

briefing notes road safety issues

Tararua District

Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2002–2006 period.

The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and be a resource to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in Tararua District.

This report is the eighth road safety report for Tararua District. Most of the data in this report applies to both local roads and state highways. Where relevant the details of the crashes on the local roads and state highways are provided and discussed.

In each new report the latest year's data is added to a five year block and the oldest dropped, so it is unlikely that the core issues for any local body would change radically from report to report.

The issues chosen for this report are drawn from either the most common crash types, those that appear over-represented when Tararua District is compared to similar local bodies and national average or those with high social cost (relating mainly to high numbers of fatal and serious crashes).

We have included a brief overview of crashes in the district for 2006.

Major Road Safety Issues		2006 road trauma	
Tararua District		Casualties	
Loss of control at bends		Deaths	3
Alcohol		Serious casualties	27
		Minor casualties	69
Nationally		Crashes	
Speed		Fatal crashes	3
Alcohol		Serious injury crashes	18
Failure to give way		Minor injury crashes	43
Restraints		Non injury crashes	124

Overview of crashes in 2006

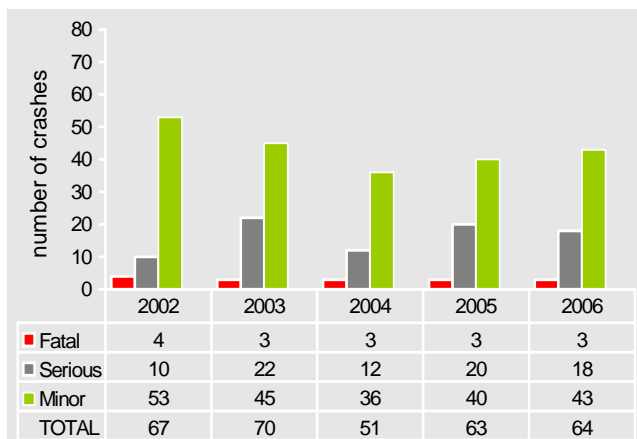
In 2006, on local roads in Tararua District, there were 21 injury crashes and 43 non-injury crashes, in addition there were 43 injury crashes and 81 non-injury crashes on State Highways, as reported by the New Zealand Police. It should be noted that all the fatal crashes in 2006 happened on state highways.

The table below shows the number of injury crashes from 2006 by rural or urban areas for both local roads and state highways. Rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more.

	Crashes in 2006			
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	2	16	32	50
Urban	1	2	11	14
Total	3	18	43	64

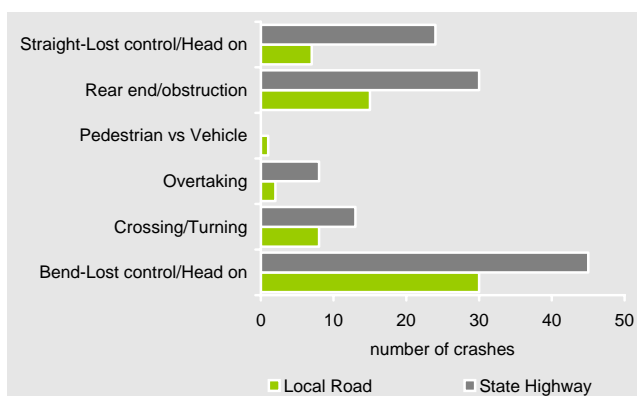
The total number of injury crashes show a slight long term decrease. Crash numbers remain volatile.

Crash trend 2002-2006



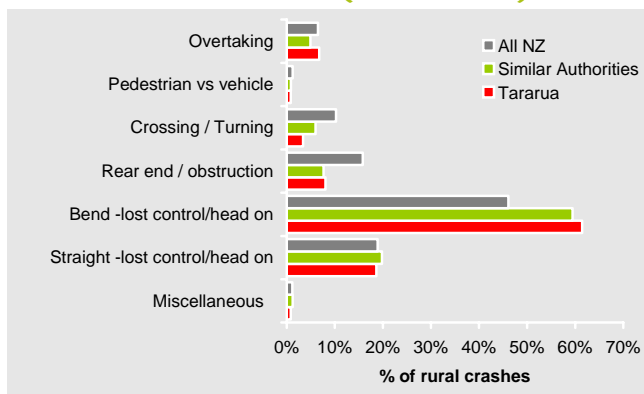
In 2006 *Bend – lost of control/head-on crashes* was the main type of crash on both local roads and state highways.

Crash characteristics (2006)

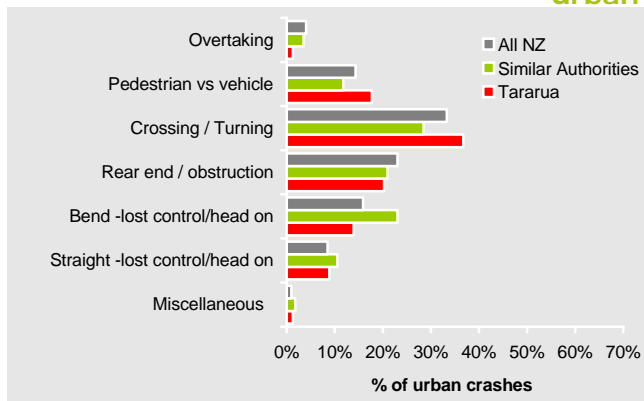


A significant number of crashes, especially on the state highways, were *rear end obstruction and straight – lost control/head-on* types.

Crash characteristics (2002-2006)- rural



urban

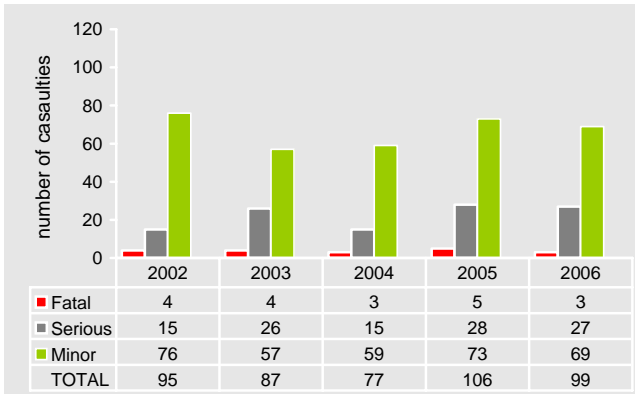


The proportions of the different crash movement types in the total number of crashes are similar for the last 5 years. The exception is a slightly higher number of rear-end/obstruction type of crashes in 2006

Poor Observation, poor handling, fatigue, road factors and speed are the major issues with the crashes on state highways in 2006. On local roads speed, poor judgement and road factors are the major factors in 2006. No major changes in crash factors have been observed in the past five years.

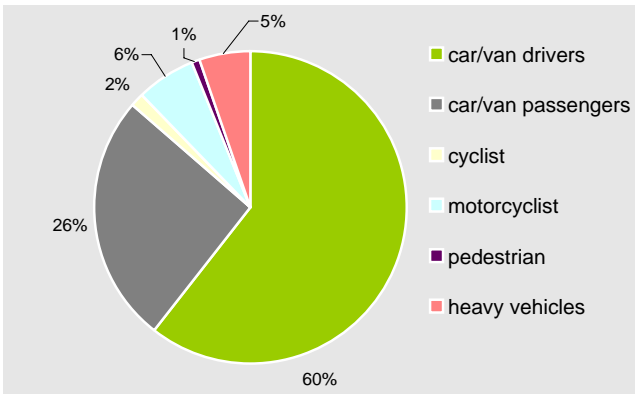
The number of serious injuries and fatal casualties in 2006 is slightly less than 2005, but much higher than in 2002 and 2004.

Casualties by injury type 2002–2006



The highest number of casualties in 2006 were the car/van drivers followed by car/van passengers.

Casualties by user type 2006



The casualties user type distribution for the last five years is similar to 2006.

It has been observed nationally that there is a growing group of drivers who have not been exiting the graduated licence system and who are choosing to stay on restricted licences. This is making it increasingly difficult to distinguish drivers who are truly inexperienced from those that should have moved to a full licence. As a consequence it is more difficult to target educational material.

This is certainly true in Tararua District with as many as 16.9 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes being the holder of a restricted driving licence. In addition to that 10.8 percent of at fault drivers have learner license, which is higher than the national average.

Similarly 6.2 percent of the drivers at fault were either never licensed or disqualified.

Licence Status in 2006	Injury crashes percentage of at fault or part fault drivers	
	Tararua District	New Zealand
Full	58.5	58.4
Learner	10.8	9.5
Restricted	16.9	17.6
Never licensed	3.1	2.2
Disqualified	3.1	1.7
Overseas	1.5	4.2
Expired	1.5	0.5
Others/Unknown	24.6	5.6

Further information about 2006 injury and non-injury crashes on:

Local roads

- Worst month April (10 crashes)
- Worst day Saturday (13 crashes)
- Wet road 22 percent
- Night time 30 percent
- Mid-block 82 percent
- Social cost of crashes \$7.8m
- At fault or part fault male driver 67 percent
- Full NZ licence 53 percent of at fault or part fault (injury crashes) drivers

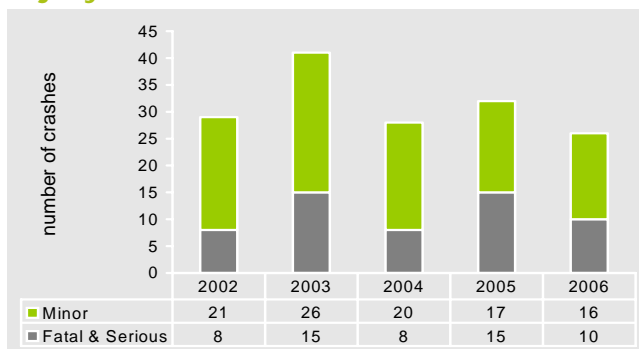
State highways

- Fifty-six percent of crashes occur at weekends
- Wet road 36 percent
- Night time 38 percent
- Mid-block 79 percent
- Social cost of crashes \$26m
- At fault or part fault (injury crashes) male driver 55 percent
- Full NZ licence 62 percent of at fault or part fault (injury crashes) drivers

Loss of control at bends

Between 2002 and 2006, 49 percent of all injury crashes in Tararua District occurred at bends. These crashes resulted in 11 fatalities, 70 serious injuries and 161 minor injuries. There were also 240 non-injury crashes reported.

Injury crashes at bends 2002-2006



Number of Crashes and types remained variable for last five years.

Most crashes at bends involved a driver losing control of their vehicle and either running off the road or colliding with another vehicle.

After drivers lose control their vehicles then often crash into roadside hazards such as ditches, banks, poles or trees. Hitting these objects can result in a relatively minor off-road event turning into something far more serious.

The three most common roadside hazards struck during crashes in Tararua District were fences (42), ditches (24) and trees (23) out of a total of 167 reported objects struck.

The following table lists the main characteristics related to Loss of control/heads-on (bend) crashes in the Tararua District.

Crash characteristic	
Single vehicle	76 percent
Roadside object struck	167 in Total
Alcohol (injury crashes)	20 percent
Too fast for the conditions (injury crashes)	31 percent
Road factors	24 percent
Poor handling (injury crashes)	37 percent
Rural road	87 percent
Wet road	40 percent
Night time	38 percent

Percentage of at fault or part fault drivers involved in injury crashes in Tararua District is similar to the national average.

Licence Status	Injury crashes—percentage of at fault or part fault drivers	
	Tararua District	New Zealand
Full	57.5	51.1
Learner	11.2	10.7
Restricted	17.5	17.9
Never Licensed	2.5	4.1
Disqualified	1.2	2.8
Overseas	5.0	5.6
Expired	<1	0.9
Unknown	4.4	6.8

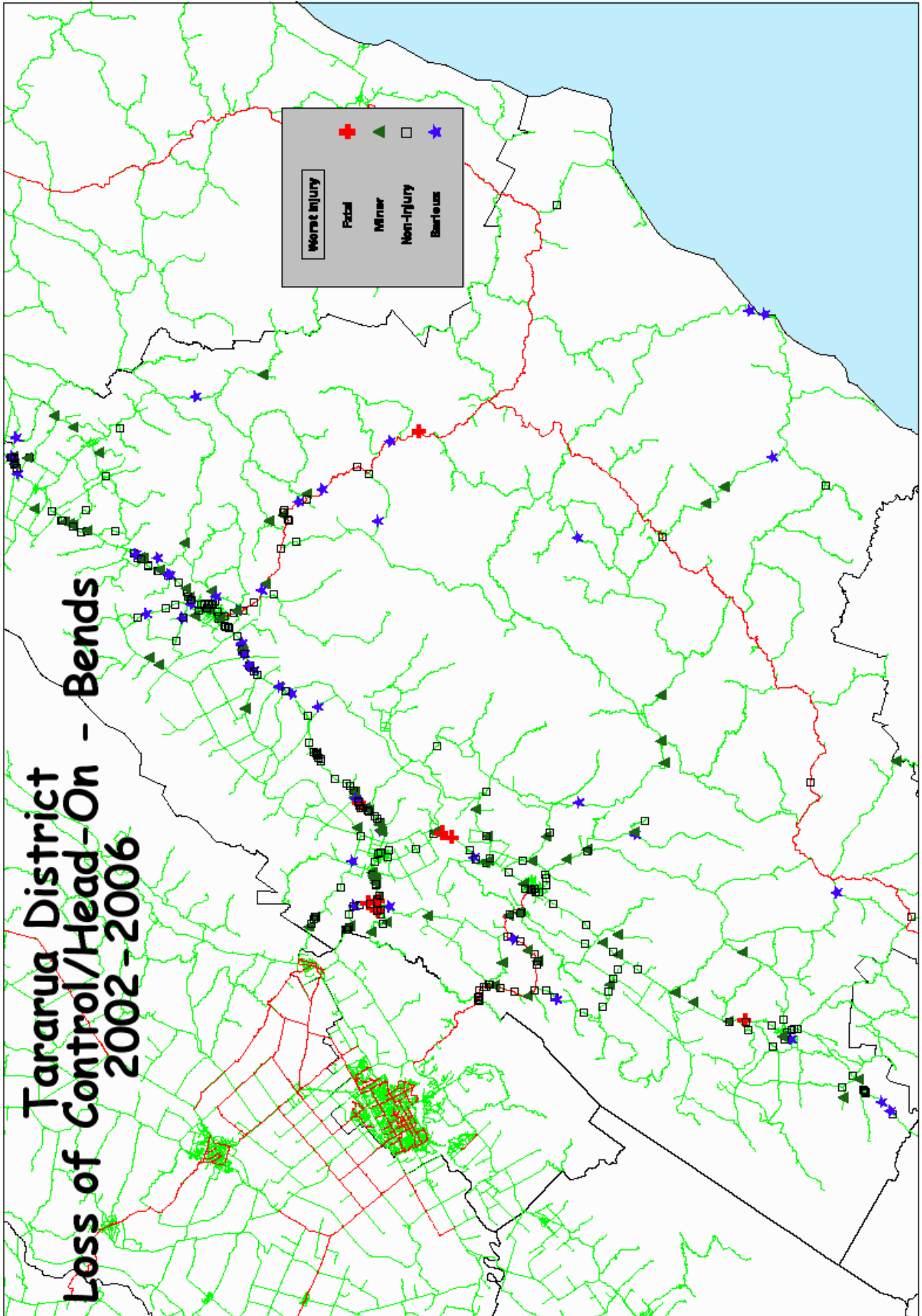
Further information about crashes at bends in Tararua District:

Local roads

- 3 deaths, 36 serious injuries and 85 minor injuries
- Male drivers 72 percent at fault in injury crashes
- Most common injury crash factor poor handling
- Most common age group drivers under 25 years old
- 20 percent of injury crashes alcohol over limit
- Worst month April
- Worst day of week Saturday

State highways

- 8 deaths, 34 serious injuries and 76 minor injuries
- Male drivers 77 percent at fault in injury crashes
- Most common crash factor *poor handling*
- Most common age group drivers between 30 and 49 years old
- 19 percent of injury crashes over alcohol limit
- Worst month June
- Worst day of week Saturday



Alcohol

Alcohol affects the way people drive. Studies show that the risk of being involved in a crash increases rapidly as a driver's blood alcohol level rises. A driver over the legal limit (80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood) is three times more likely to be involved in a crash than a sober driver.

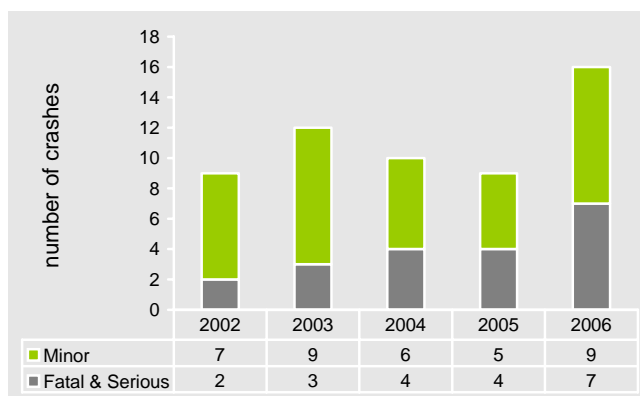
Contrary to popular opinion, people with high blood alcohol levels are more likely to be injured or killed in a crash than sober drivers in the same crash and if injured, they are also more likely to encounter complications in their recovery.

In New Zealand for the 12 months to December 2006, alcohol-affected drivers contributed to 31 percent of all fatal crashes and 15 percent of all injury crashes.

In the Tararua District, alcohol was a factor in 25 percent of all injury crashes in 2006 which is much higher than national average and higher than the last five year district average of 18 percent.

There were 56 alcohol-related injury crashes reported in the last five years. These crashes have resulted 5 fatal, 27 serious and 54 minor injuries.

Alcohol related crashes 2002-2006



The crash location map on page 7 shows some of the locations in Tararua District at which a drink-driving crash occurred during the 2002 to 2006 period.

Licence status of at the fault drivers in alcohol related injury crashes in Tararua District and all New Zealand (2002-2006).

Licence status	Injury crashes percentage of at fault or part fault drivers	
	Tararua District	New Zealand
Full	42.1	41.6
Learner	14.0	15.8
Restricted	24.6	20.8
Never licensed	3.5	4.6
Disqualified	7.0	6.2
Overseas	5.3	1.0
Expired	0	1.4
Unknown	3.5	8.2

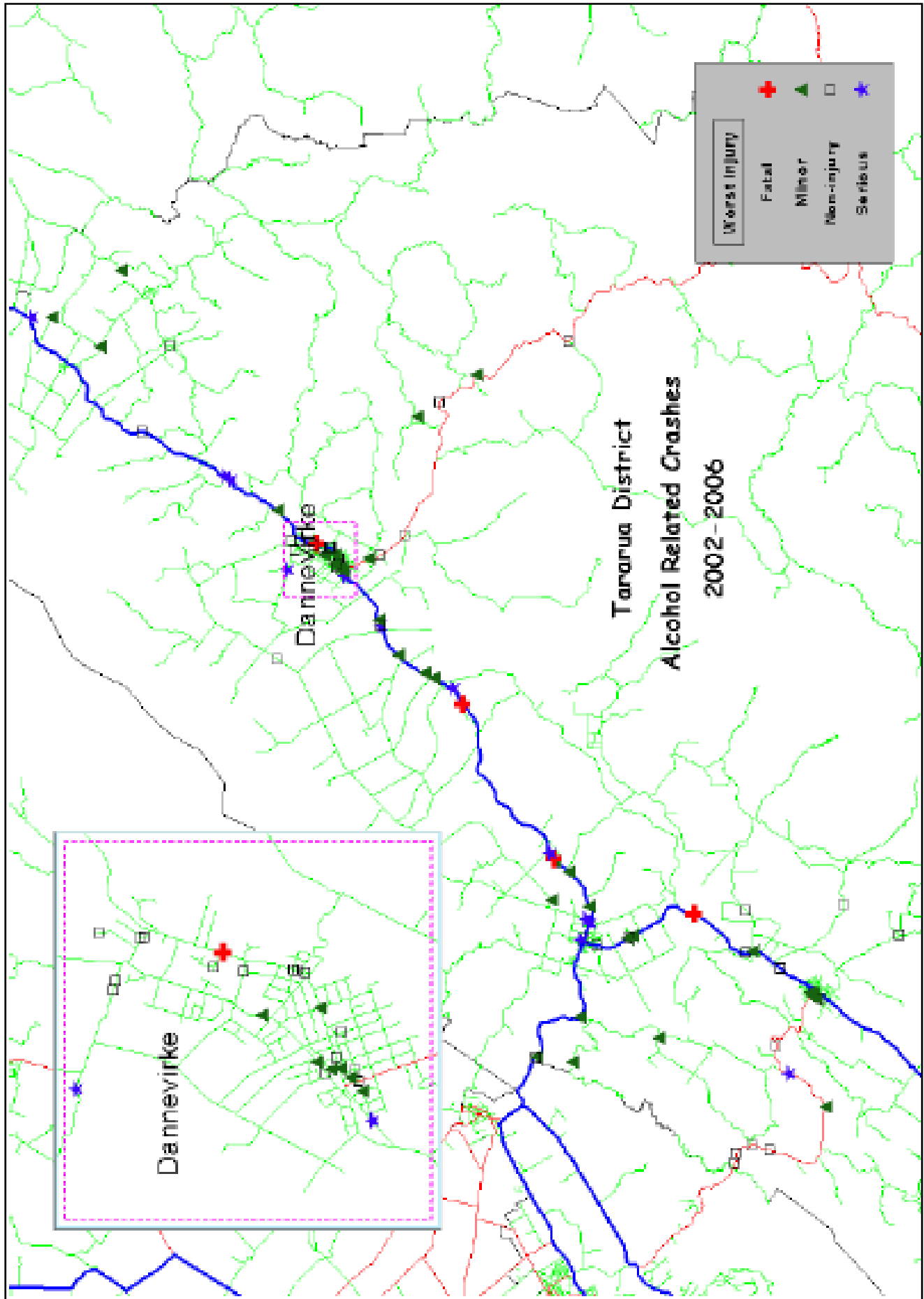
Further facts about alcohol related crashes in Tararua District (divided into local roads and State Highways) (2002 -2006):

Local roads

- 1 death, 13 serious injuries and 29 minor injuries
- 80 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes are male
- Most common crash type *Bend—loss of control head on* followed by *rear end/obstruction*
- 28 percent at intersections
- 49 percent on urban roads
- 26 percent on wet road
- 71 percent at night time
- Worst month April (12 percent)
- Worst days Saturday and Sunday (52 percent)

State highways

- 4 deaths, 14 serious injuries and 25 minor injuries
- 86 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes are male
- Most common crash type *Bend—loss of control head on* followed by *Straight—loss of control head on*
- 21 percent at intersections
- 30 percent on urban roads
- 34 percent on wet roads
- 71 percent at night time



National issues

Speed

Speed *too fast* was recorded in 17 percent of all nationally reported injury crashes in the last five years. In

Tararua District this has resulted in 5 deaths and 88 other injuries. Speed as a factor in crashes is not reducing in the district.

Most (80 percent) of speed-related crashes involved *loss of control/head-on at bends*. Alcohol and *poor handling* were the other driver factors most often associated with speed. Male drivers aged under 40 years old were most involved in speed related crashes.

Alcohol

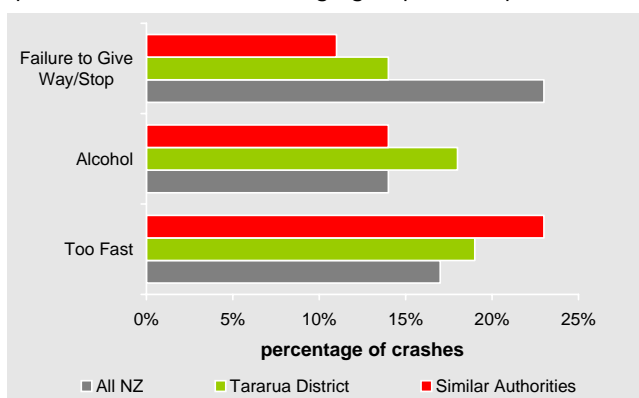
Alcohol was involved in 14 percent of all nationally reported injury crashes in the last five years. In Tararua District this has resulted in 5 deaths and 81 other injuries. The number of injury crashes involving alcohol is increasing.

Fifty-eight percent of alcohol crashes were in urban areas. Seventy percent of these crashes involved *loss of control/head-on crashes*. Travelling *too fast* and *poor handling* were the factors often associated with alcohol.

Failure to give way

Failure to give way or stop was reported in 24 percent of all nationally reported injury crashes for the last five years. In Tararua District this has resulted in 3 deaths and 73 other injuries.

Ninety percent of these are crossing/turning manoeuvres often associated with failure to look for other parties. For drivers at fault in injury crashes 70 percent are male and all age groups are represented.



Restraints

The Ministry of Transport conducts surveys of restraint use. The results of these surveys are at a regional level, and may not be fully appropriate to a Territorial Authority. The results are obtainable from the Ministry of Transport website.

<http://www.transport.govt.nz/belts-index/>

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