



# briefing notes - road safety issues

## Central Otago 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 Central Otago 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 Central Otago 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 Central Otago 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	Note Issues are not in any order	2009 road trauma	
<b>Central Otago District</b>		<b>Casualties</b>	<b>Central Otago District</b>
Bend - loss of control or head-on		Deaths	1
Young drivers		Serious casualties	15
		Minor casualties	74
<b>Nationally</b>		<b>Crashes</b>	<b>Central Otago District</b>
Speed		Fatal crashes	1
Alcohol / Drugs		Serious injury crashes	11
Young Drivers		Minor injury crashes	47
Roads and Roadsides		Non-injury crashes	102
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 Otago / Southland Region of the New Zealand Transport Agency.

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

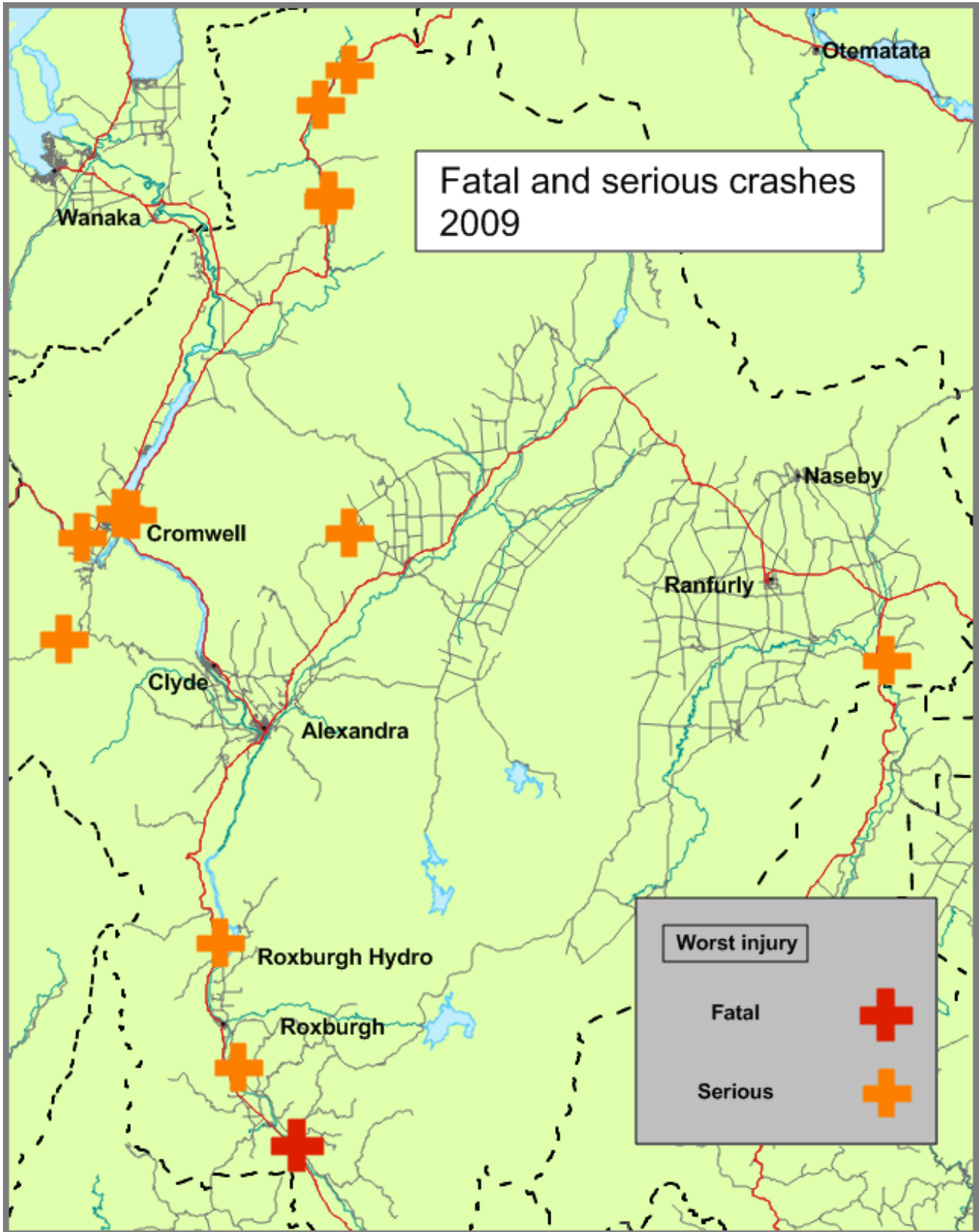
AREAS OF CONCERN WE WILL ADDRESS	WHERE WE WILL TAKE ACTION ACROSS THE SAFE SYSTEM			
	SAFE ROADS AND ROAD-SIDES	SAFE SPEEDS	SAFE VEHICLES	SAFE ROAD USE
<b>Areas of high concern</b>				
Reducing alcohol/drug impaired driving			✓	✓
Increasing the safety of young drivers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Safe roads and roadsides	✓			
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 - Otago / Southland 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
Waitaki District	19	35	52	0	19	16
Central Otago District	18	35	59	3	16	18
Queenstown-Lakes District	20	41	51	2	20	19
Dunedin City	17	44	46	21	21	13
Clutha District	14	36	61	1	22	15
Southland District	20	38	61	1	24	21
Gore District	16	53	46	1	20	18
Invercargill District	15	49	49	19	21	17
Otago Region	17	41	50	27	20	15
Southland Region	18	44	49	21	21	19
New Zealand	23	34	45	446	23	18



## Overview

In 2009 on Central Otago District local roads there were 18 reported injury crashes, of which 4 were serious. In addition, on State Highways there were 43 reported injury crashes of which 10 were fatal or serious.

The table below shows the number of casualties resulting from the 61 injury crashes by rural or urban areas (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

Casualties 2009 Central Otago District				
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	1	17	56	74
Urban	0	0	18	18
Total	1	17	74	92

In 2009, all fatalities, all serious injuries and three quarters of minor injuries were from crashes on roads in rural areas of the district.

Over the last 10 years, the number of fatal and injury crashes reported rose to a high of 86 in 2004. Since then the number has reduced each year, and in 2009 was the lowest since 2000. For fatal and serious crashes only, the pattern was similar, and in 2009 the number of fatal and serious crashes was the lowest in the ten year period.

Crash trends in Central Otago District				
Year	Fatal Crashes	Serious Crashes	Minor Crashes	Total Crashes
2000	3	14	22	39
2001	1	20	46	67
2002	1	24	40	65
2003	4	28	45	77
2004	0	32	54	86
2005	3	31	51	85
2006	1	26	48	75
2007	5	12	57	74
2008	5	14	50	69
2009	1	13	47	61

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 Central Otago District.

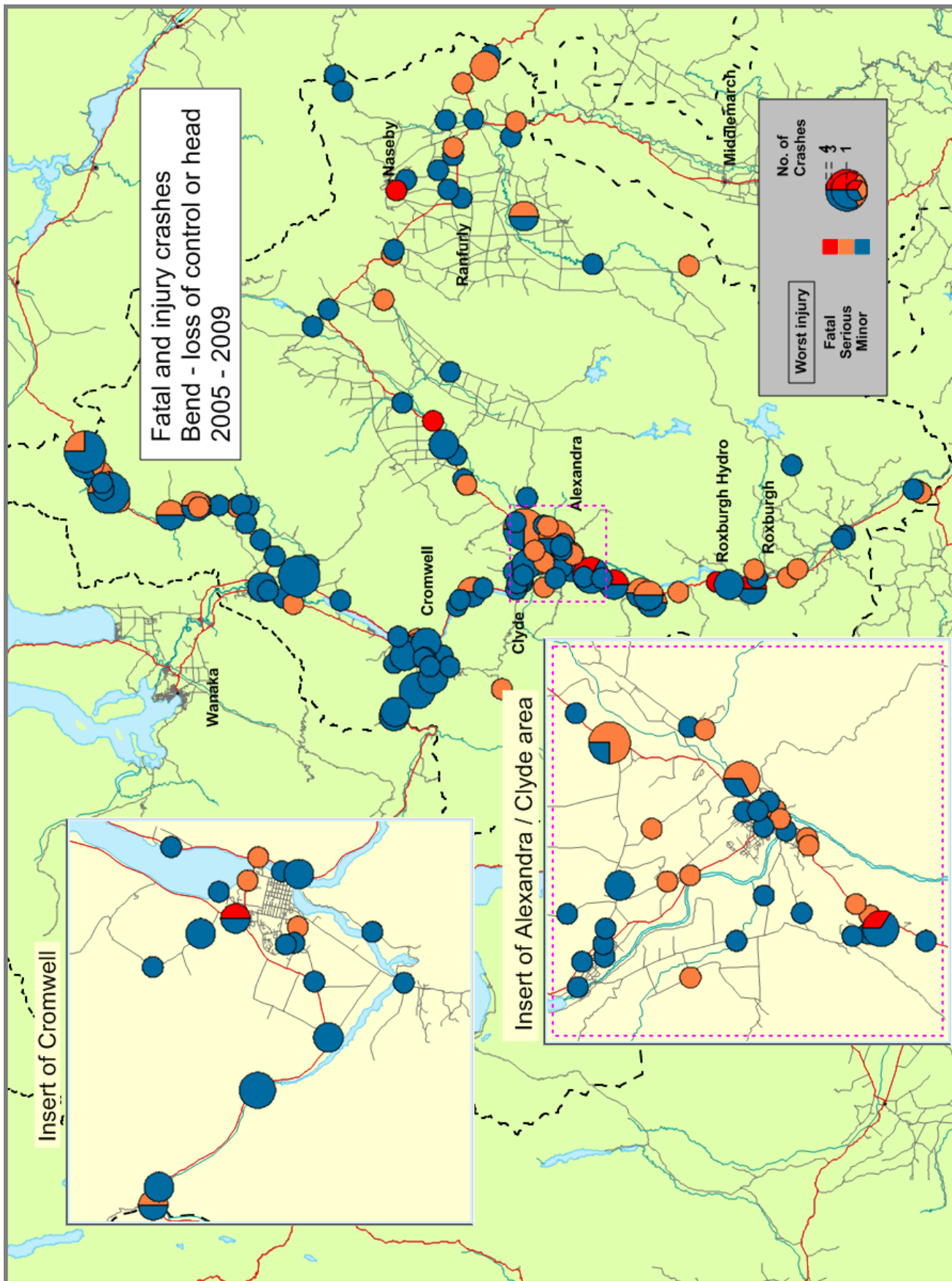
Crash characteristics (2005 to 2009) Central Otago District				
Crash type or contributory cause	Percent fatal and serious crashes	Percent all injury crashes	No. of injury crashes	Safer Journeys priority
Alcohol	18	12	43	1
Too fast	16	15	54	1
At bends	55	49	179	1
On straights	20	21	75	1
Intersections	14	17	63	1
Road factors	19	21	77	1
Motorcycling	18	8	30	1
Young drivers	35	37	134	1
Fatigue	11	10	38	2
Distraction	14	5	49	2
Pedestrians	5	3	12	2
Cycling	1	4	15	2
Heavy vehicles	6	6	20	2
Older road users	11	7	25	3
Overseas drivers	10	13	49	-

Further information about the 126 injury crashes on local roads in Central Otago District, 2005 to 2009:

- 5 deaths, 45 serious injuries and 120 minor casualties
- Five year age group with most at fault drivers in injury crashes: 15 to 19 years (29 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$3.96 m

Further information about the 238 injury crashes on State Highways in Central Otago District, 2005 to 2009:

- 14 deaths, 83 serious injuries and 280 minor casualties
- Five year age group with most at fault drivers in injury crashes: 15 to 19 years (16 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$13.56 m





## Bend - loss of control or head on

Between 2005 and 2009, 49 percent of all injury crashes in Central Otago District were bend - loss of control or head on crashes. These crashes resulted in 7 deaths, 68 serious injuries and 190 minor injuries.

Total crash numbers dropped in 2009. There were no fatal crashes in 2009

Bend - loss of control or head on crashes Central Otago District (2005 - 2009)				
Crash year	Fatal crashes	Serious crashes	Minor crashes	Total
2005	1	13	21	35
2006	1	19	23	43
2007	3	7	29	39
2008	2	8	29	39
2009	0	7	17	24
Total	7	54	119	180

In these crashes in Central Otago, males represented 70 percent of at fault drivers. For young drivers, those aged 15 - 24 years, they made up 76 percent of at fault drivers.

Overall young drivers made up 45 percent of at fault drivers. The 30 to 39 years age group represented 19 percent of 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	29	12	41
20 to 24	32	7	39
25 to 29	9	3	12
30 to 39	21	13	45
40 to 49	17	5	22
50 to 59	9	6	15
60 to 69	6	2	8
70 and over	3	6	9
Total	126	55	181

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 Central Otago District were cliffs or banks (42), fences (34), ditch (28), and over bank (25) from a total of 178 objects struck.

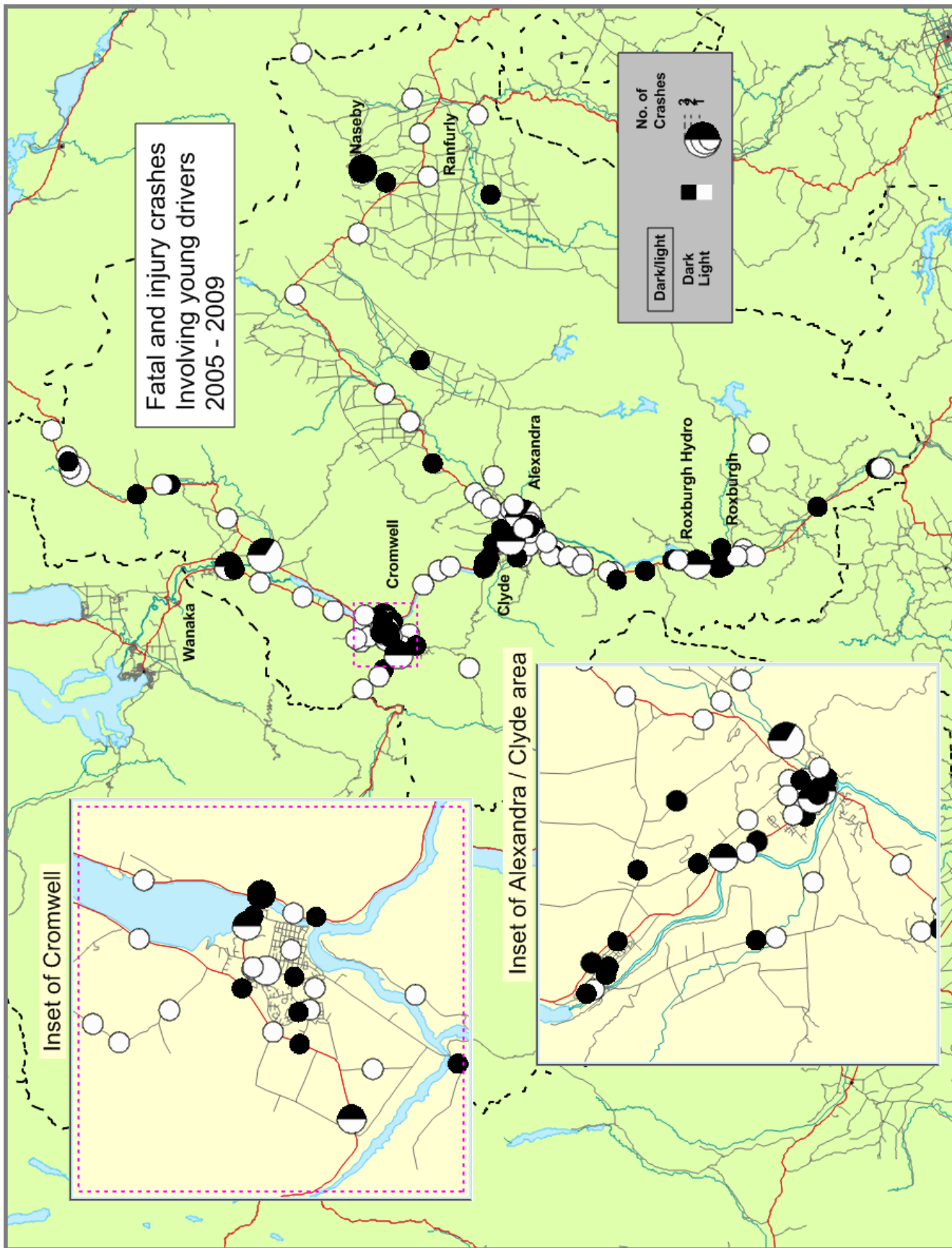
A roadside hazard was struck in 73 percent of bend - loss of control or head on crashes in the district.

Further information about the 64 injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes on local roads in Central Otago District, (2005 to 2009):

- 1 death, 25 serious injuries and 62 minor injuries
- 30 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 33 percent of crashes involved speed too fast for the conditions
- 28 percent involved road factors
- 67 percent involved poor handling
- 80 percent were on rural roads
- 16 percent were on wet or icy roads
- 34 percent were at night
- Worst month April
- Worst day of week Saturday
- Worst time period midday till 3 pm

Further information about the 116 injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes on State Highways in Central Otago District, (2005 to 2009):

- 6 deaths, 43 serious injuries and 128 minor injuries
- 9 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 19 percent of crashes involved speed too fast for the conditions
- 31 percent involved road factors
- 49 percent involved poor handling
- 98 percent were on rural roads
- 34 percent were on wet or icy roads
- 32 percent were at night
- Worst month June
- Worst day of week Saturday
- Worst time period midday till 3 pm





## Young drivers

Young drivers are those aged less than 25 years. This analysis is based on injury crashes only as driver age is not recorded in non-injury crashes.

In Central Otago District between 2005 and 2009, 37 percent of injury crashes involved young drivers. These crashes resulted in 13 deaths, 55 serious injuries and 162 minor injuries.

The total number of casualties from crashes involving young drivers reduced in 2009 from the high of 54 in 2008. There is no obvious trend in the annual number of crashes involving young drivers.

Casualties from crashes involving young drivers Central Otago District				
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total
2005	4	12	28	44
2006	1	13	37	51
2007	3	10	35	48
2008	4	14	36	54
2009	1	6	25	32
Total	13	55	162	230

Almost 40 percent of the 156 young drivers in these crashes had a learner or restricted licence. Nearly three quarters of them were males and 49 percent were 15-19 year olds.

Close to two thirds of the young drivers were local residents.

Young drivers at fault in injury crashes Central Otago District (2005 - 2009)			
Licence type	Female	Male	Total
Full	14	56	70
Learner	4	4	8
Restricted	21	33	54
Overseas	3	12	15
Never licensed	0	3	3
Disqualified	1	2	3
Other (unknown, wrong class)	1	2	3
Total	44	112	156

### Injury crashes involving young drivers Central Otago District (2005 - 2009)

Crash type or contributory cause	Urban roads	Rural roads
Alcohol	6	19
Speed	9	32
Failed to stop/Give way	9	2
Poor handling	11	71
Poor observation	16	34
Poor judgement	10	33
Lost control - straight	3	26
Lost control - bend	10	71
Crossing / turning	8	3

Further information about the 65 injury crashes involving young drivers on local roads in Central Otago District 2005 to 2009:

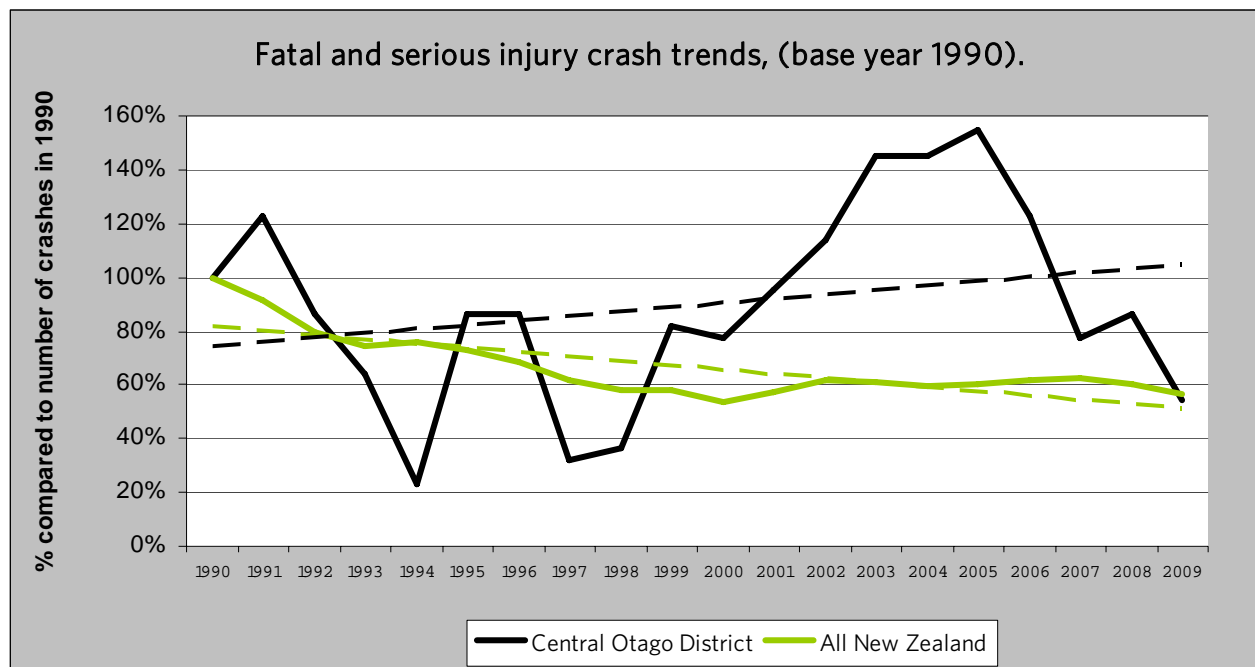
- 4 deaths, 31 serious injuries 68 minor injuries
- 62 percent were single vehicle crashes
- 40 percent were on urban roads
- 23 percent at intersections
- 37 percent at night
- 20 percent wet or icy roads
- Worst month December
- Worst day of week Saturday
- Worst time 6 pm to 9 pm

Further information about the 82 injury crashes involving young drivers on State highways in Central Otago District 2005 to 2009:

- 9 deaths, 24 serious injuries 94 minor injuries
- 62 percent were single vehicle crashes
- 12 percent were on urban roads
- 15 percent at intersections
- 38 percent at night
- 26 percent on wet or icy roads
- Worst month January
- Worst days of week Saturday, Sunday
- Worst time 3 pm to 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 Central Otago District and for the country as a whole.



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