



# *briefing notes - road safety issues*

## *Central Otago 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 the Central Otago District.

All the material, unless otherwise stated, in this report applies to both local roads and to State Highways (Transit roads).

In each year's report, one 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 the Central Otago District is compared to similar local bodies or those with a high social cost (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes mainly). We have included a brief overview of crashes in the district for 2006.

We encourage local bodies to use their free access to the Ministry of Transport Crash Analysis System to delve deeper into the highlighted issues.

Major road safety issues		2006 road trauma	
<b>Central Otago District</b>		<b>Casualties</b>	
Loss of control on rural roads		Deaths	1
Speed		Serious casualties	28
Alcohol		Minor casualties	87
<b>Nationally</b>		<b>Crashes</b>	
Speed		Fatal crashes	1
Alcohol		Serious injury crashes	24
Failure to give way		Minor injury crashes	50
Restraint use		Non-injury crashes	73

## Overview

In 2006 on local roads in the Central Otago District there were 22 injury crashes and 24 non-injury crashes, in addition there were 52 injury crashes and 49 non-injury crashes on State Highways, as reported by the New Zealand Police.

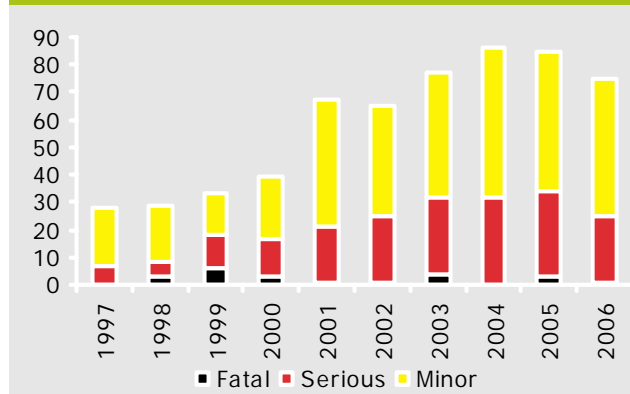
The table below shows the number of injuries resulting from 2006 crashes by rural or urban areas for both local and Transit roads (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

### Casualties by injury type 2006

	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	1	22	71	94
Urban	0	6	16	22
Total	1	28	87	116

Fatalities in the district have been fluctuating over the last ten years between a high of six in 1999 and none in 2004. Serious injuries on the other hand fell in 2006 from 41 the previous year to the lowest level since 2001.

### Injury crashes 1997 to 2006



Crash movement 2006	Percentage of all crashes of this type
Lost control at bend	47%
Lost control on straight	18%
Crossing/turning	9%
Rear end/obstruction	21%
Overtaking	2%
Pedestrian vs vehicle	2%

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

- Worst month December (8), best October (1)
- Worst day Wednesday (9), best Sunday (5)
- Wet road 15 percent
- Night time 41 percent
- Intersection 15 percent
- 78 percent of at fault drivers male (injury crashes)
- 53 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes held a full NZ licence

Transit roads

- Worst month January (12), best April (4)
- Worst day Sunday (18), best Saturday (13)
- Wet/icy road 23 percent
- Night time 31 percent
- 71 percent of at fault drivers male (injury crashes)
- 50 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes held a full NZ licence

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.

In the Central Otago District however licence status figures are distorted by the number of overseas licence holders involved in crashes. In 2006 nearly one quarter of all at fault drivers held a licence from overseas as shown below.

Driver licence status 2006	Percentage of total 'at fault' drivers (NZ value in brackets)
Full	50.0 (58.4) %
Learner	4.4 (9.5) %
Restricted	13.2 (17.6) %
Never licenced	1.4 (2.2) %
Disqualified	1.4 (1.7) %
Overseas	23.5 (4.2) %
Expired	0 (0.5) %
Other / unknown	5.8 (5.6) %

## Rural crashes

In 2006 68 percent of reported crashes in the Central Otago District occurred on rural roads, that is roads with a speed limit greater than 70km/h. Four out of five injuries occurred on these higher speed roads.

Over three quarters of rural crashes involved a vehicle losing control and either leaving the road or colliding with an oncoming vehicle.

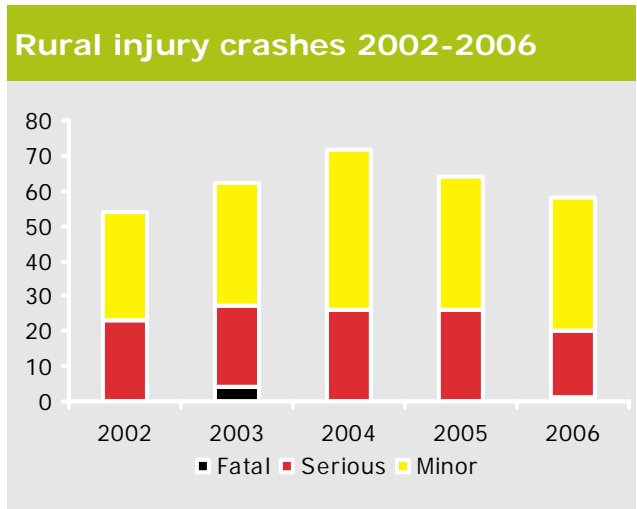
After drivers lose control of their vehicles they often crash into roadside hazards such as ditches, banks, poles or trees. It is hitting these objects that can result in a relatively minor off-road event turning into something far more serious.

The following table shows the number of various road side hazards that were hit in rural crashes in the Central Otago District during the period 2002-2006. Note that the same hazard can be struck more than once in the same crash and that each crash could have a number of objects of different types hit.

Type of roadside hazard	Local road	State Highway
Bridge ends	2	3
Cliff or bank	16	69
Ditch	23	74
Fence	25	68
House or building	0	1
Guard rail	0	28
Over bank	15	49
Post or pole	6	13
Stray animal	0	16
Traffic sign	5	14
Tree	7	29
Water/River	1	4

The 102 reported crashes on rural roads in 2006 was an increase on the 90 recorded the previous year and just below the ten year high of 108 recorded in 2001. The number of rural crashes resulting in injury was lower than the previous five years.

The following graph shows the number of reported injury crashes on rural roads over the last five years.



Further information about rural crashes on local roads in the Central Otago District in 2006:

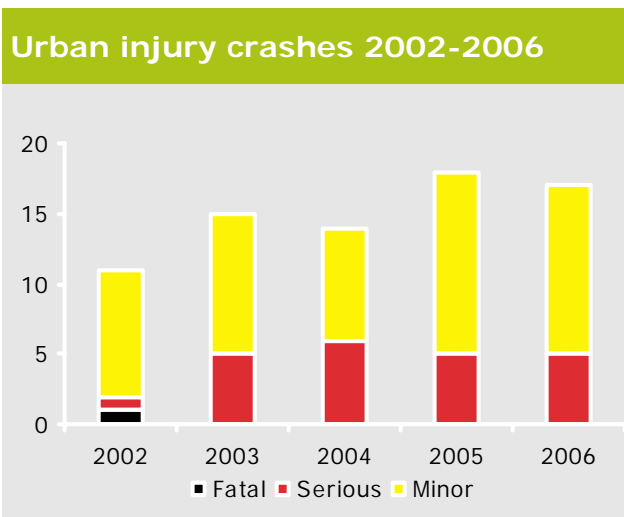
- Four serious injuries and 21 minor injuries
- At fault drivers 77 percent male
- Most common crash type - losing control on a bend
- 23 percent of injury crashes involved alcohol over limit
- 46 percent of crashes involved a vehicle travelling too fast for the conditions
- Ten percent of crashes were on a wet surface
- 15 percent of crashes were on an icy surface
- 42 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 84 percent of crashes involved a single vehicle

### Transit roads

- One death, 18 serious injuries and 53 minor injuries
- At fault drivers 70 percent male
- Most common crash type - loss of control on a bend
- Nine percent of injury crashes involved alcohol over limit
- Nine percent of injury crashes involved a vehicle travelling too fast for the conditions
- 14 percent of crashes were on a wet surface
- 13 percent of crashes were on an icy surface
- 32 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 72 percent of crashes involved a single vehicle
- 28 percent of at fault drivers held an overseas licence

## Urban crashes

In the Central Otago District in 2006 32 percent of all reported crashes took place on urban roads. In 2006 22 people were injured in urban crashes and there were a further 30 crashes reported that resulted in no injury. The 47 crashes recorded on urban roads was the highest number seen in over ten years.



36 percent of all urban crashes were a rear end type collision or hitting a parked vehicle. Over 40 percent of crashes involved a vehicle losing control. Just over one third of all urban crashes took place at intersections.

62 percent of urban crashes in 2006 involved more than one vehicle. The most common factor was 'Poor Observation' which means one driver failed to look and make sure that the road was clear before making a manoeuvre.

Further information about urban crashes in the Central Otago District in 2006:

### Local roads

- Six serious injuries, seven minor injuries and 18 non injury crashes
- At fault drivers were 83 percent male
- 33 percent of crashes involved alcohol over limit
- 33 percent of crashes also involved travelling too fast for the conditions
- 18 percent of crashes were on a wet surface
- 41 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 52 percent of crashes involved more than one vehicle
- Only 26 percent of crashes occurred at intersections

### Transit roads

- Nine minor injuries and 12 non injury crashes
- At fault drivers 86 percent male
- None of the urban injury crashes involved speed or alcohol
- All crashes took place on a dry road surface
- 25 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 45 percent of crashes occurred at intersections
- 75 percent of all crashes involved more than one vehicle

## Speed

'Too fast for the conditions' was recorded in 15 percent of injury crashes in the district in the last five years resulting in four deaths and 92 injuries. There were also 45 non-injury speed-related crashes reported. The number of speed related crashes reached a five year high in 2006 with 25 crashes reported.

92 percent of speed-related crashes over the last five years were loss of control type crashes, 53 percent of which took place on local roads. 25 percent of speed related crashes also involved excess alcohol.

Four out of five at fault drivers in speed related crashes over the last five years were male, with drivers under 20 years old accounting for 37 percent of them.

## Alcohol

Alcohol was a factor in 12 percent of injury crashes in the district over the last five years resulting in four deaths and 54 other injuries. There were also 28 non-injury alcohol-related crashes reported. The number of crashes where alcohol was a factor increased by 54 percent from 2005.

Over the last five years nine out of ten at fault drivers in alcohol related crashes were male.

As is to be expected, a large number of alcohol related crashes occurred at night, 75 percent. 85 percent of crashes involved a single vehicle with loss of control either on a straight or bend being the most common type of crash. Alcohol was combined with travelling too fast for the conditions in 31 percent of injury crashes.