crashes.