



INJURY RISE: A study has found that 15 people were killed and more than 1700 injured in tram-related accidents between 2000 and 2008.

Unexplained rise in tram injuries, deaths

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A RISING number of people are being injured or killed by Melbourne's trams and the increase cannot be explained by the city's growing population.

A study that collates all tram-related injuries over the eight years to 2008 has identified more than 1700 people who required hospital care and 15 deaths.

"There was a significant increase in the rate of emergency department presentations,"

writes Dr Biswadev Mitra, who conducted the research along with colleagues at The Alfred hospital.

"There was also a significant increase in the incidence of major trauma cases, with pedestrians accounting for most major trauma cases."

The study — the first of its kind in Australia — found people were most likely to be injured by falling over inside a tram or at a tram

stop, while being hit by a tram caused the most deaths.

A total of 1769 people were taken to hospital for treatment for a tram-related injury over the eight years.

Falls accounted for 46 per cent of these cases, though usually they resulted in only minor injuries and the patient could be discharged after treatment in the emergency department.

A total of 107 patients required

treatment for more serious "major trauma" injuries, most commonly the result of being hit by a tram or a passing vehicle while negotiating a tram stop.

"Nine deaths were pedestrians hit by trams, five were falls from trams, while the remaining case was a pedal cyclist struck by a tram."

Dr Mitra found the average patient age was 37 years and almost 60 per cent were men.