



briefing notes - road safety issues

Christchurch City

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 to be a resource to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in Christchurch City.

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 Christchurch City is compared to similar local bodies or those with a high social cost (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes). We have included a brief overview of crashes in the city 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	
Christchurch City		Casualties	
Intersection crashes		Deaths	10
Alcohol		Serious casualties	167
Vulnerable road users		Minor casualties	994
Nationally		Crashes	
Speed		Fatal crashes	10
Alcohol		Serious injury crashes	159
Failure to give way		Minor injury crashes	777
Restraint use		Non-injury crashes	1976

Overview

In 2006 on local roads in Christchurch City there were 772 injury crashes and 1656 non-injury crashes. In addition there were 171 injury crashes and 320 non-injury crashes on State Highways.

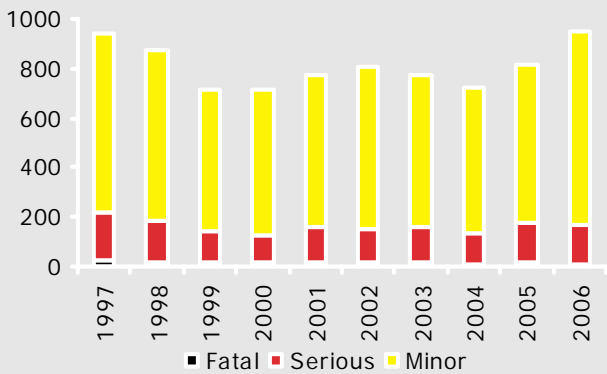
The table below shows the number of injuries resulting from 2006 crashes by rural or urban areas for both local and Transit roads. (Rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more.)

Casualties by road type 2006

	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	1	23	89	113
Urban	9	144	905	1058
Total	10	167	994	1171

The ten deaths in 2006 was the lowest total recorded since 1980. In the same period the worst year was 1989, when 44 people died on Christchurch roads. Serious injury numbers fell slightly in 2006 but are still above the ten year average.

Injury crashes 1997 to 2006



Crash movement	Percentage of all crashes of this type in 2006
Lost control at bend	18%
Lost control on straight	9%
Crossing/turning	32%
Pedestrian vs vehicle	3%
Rear end/obstruction	31%
Overtaking	6%
Miscellaneous	1%

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

- Worst month June (232), best January (156)
- Worst day Friday (409), best Sunday (302)
- Wet road 18 percent
- Night time 35 percent
- Intersection 54 percent
- 62 percent of at fault drivers male (injury crashes)
- 59 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes held a full NZ licence

Transit roads

- Worst month April (54), best June (33)
- Worst day Wednesday (78), best Sunday (58)
- Wet road 16 percent
- Night time 29 percent
- Intersection 68 percent
- 64 percent of at fault drivers male (injury crashes)
- 69 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.

This is certainly true in Christchurch City with as little as 61 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes being the holder of a full driving licence.

Driver licence status 2006	Percentage of total 'at fault' drivers (NZ value in brackets)
Full	61.5 (58.4) %
Learner	9.6 (9.5) %
Restricted	16.3 (17.6) %
Never licenced	1.6 (2.2) %
Disqualified	1.1 (1.7) %
Overseas	3.1 (4.2) %
Expired	0.6 (0.5) %
Other / unknown	6.1 (5.6) %

Intersections

Crashes at intersections are one of the most common crash types in Christchurch. In 2006, 56 per cent of all reported crashes took place at an intersection. In total five people died, 89 received serious injuries and 604 received minor injuries in these crashes in 2006. There were a further 1084 crashes reported that resulted in property damage only.

Severity	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Fatal/ Serious	75	84	67	97	87
Minor injury	372	351	329	347	466
Non injury	1043	698	868	941	1084
Total	1490	1403	1264	1385	1637

The most common intersection crash is one in which vehicles hit at right angles. The next most common type was one vehicle turning right across the path of another.

The main causes contributing to crashes as reported in Police reports were failure to stop and give way as required, not checking properly, and general errors of judgement.

In 2006 there were five intersections that recorded more than ten crashes, as detailed below.

Intersection name	Total injury crashes	Total non injury crashes	Total crashes in 2006
SH74/Main North Road	6	14	20
SH74/Marshland Road	4	8	12
Riccarton Ave / Deans Ave	2	10	12
Linwood Ave / Aldwins Road	4	8	12
Manchester St / Bealey Ave	2	10	12

Traffic signal controlled junctions are the most common location for an intersection crash in Christchurch followed by Give Way controlled intersections. Three of the intersections shown above are controlled by traffic signals.

Intersections present most drivers with one of their biggest driving challenges, and as a result, less experienced drivers are well represented in these crashes. The table below shows licence class of at fault drivers in 2006.

Driver licence status	Percentage of total 'at fault' drivers (NZ value in brackets)
Full	63.6 (60.9) %
Learner	8.8 (9.4) %
Restricted	15.6 (14.8) %
Never licenced	1.2 (2.5) %
Disqualified	1.4 (1.6) %
Overseas	2.3 (3.7) %
Expired	0.3 (0.8) %
Other / unknown	6.4 (6.3) %

Further facts about crashes at intersections in Christchurch in 2006:

Local roads

- Four deaths, 66 serious injuries and 478 minor injuries
- At fault drivers 63 percent male
- Ten percent of crashes involved excess alcohol
- 96 percent of crashes were on urban roads
- 19 percent of crashes occurred on a wet surface
- 32 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 59 percent of crashes were caused by one party failing to give way or stop
- 45 crashes involved a pedestrian

Transit roads

- One death, 23 serious injuries and 126 minor injuries
- At fault drivers 64 percent male
- Eight percent of crashes involved excess alcohol
- 82 percent of crashes were on urban roads
- 13 percent of crashes occurred on a wet surface
- 30 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 61 percent of crashes were caused by one party failing to give way or stop

Vulnerable road users

Vulnerable road users are those who have very little physical protection in the event of a crash and are therefore susceptible to severe injuries.

On 24 February 2005, the Government launched *Getting there - on foot, by cycle*, its strategy to advance walking and cycling in New Zealand transport.

Getting there - on foot, by cycle aims to improve environments for walking and cycling, improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and increase the choice of walking and cycling for day-to-day transport.

As a result Land Transport NZ expects local bodies to take a proactive approach to this subject. This should include the development of a walking and cycling strategy and making appropriate funding applications to progress that strategy. It is vitally important to recognise that promotion alone of cycling and walking is not going to be effective at increasing their mode share unless they can be made safer.

Pedestrians

Although pedestrian crashes do not feature highly in Christchurch City, representing only three percent of all reported crashes in 2006, they make up nearly one quarter of all road fatalities over the last five years.

Pedestrian injuries	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Fatal	4	4	2	1	4
Serious	23	33	28	26	29
Minor	68	61	68	70	61
Total	95	98	98	97	94

43 percent of all crashes involving pedestrians in 2006 occurred at intersections. Nearly all crashes took place on urban roads. Three quarters of pedestrian related crashes took place during daytime hours with 93 percent being on a dry road surface.

By far the most common age group for injured pedestrians in Christchurch in 2006 was between 15 and 19 years old. This group were twice as likely to be injured as the next most common group, those 20 to 24 years old.

The most common factor in Christchurch pedestrian crashes in 2006 was crossing the road heedless of traffic. This factor accounted for one in five of the reported crashes. In 12 percent of crashes the pedestrian was visibility intoxicated.

Not all crashes were the fault of the pedestrian however. In 16 percent of crashes a vehicle failed to give way to a pedestrian either at traffic signals or a pedestrian crossing. The driver was deemed to be at fault in 46 percent of crashes involving a pedestrian in Christchurch in 2006.

Cyclists

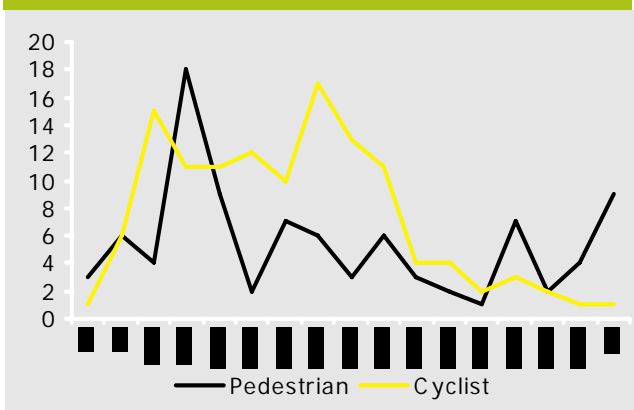
The number of cyclists injured on Christchurch roads increased in 2006 to the second highest number seen in over ten years and now account for nearly ten percent of all people injured.

Cyclist injuries	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Fatal	2	0	2	1	0
Serious	28	20	19	24	23
Minor	85	94	68	76	111
Total	115	114	89	101	134

Most cycling crashes (96 percent) occur on urban roads. Nearly three quarters occurred at intersections with the majority taking place during daylight hours on a dry road.

In 2006 more cycles than cars were imported into New Zealand. It is certainly noticeable in many areas across the country that there are many more cyclists using the roads than in past years, Christchurch is no exception.

Pedestrian & cyclist casualties 2006



Other urban issues

While more than half of all crashes in Christchurch in 2006 occurred at intersections there was still a considerable number that happened elsewhere on urban roads. Last year five people died and over 400 were injured on urban roads away from intersections. There were a further 796 crashes where there was damage only.

Nearly three quarters of all mid-block crashes involved more than one vehicle, with rear end type crashes accounting for nearly half the total as shown on the table below.

Urban mid-block crash movement	Percentage of all crashes of this type in 2006
Rear end/Obstruction	47%
Lost control on bend	17%
Lost control on straight	14%
Overtaking	8%
Crossing/Turning	7%
Pedestrian vs vehicle	5%
Miscellaneous	1%

The most common factor given to mid-block crashes was 'Poor Observation' which means that one driver failed to notice either stationary traffic, a pedestrian or an obstruction in the road.

There were 65 crashes where one vehicle drove in to a parked vehicle at the side of the road. The same number occurred where a vehicle performed a u-turn without checking that the way was clear.

Further information about non intersection crashes in Christchurch City in 2006:

Local roads

- Three deaths, 57 serious injuries, 315 minor injuries and 736 non injury crashes
- At fault drivers 61 percent male
- 18 percent of crashes involved alcohol over limit
- The most common crash movement was a rear end in a queue of traffic.
- 17 percent of crashes were on a wet surface
- 38 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 74 percent of crashes involved more than one vehicle
- 52 crashes involved pedestrians

Transit roads

- Two deaths, six serious injuries, 33 minor injuries and 60 non injury crashes
- At fault drivers 58 percent male
- 12 percent of crashes involved excess alcohol
- 22 percent of crashes were on a wet surface
- 36 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 76 percent of crashes involved more than one vehicle

Speed

'Too fast for the conditions' was recorded in eight percent of injury crashes in Christchurch in 2006 resulting in 18 serious and 95 minor injuries. There were also 260 non-injury speed-related crashes reported. The 79 injury crashes that were speed related is a fall from the 107 recorded in 2005 and is in fact the lowest number since at least 1980.

83 percent of speed related crashes in 2006 were loss of control type crashes, 52 percent of which took place at intersections. 49 percent of speed related crashes also involved excess alcohol.

85 percent of at fault drivers in speed related crashes last year were male, with drivers under 24 years old accounting for more than half of all at fault drivers. 15 percent of at fault drivers held a learner licence while 27 percent held a restricted licence.

Alcohol

Alcohol was a factor in 13 percent of injury crashes in Christchurch in 2006 resulting in 27 serious and 124 minor injuries along with 243 crashes where there was no injury reported. Although the number of injury crashes where alcohol was a factor is well below the level found in the 1980's there has been a 25 percent increase in the last two years.

As with speed related crashes, male drivers dominate the crash statistics with 79 percent of at fault drivers being male. The age range is greater whilst learner and restricted licence holders again make up over one third of all at fault drivers.

Four out of five alcohol related crashes occurred at night. Two thirds of crashes involved a vehicle losing control and one third of all injury crashes that had alcohol as a factor also had 'too fast for the conditions' reported.

Contact details

Land Transport New Zealand
Jackie Curtis
Partnership Manager Southern
PO Box 13364
Christchurch
Phone 03 964 2866

Road Safety Coordinator
Susan Cambridge
Francis & Cambridge
P O Box 30064
Christchurch
Phone 03 332 2722

Christchurch City Council
Network Operations Team Leader
Barry Cook
P O Box 237
Christchurch
Phone 03 941 8999

New Zealand Police:
Derek Erasmus
Road Policing Manager
PO Box 2109
Christchurch
Phone 03 363 7417