

# briefing notes - road safety issues

## Buller District

New Zealand Transport Agency, (NZTA), has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data for the 2005–2009 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues to help identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in Buller District.

In March 2010 the Government released a new strategy, “Safer Journeys”, to build on the gains made under the Road Safety to 2010 Strategy. The focus of these Issues Reports has changed to reflect the new strategy. Many of the issues reported on in the past fit neatly into the new strategy. An explanation of where things fit is included in this report.

The issues chosen for this report are drawn from: the most common crash types, those that appear over-represented when Buller District is compared to similar local bodies, those with high social cost, (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes), or those that are a priority under Safer Journeys.

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

We encourage Buller District to use its free access to the Ministry of Transport’s Crash Analysis System (CAS), to delve deeper into the highlighted issues and other road safety issues in the district. Also the NZTA Southern Performance Information Team in Christchurch is available to provide further information or assistance if required.

Major road safety issues		2009 road trauma	
	Note Issues are not in any order	Casualties	Buller District
<b>Buller District</b>			
Bend - loss of control or head-on		Deaths	2
Speed		Serious casualties	12
		Minor casualties	41
<b>Nationally</b>		<b>Crashes</b>	
Speed		Fatal crashes	2
Alcohol / Drugs		Serious injury crashes	9
Young Drivers		Minor injury crashes	27
Roads and Roadsides		Non-injury crashes	66
Motorcyclists			

## Safer Journeys

For the past few years road safety in New Zealand has been directed by the Road Safety to 2010 strategy. This strategy was introduced in 2003 and aimed to reduce deaths and casualties from road crashes.

In March 2010 the Government released a new strategy, "Safer Journeys", to build on the gains made under the Road Safety to 2010 strategy.

Under this new strategy, road safety will be looked at from a system wide approach rather than focusing on the road user. The emphasis will be on improving all the parts road transport system that impact on safety; the road, the vehicle, travel speeds and the road user.

A number of areas were chosen as the areas of focus under the strategy. These areas were assigned a priority, based on research that shows five major areas of concern, five areas of lesser concern, and three areas where continued focus is needed, or concern is emerging.

These divisions are shown in the table opposite. This table is a direct extract from page 12 of the Safer Journeys document, which can be found at:

<http://www.transport.govt.nz/saferjourneys/Documents/SaferJourneyStrategy.pdf>

In this year's Road Safety Issues Briefing Notes changes have been made to the wording, and to the data presented, to better reflect and emphasise the connections to the new strategy.

On the following page we present a table that shows the areas of "high concern" under the Safer Journeys strategy. This table allows some relative comparison of the Safer Journeys priorities across the local bodies and regional authorities in the Canterbury / West Coast Region of the New Zealand Transport Agency.

**Table 3 – Safer Journeys' areas of concern and the Safe System**

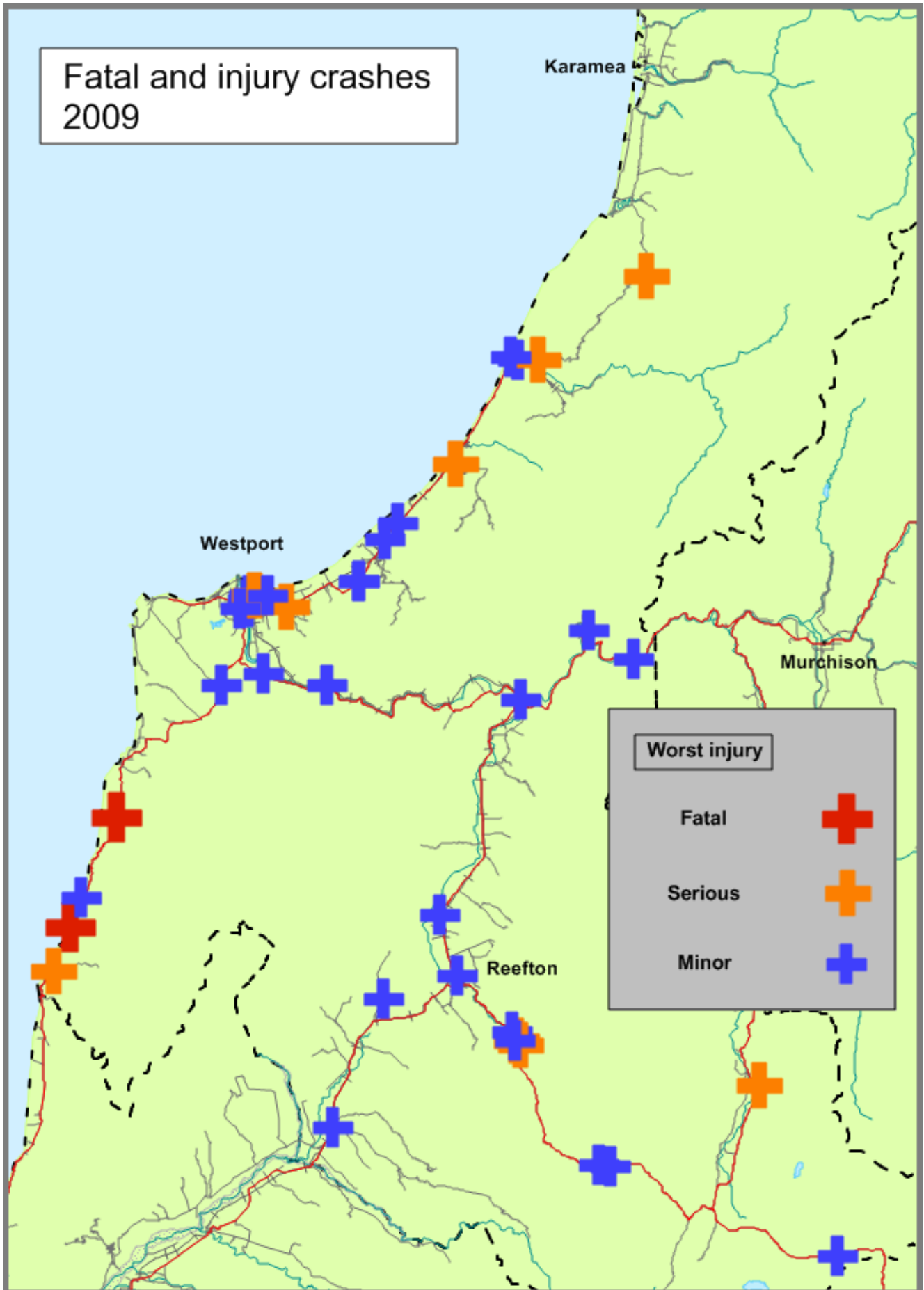
AREAS OF CONCERN WE WILL ADDRESS	WHERE WE WILL TAKE ACTION ACROSS THE SAFE SYSTEM			
	SAFE ROADS AND ROAD-SIDES	SAFE SPEEDS	SAFE VEHICLES	SAFE ROAD USE
<b>Areas of high concern</b>				
Reducing alcohol/drug impaired driving			✓	✓
Increasing the safety of young drivers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Safe roads and roadsides	✓			
Safe speeds	✓	✓	✓	
Increasing the safety of motorcycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Areas of medium concern</b>				
Improving the safety of the light vehicle fleet			✓	✓
Safe walking and cycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
Improving the safety of heavy vehicles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reducing the impact of fatigue	✓	✓	✓	✓
Addressing distraction	✓		✓	✓
Reducing the impact of high risk drivers		✓	✓	✓
<b>Areas of continued and emerging focus</b>				
Increasing the level of restraint use			✓	✓
Increasing the safety of older New Zealanders	✓	✓	✓	✓

For some priorities (eg motorcycling), complementary action will be taken across all four areas of the Safe System. For others (eg reducing the impact of drink driving or safe roads), more effort would be focussed on one or two of the four Safe System areas.

Source  
Safer Journeys, Road Safety Strategy 2010-2020  
Ministry of Transport  
March 2010

Status of the areas of "high concern" from Safer Journeys 2020 - Canterbury / West Coast Region  
(table is based on 2005 to 2009 fatal and serious crashes - local roads as well as State Highways)

Area of concern	Reducing alcohol and drug impaired driving	Increase the Safety of young drivers	Safer roads and roadsides		Reducing speed related crashes	Increasing the safety of motorcycling
Measure	Percentage of crashes with this factor	Percentage of at fault drivers 24 years or less	Percentage of crashes with an object struck	Number of intersections with two or more fatal or serious casualties in the last five years	Percentage of crashes with this factor	Percentage of crashes involving a motorcyclist
Buller District	17	26	58	0	32	29
Grey District	20	23	49	1	29	31
Westland District	16	32	56	0	32	22
Kaikoura District	15	24	62	0	38	28
Hurunui District	18	21	64	0	34	16
Waimakariri District	20	32	50	3	17	15
Christchurch City	16	34	31	83	15	22
Selwyn District	20	26	45	5	16	17
Ashburton District	21	28	45	2	25	16
Timaru District	18	35	36	2	17	27
Mackenzie District	6	23	63	0	13	3
Waimate District	30	36	45	0	23	23
Chatham Islands	38	17	75	0	25	38
West Coast Region	17	34	55	1	31	27
Canterbury Region	17	31	39	95	18	20
New Zealand	23	34	45	446	23	18



## Overview

In 2009 on Buller District local roads there were 12 reported injury crashes, of which 4 were serious. In addition, on State Highways there were 26 reported injury crashes of which 7 were fatal or serious.

The table below shows the number of casualties resulting from the 38 injury crashes by rural or urban areas (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

Casualties 2009 Buller District				
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	2	10	33	45
Urban	0	2	8	10
Total	2	12	41	55

In 2009 in Buller District all fatalities, 83 percent of serious casualties and 80 percent of minor casualties were from crashes in the rural areas.

The number of injury crashes has fluctuated between a high of 55 in 2007 and a low of 25 in 2002. There are no trends obvious in the ten years, although from the chart on the back page, the numbers of fatal and serious crashes are reducing on the long term.

Crash trends in Buller District				
Year	Fatal Crashes	Serious Crashes	Minor Crashes	Total Crashes
2000	1	13	17	31
2001	7	9	18	34
2002	3	9	13	25
2003	1	7	28	36
2004	4	12	20	36
2005	1	9	22	32
2006	1	13	27	41
2007	2	18	35	55
2008	2	9	27	38
2009	2	9	27	38

The following table illustrates where the issues considered for this report fit within the Safer Journeys priority. The numbers and percentages give an indication of how they fit in the priorities for Buller District.

Crash characteristics (2005 to 2009) Buller District				
Crash type or contributory cause	Percent fatal and serious crashes	Percent all injury crashes	No. of injury crashes	Safer Journeys priority
Alcohol	17	15	31	1
Too fast	32	31	63	1
At bends	65	59	120	1
On straights	11	14	29	1
Intersections	12	18	36	1
Road factors	21	21	42	1
Motorcycling	29	13	27	1
Young drivers	26	28	58	1
Fatigue	11	11	22	2
Distraction	8	4	18	2
Pedestrians	2	1	3	2
Cycling	2	1	3	2
Heavy vehicles	18	15	32	2
Older road users	6	7	15	3
Overseas drivers	10	14	29	-

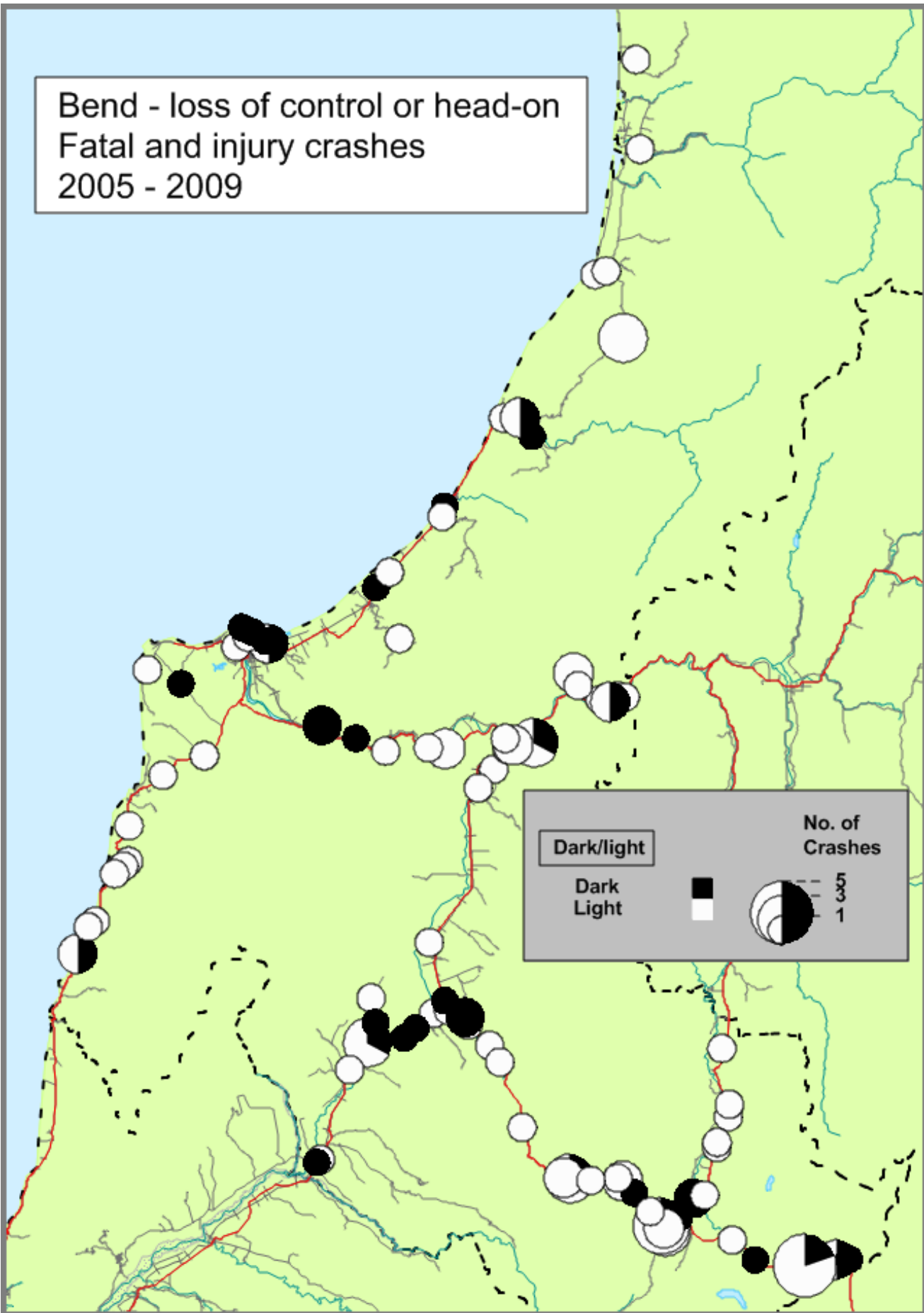
Further information about the 53 injury crashes on local roads in Buller District, 2005 to 2009:

- 1 death, 21 serious injuries and 51 minor casualties
- Five year age group with most at fault drivers in injury crashes: 15 to 19 years, (22 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$4.49 m

Further information about the 151 injury crashes on State Highways in Buller District, 2005 to 2009:

- 7 deaths, 50 serious injuries and 171 minor casualties
- Five year age group with most at fault drivers in injury crashes: 20 to 24 years (16 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$14.19 m

Bend - loss of control or head-on  
Fatal and injury crashes  
2005 - 2009



## Bend - loss of control or head on

Between 2005 and 2009, 59percent of all injury crashes in Buller District were bend - loss of control or head on crashes. These crashes resulted in 5 deaths, 47 serious injuries and 117 minor injuries.

Crash numbers rose in 2007 and fell again in 2008. This was from a high number of serious injury crashes.

Bend - loss of control or head on crashes Buller District (2005 - 2009)				
Crash year	Fatal crashes	Serious crashes	Minor crashes	Total
2005	1	7	11	19
2006	1	7	18	26
2007	1	15	20	36
2008	1	4	15	20
2009	1	5	13	19
Total	5	38	77	120

In injury crashes in Buller District, males represented over 70 percent of drivers at fault.

Young drivers, (aged 15 - 24 years) made up 31 percent of at-fault drivers. Those aged 40 to 59 years made up 34 percent of all at fault drivers.

At fault drivers in Bend - loss of control or head on crashes 2005 to 2009			
Ages	Male	Female	Total
15 to 19	14	2	16
20 to 24	11	9	20
25 to 29	5	3	8
30 to 39	9	5	14
40 to 49	16	5	21
50 to 59	15	3	18
60 to 69	7	1	8
70 and over	6	5	11
Total	83	33	116

If drivers lose control, their vehicles they may crash into roadside hazards such as ditches, banks, poles or trees. Hitting roadside objects can result in a minor off-road event becoming more serious.

The most common roadside hazards struck in injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes in Buller District were cliffs or banks (27), ditches (18), and trees (17) from a total of 107 objects struck.

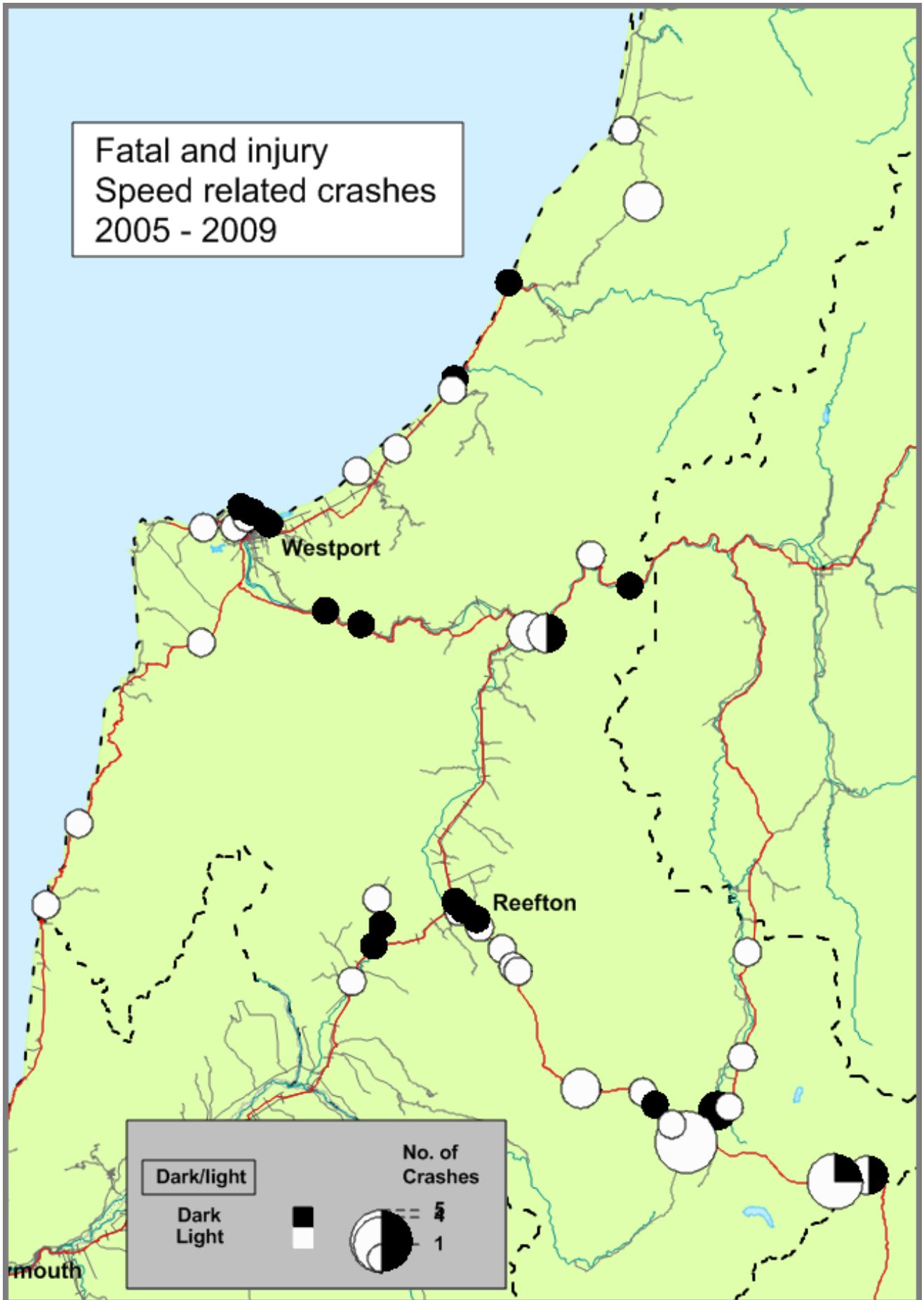
A roadside hazard was struck in 68 percent of bend - loss of control crashes in the district.

Further information about the 24 injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes on local roads in Buller District, (2005 to 2009):

- 12 serious injuries and 19 minor injuries
- 46 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 54 percent of crashes involved speed too fast for the conditions
- 13 percent involved road factors
- 42 percent involved poor handling
- 67 percent were on rural roads
- 13 percent were on wet or icy roads
- 42 percent were at night
- Worst month August
- Worst day of week Wednesday
- Worst time period 3 pm till 6 pm

Further information about the 96 injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes on State Highways in Buller District, (2005 to 2009):

- 5 deaths, 35 serious injuries and 98 minor injuries
- 6 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 45 percent of crashes involved speed too fast for the conditions
- 27 percent involved road factors
- 63 percent involved poor handling
- 95 percent were on rural roads
- 52 percent were on wet or icy roads
- 25 percent were at night
- Worst month February
- Worst days of week Monday, Wednesday, Friday
- Worst time period midday till 3 pm





## Speed

Nationally, speed is one of the major contributing factors to road crashes. Reducing speeds is an important road safety goal. Excessive speed increases the likelihood of a crash occurring by reducing the time available for a driver to react to a situation. It also leads to more severe injuries. Research has shown that a one km/h reduction in average speed can produce a three percent reduction in injury crashes.

Speed related crashes in CAS are not necessarily crashes where the driver was exceeding the posted speed limit but are crashes where in the opinion of the Police Officer reporting the crash the driver was travelling too fast for the prevailing conditions.

Between 2005 and 2009, 31 percent of injury crashes in Buller District involved travelling too fast for the conditions. These 63 crashes resulted in 23 serious injuries and 61 minor injuries.

Speed related crashes, Buller District					
Area	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Rural	6	7	24	6	9
Urban	0	5	2	2	2
Total	6	12	26	8	11

In 2007 almost three times the average number of speed-related crashes were reported. This was in the rural areas. Over 80 percent of speed-related crashes were in rural areas of the District.

The other main causes contributing to speed related crashes were:

- Handling errors
- Alcohol
- General errors of judgement

The key locations of alcohol related crashes are shown on the map opposite.

### Age and gender of at fault drivers in speed related injury crashes. (2005 - 2009) Buller District

Drivers age *	Male	Female	Total
15-19 years	12	4	16
20 - 24	5	4	9
25 - 29	3	2	5
30 - 39	6	2	8
40 - 49	6	2	8
50 - 59	6	2	8
60 - 69	3	1	4
70+	4	1	5
<b>Total</b>	45	18	63

Further information about the 16 speed related injury crashes in Buller District on local roads (2005 to 2009):

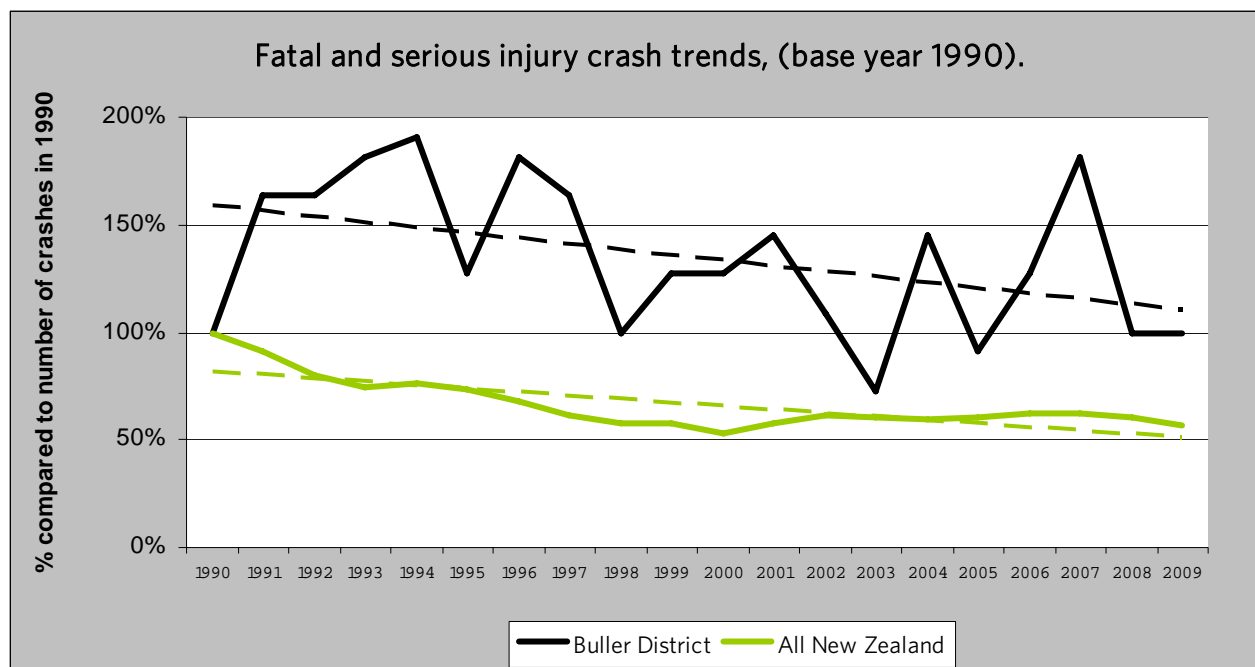
- 9 serious injuries and 15 minor injuries
- Most common crash type bend - loss of control or head-on
- 88 percent mid-block
- 44 percent urban
- 13 percent wet or icy road
- 50 percent night time
- Worst months March, August
- Worst day of week Wednesday
- Worst times midnight to 3 am and 3 pm - 6 pm

Further information about the 47 speed related injury crashes in Buller District on State highways (2005 to 2009):

- 14 serious injuries and 46 minor injuries
- Most common crash type Bend - loss of control or head-on
- 83 percent mid-block
- 91 percent rural
- 62 percent wet or icy road
- 28 percent night time
- Worst month February
- Worst day of week Friday
- Worst time 3 pm - 6 pm

## Looking back - the last two decades.

The vision of the Government's "Safer Journeys" road safety strategy is "A safe road system that is increasingly free of road deaths and serious injuries". The chart below illustrates the progress made in reducing fatal and serious casualties since 1990, for both Buller District and for the country as a whole.



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