

road safety issues

July 2003

The Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 1998–2002 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in the Ashburton District.

Three people died in road crashes in Ashburton in 2002, two fewer than in 2001. A 12-year old passenger died when the car he was in lost control near a bend on Thompsons Track. A truck driver died when he collided with a train at the Northpark Road level crossing and a motorcyclist died when he lost control on a straight section of the Dromore Methven road.

There were fewer reported injury crashes in 2002 than in 2001, with only about half the number of urban injury crashes. This continues a downward trend in reported injury crashes in the last 10 years. Eighty percent of the \$22.3 million social cost of crashes in 2002 resulted from crashes on local roads and over 90 percent of the cost from rural crashes.

Nearly 80 percent of the casualties in road crashes in the last five years were drivers or passengers in cars or vans. Eight percent were motorcyclists and five percent were cyclists. Most of the cyclists were aged between 10 and 14 years. Just over 70 percent of the injury crashes happened at intersections.

Major road safety issues

Ashburton District

Intersections

Rural loss of control on straight roads

Cyclists

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

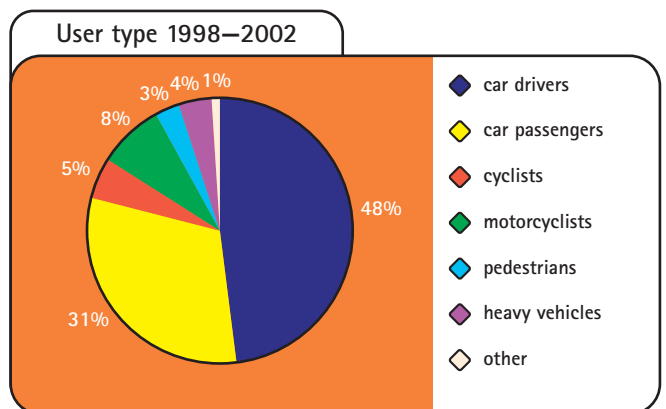
Failure to give way

Restraints

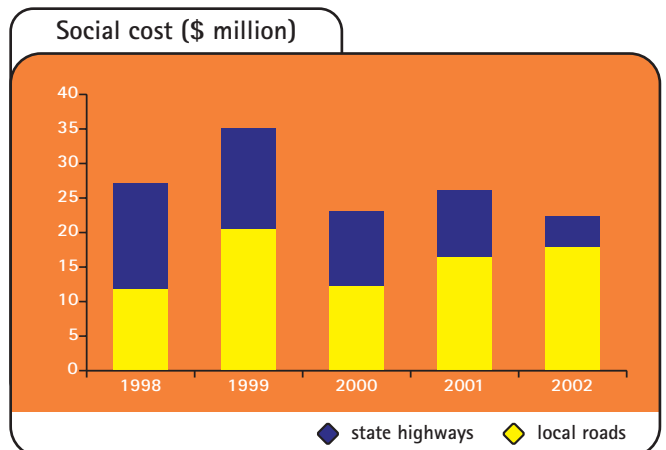
2002 road trauma for Ashburton District

☹	Deaths	3
♀	Serious casualties	13
	Minor casualties	42
🚗	Fatal crashes	3
	Serious injury crashes	10
	Minor-injury crashes	26
	Non-injury crashes	112

Road casualties 1998–2002



Estimated social cost of crashes*



* The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2002 prices.

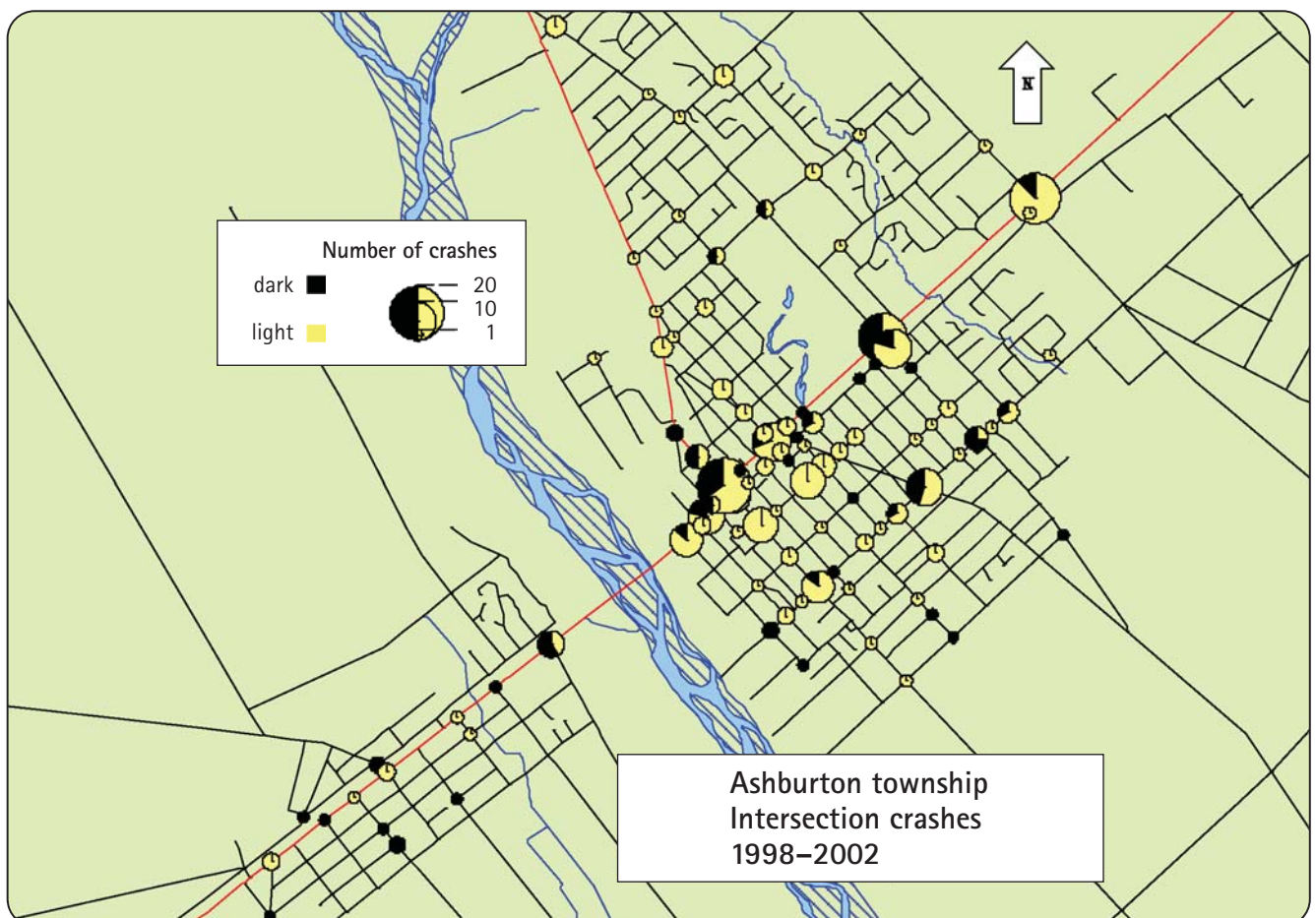
Intersections

Half of the reported crashes in Ashburton happened at intersections. In urban areas nearly two thirds happened at intersections and about 60 percent of these at local road intersections. In rural areas just under a third happened at intersections and about 70 percent of these at local road intersections. The social cost of crashes at intersections in 2002 was \$7.3 million; this is one third of the total social cost of crashes in 2002 for the district.

Crashes at rural intersections have killed seven people and injured 71 (17 seriously) in the last five years. At urban intersections two people died and 98 were injured; 13 were seriously injured.

Review of the crashes at rural intersections shows:

- a quarter of the crashes involved right angle crossing collisions and 10 percent involved traffic turning right being hit by through traffic from the right
- compared with urban intersection crashes, a higher proportion involved single vehicle loss of control type crashes with 14 percent missing the intersection or end of road, nine percent losing control when turning and 10 percent losing control and going off the road to the left or the right
- about 42 percent happened at crossroads and 58 percent at T or Y junctions with nearly a half recorded as having a Give Way control, a third uncontrolled and a fifth Stop controlled. The most common driver factors were failure to give way and poor observation and these contributed to 54 and 43 percent of the injury crashes respectively. Travelling too fast was the next most common and this accounted for 22 percent of the injury crashes
- just over a quarter of the crashes happened at night
- a third happened at weekends and nearly half of these at night
- only one intersection had three or more crashes in the last five years.



Intersection crashes 1998–2002



Comparing the urban crashes at local road intersections and intersections with state highways shows:

- at local road urban intersections half the crashes involved right angle crossing collisions; 11 percent single vehicle loss of control turning crashes; and eight percent right turning traffic colliding with oncoming traffic
- at intersections with state highways less than a quarter were right angle collisions; eight percent were single vehicle loss of control turning crashes; 30 percent right turning traffic colliding with oncoming traffic; and a higher percentage, eight, involved traffic turning right being hit by through traffic from the right
- three quarters of the local road crashes happened at crossroads and a quarter at T or Y junctions but on state highways over half were at crossroads and 44 percent at T or Y junctions
- the most common factors were: drivers failing to give way at Give Way or Stop controls or to non-turning traffic when turning, drivers not stopping at red lights and drivers not seeing either priority traffic coming from another direction or vehicles in front slowing or stopping
- a third of the crashes at state highway intersections happened at night but just over a quarter of those at local road intersections happened at night.

Recommended actions

Education

- Initiate and support campaigns on the need to give way at intersections, particularly when turning right.
- Support education and advertising campaigns on the right of way rules.
- Encourage education programmes to address driving at an appropriate speed, keeping a safe distance, signalling intentions, choosing a safe gap and checking for other vehicles.

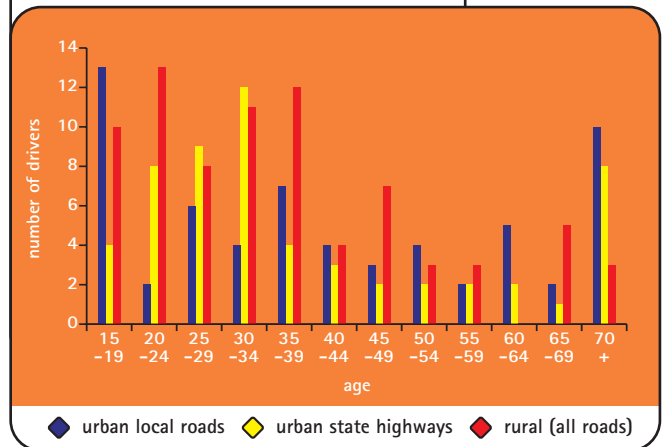
Enforcement

- Support strategic enforcement campaigns aimed at crossroads and known problem intersections.
- Encourage enforcement campaigns targeting drivers who fail to stop or give way.

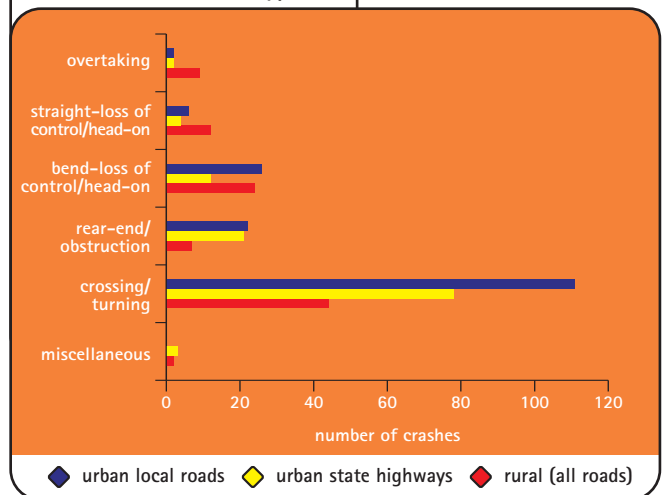
Engineering

- Promote and implement improvement works already identified for intersections with high crash rates.
- Continue crash reduction studies to identify, investigate and remedy intersections with high crash rates.
- Improve visibility at intersections.
- Conduct a safety audit/survey of intersection controls and visibility.
- Investigate the level of control at T junctions.
- Consider installing roundabouts, where feasible, to reduce the severity of crash injuries.

Age of drivers involved in crashes



Intersection crash types

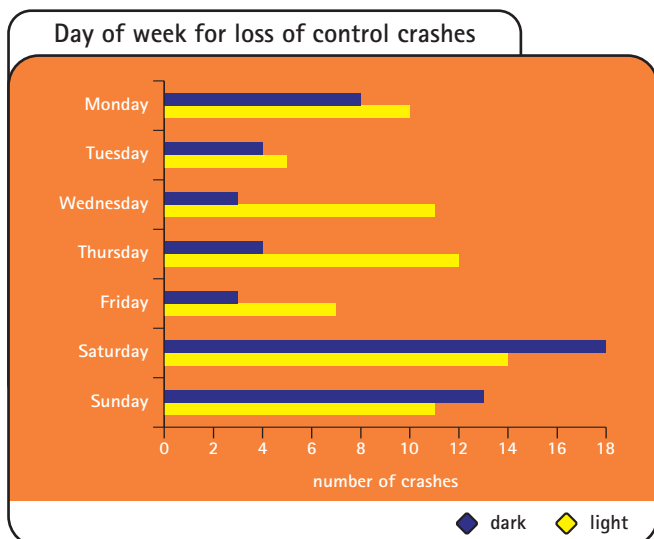
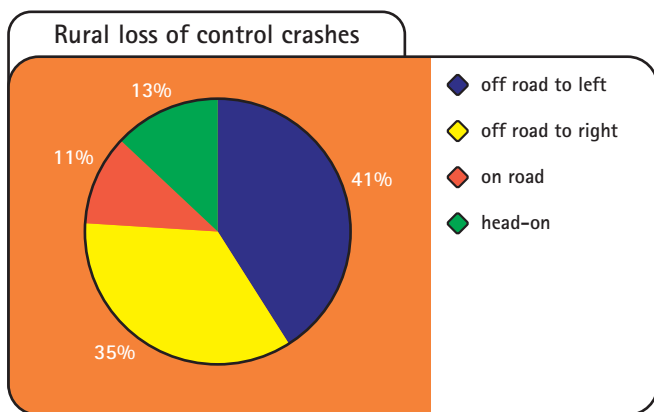


Rural loss of control on straight roads

A significantly high proportion, nearly 40 percent, of rural crashes in Ashburton were loss of control/head-on crashes on straight sections of road. The social cost of these crashes in 2002 was \$5.8 million – this is 29 percent of the social cost of rural crashes and 26 percent of the total cost of all crashes in the district in 2002.

In the last five years there were six fatal, 20 serious and 46 minor injury loss of control/head-on crashes on straight rural roads. In addition, 71 non-injury crashes of this type were reported. Eight people died and 66 were injured, 20 seriously in these crashes. Most of the casualties were drivers and about 30 percent were passengers.

The pie chart below shows most of the crashes were vehicles going off the road to the left or right.



Nearly a third of the injury crashes were caused by driver fatigue. Other common factors were poor handling, simple loss of control or loss of control when trying to return to seal from unsealed shoulder, and alcohol. Road factors contributed to 20 percent of the crashes – these were mainly slippery road surfaces due to rain, ice or snow and road surfaces under construction or maintenance.

About 40 percent of the drivers were under 25 years old but drivers of all ages were involved in these crashes; nearly half were females.

Nearly half the crashes happened at weekends and 43 percent in twilight or darkness. A quarter happened when the road surface was wet. Just under a quarter of the crashes resulted in a collision with a pole.

Recommended actions

Education

- Encourage education campaigns aimed at improving rural driving skills, especially skills to retain control if a vehicle leaves the sealed roadway.
- Encourage campaigns on the need to be fully alert when driving and to slow down at roadworks sites.
- Raise awareness of fatigue issues by community projects and continuing use of fatigue stops.

Enforcement

- Support strategic enforcement campaigns targeting drivers affected by alcohol or fatigue on rural roads, especially at weekends.

Engineering

- Encourage shoulder widening to ensure roads are the appropriate width with good recovery areas for errant vehicles.
- Maintain good road surfaces and drainage.
- Ensure roadside areas are kept clear of hazards.



Cyclists

Cyclists were a higher proportion (12 percent) of urban casualties in Ashburton than in similar areas or all New Zealand. In the last five years 19 cyclists have been injured in urban crashes, two seriously. In addition, a 12-year old cyclist died in a collision with a milk tanker at a T intersection on the Lismore Mayfield Road in 1998.

Ten of the 20 casualties were aged between 10 and 14 years, four between 15 and 19 years and five over 30 years. Six were females and 14 were males.

In addition to the 20 reported injury crashes in the last five years, 10 non-injury cycle crashes were reported. All except one of the cycle crashes were in urban areas and most in the Ashburton township. One was in Rakaia and one in Methven.

Car drivers are not checking well enough to see cyclists that they should give way to and are failing to give way at Give Way signs. Cyclists factors include cyclists riding on the footpath, failing to give way at Give Way signs, being inattentive and failing to check for other traffic.

Of the 30 crashes, eight (five injury and three non-injury), happened at roundabouts. Most of these were at the Walnut Avenue/East Street roundabout.

Recommended actions

Education

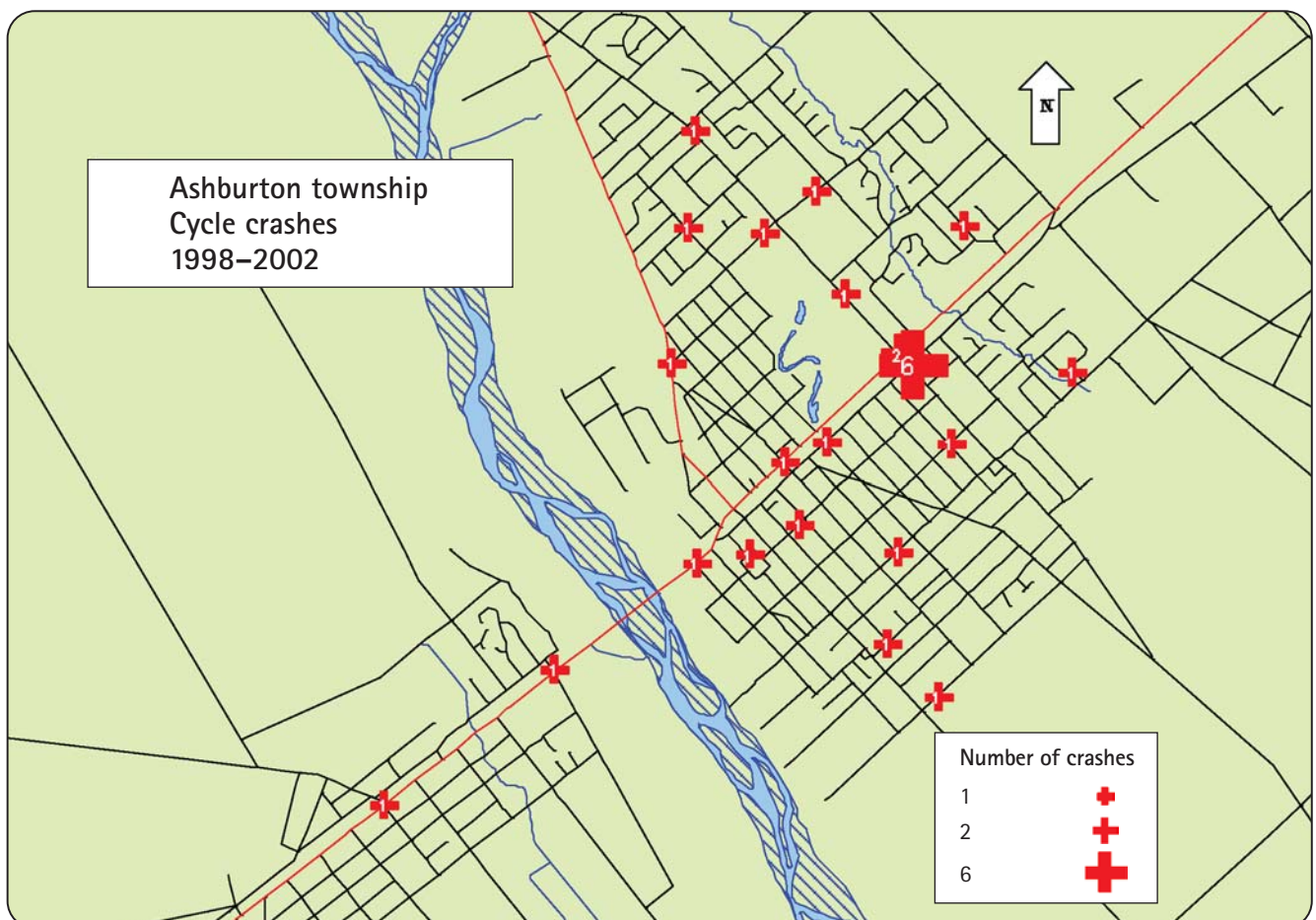
- Encourage safe cycling campaigns aimed at the 10 to 19 year age group.
- Support cycle safety promotion during Kidsafe Week.
- Promote drivers' awareness of cyclists, particularly at intersections.
- Promote safe cycling routes to schools.
- Encourage engineering staff and consultants to attend road safety workshops and conferences to stay up to date with new standards, guidelines and policies.

Enforcement

- Support strategic enforcement campaigns aimed at drivers and cyclists who fail to give way at intersections and roundabouts.

Engineering

- Promote the establishment of safe cycle ways.



New Zealand Road Safety Programme

Reducing road trauma involves a multi-pronged approach, which includes education, engineering and enforcement. The New Zealand Road Safety Programme (NZRSP) is the primary planning and funding programme for road safety activity undertaken by the New Zealand Police, LTSA and community groups. Transfund New Zealand provides funding to Transit New Zealand and local authorities for roading projects through its National Land Transport Programme.

Community projects

Through the Community Road Safety Programme (CRSP) the NZRSP provides funding for community development and community programmes to support road safety and to bring about positive and sustainable changes in community attitudes and behaviours. CRSP funding of community initiatives aims to encourage local involvement and ownership of road safety issues, and to target local resources and effort to local risks. This year's review of the programme initiates a re-focus of effort and funding into community development. This involves working with and within different communities of people to assist them in becoming aware of their own local road safety issues and developing solutions to achieve better road safety outcomes.

Funding from the CRSP for community initiatives in Ashburton for the 2003/2004 year has been confirmed as follows.

Project	Funding
Road safety co-ordinator	\$25,000
CAAP	\$8,000
A & P shows	\$1,500
Small project fund	\$5,000
Community youth crash consequences	\$3,000
Restraints awareness	\$500
Fatigue	\$2,500
Practical driving skills *	\$2,500
Intersection safety *	\$3,000
Safe With Age *	\$2,000

* These funds are allocated by the LTSA for the Ashburton District Road Safety Association and are separate from the Ashburton District funds.

In addition to project funding, a further \$77,300 has been allocated to the Canterbury Region for advertising to support community road safety initiatives. This funding is held by the LTSA and carries application criteria that must be met. Road safety co-ordinators can advise the criteria.

The Ashburton District will also be involved this year in regionally funded projects as follows:

Project	General funding
Regional road safety co-ordinator	\$42,000
Small project fund	\$76,720
Fatigue	\$40,000
A & P show displays	\$24,000
Regional billboard project	\$18,000

Road policing

Police enforcement hours to support community projects are now allocated to police community services hours rather than to individual projects. The delivery of these hours to support community projects will need to be negotiated by the road safety co-ordinator.

In 2003/2004, the Police are funded to deliver 10,210 hours of road policing in the Ashburton District (the same as in 2002/2003) as follows:

Project	Police hours
Strategic – alcohol/drugs, speed, restraints and visible road safety enforcement	8,110
Traffic management including crash attendance, incidents, emergencies and events	1,110
School road safety education	510
Police community services	480

Road environment

Transfund New Zealand's National Land Transport Programme 2003/2004 has allocations for minor safety projects on local roads and state highways in the Ashburton District.

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes in the Ashburton District, please refer to the 1998 to 2002 Road Safety Data Report, or to one of the contacts listed below:

Contacts

Land Transport Safety Authority	New Zealand Police
Regional Manager Dennis Robertson Phone 03 363 5661	Strategic Traffic Manager Derek Erasmus PO Box 2109, Christchurch Phone 03 363 7417
Regional Education Advisor Bob Clements Phone 03 363 5677	Ashburton District Council David Robertson PO Box 94, Ashburton Phone 03 308 5139
Senior Road Safety Engineer Steve Parry Phone 03 363 5646	Transit New Zealand Area Engineer Colin Hey PO Box 1479, Christchurch Phone 03 366 4455
Road Safety Co-ordinator Ashburton District Council Sharon McDonald PO Box 419, Ashburton Phone 03 308 8377	

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