

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 level of road trauma in the Clutha District.

Road crashes in the Clutha District have resulted in 25 deaths and nearly 600 injuries over the five-year period. There were 520 reported non-injury crashes over the same period.

In 2001 there was a significant increase in crash reporting rates throughout Otago and Southland. The total number of injury crashes in 2001 reached an all time high of 107 and in 2002 even that number was surpassed. Comparisons with hospital admission data show that the recorded increase in road crash injuries is not, however, due to a sudden increase in crash numbers but reflects improved reporting.

The more accurate reporting of crashes that is now taking place better assists in identifying road safety issues in the district.

Major road safety issues

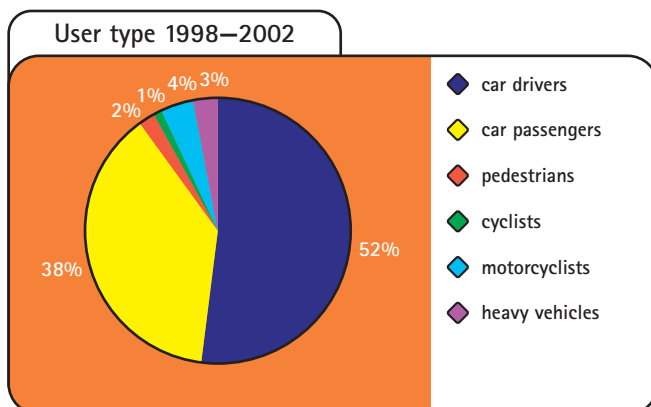
Nationally

Speed
Alcohol
Failure to give way
Restraints

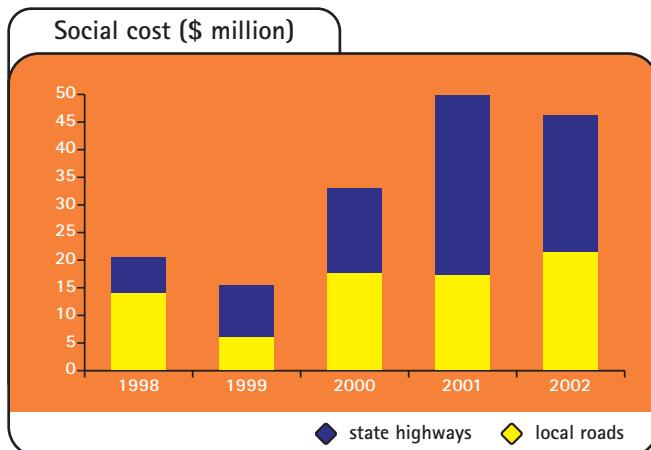
2002 road trauma for Clutha District

Deaths	2
Serious casualties	36
Minor casualties	163
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Fatal crashes	2
Serious injury crashes	30
Minor-injury crashes	96
Non-injury crashes	88

Road casualties 1998–2002

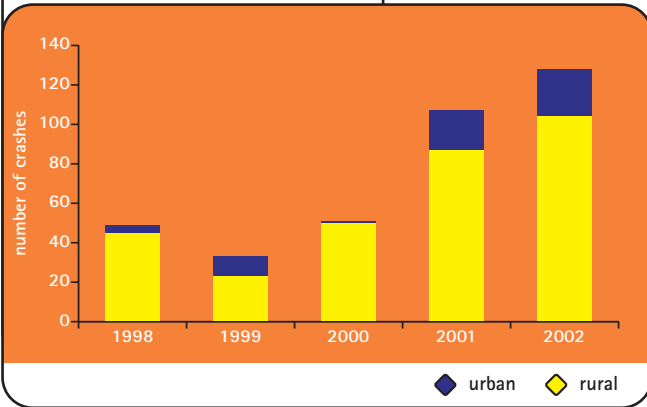


Estimated social cost of crashes*



* 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.

Injury crashes 1998–2002



The graph above shows the ratio of urban and rural crashes in the Clutha District and also how the improved reporting rate has affected the number of injury crashes recorded over the last five years. As in previous years the majority of injury crashes have occurred on rural roads. Four times as many people were injured on rural roads of the district as on urban roads last year. This is not surprising given the rural nature of much of the roading network.

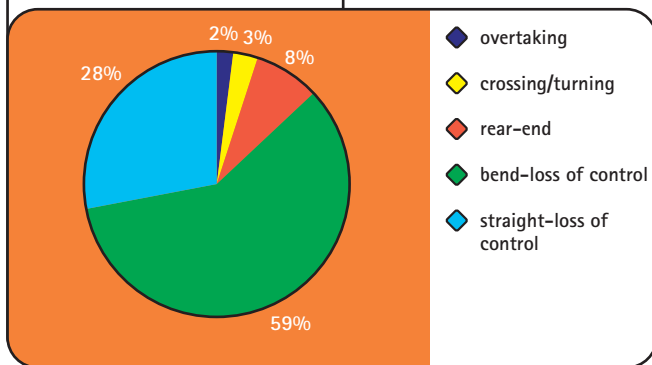


Loss of control

By far the most common type of crash in the Clutha District is a single vehicle losing control. In 2002 nearly nine out of 10 rural crashes involved a vehicle losing control, either on a straight or a bend. Over three quarters of all rural crashes involved a single vehicle.

The following graph shows the types of crash movements that took place on rural roads last year.

Crash movement 2002



Road conditions do play a part in these types of crashes – one third of rural loss of control crashes last year occurred on wet roads. 2002 had a relatively mild winter and there were only three reported injury crashes due to ice. A quarter of these crashes were on unsealed roads but the majority of loss of control crashes took place on dry roads in daylight conditions. Speed and alcohol also tend to feature in loss of control type crashes, contributing last year to 25 and 12 percent respectively.

Fatigue also tends to be a factor in loss of control type crashes. Although the rate of fatigue-related crashes in the Clutha District is lower than speed and alcohol involvement, the combination of any of these three can become a problem. Fatigue is often difficult to prove after the event, therefore the LTSA believes that this figure is greatly under-reported.

In 2002 two people died, 30 were seriously injured and over 100 people received minor injuries in these types of crashes in the Clutha District. Three quarters of all rural crashes ended up with a vehicle hitting a roadside object. In many cases this increases the severity of the crash.

Recommended actions

- Continue enforcement of and education on the issues of speed and alcohol to reduce crash numbers. These issues both play a part in loss of control type crashes.
- Support campaigns on adjusting speed for different road and weather conditions and on the need to be fully alert when driving.



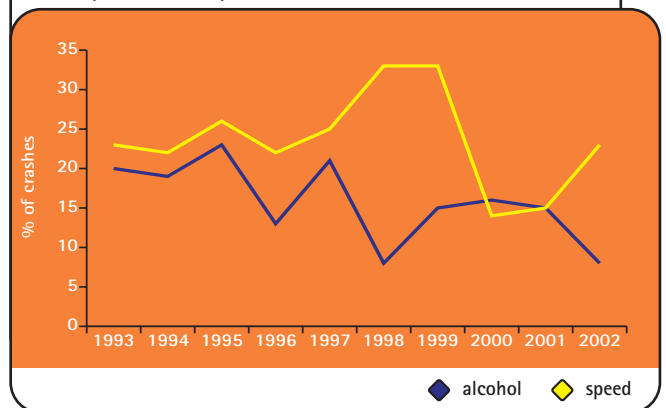
Speed and alcohol

In urban areas of the district there were no injuries reported in 2002 as a result of a driver being alcohol-impaired. In rural areas the figure remained around 15 percent of crashes. This is on a par with national levels.

The number of speed-related injury crashes nearly doubled in 2002 – it is estimated that nearly one in four of all rural crashes involved a vehicle travelling too fast for the conditions.

The graph below shows the trend for both speed and alcohol involvement in the district over the last 10 years. Overall, alcohol involvement is at its lowest level for many years.

Proportion of speed and alcohol-related crashes

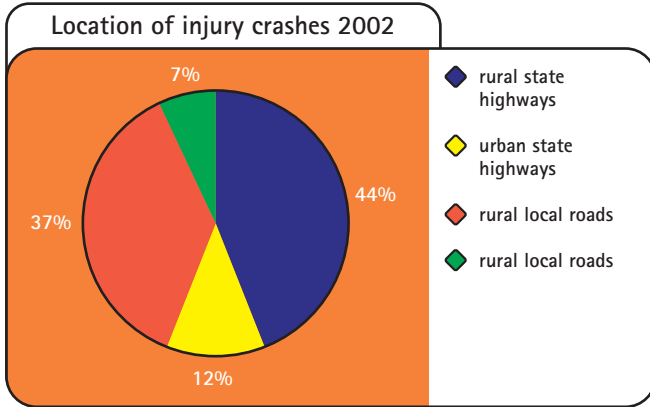


Recommended actions

- Continue to support drink-driving strategic enforcement campaigns.
- Continue to support education campaigns aimed at drink-driving.
- Support host responsibility and designated driver programmes.
- Support enforcement campaigns aimed at speed control and education to make people more aware of the consequences of excessive speed.

Other issues

More than half of all reported crashes last year took place on the state highway network, as shown on the graph below.

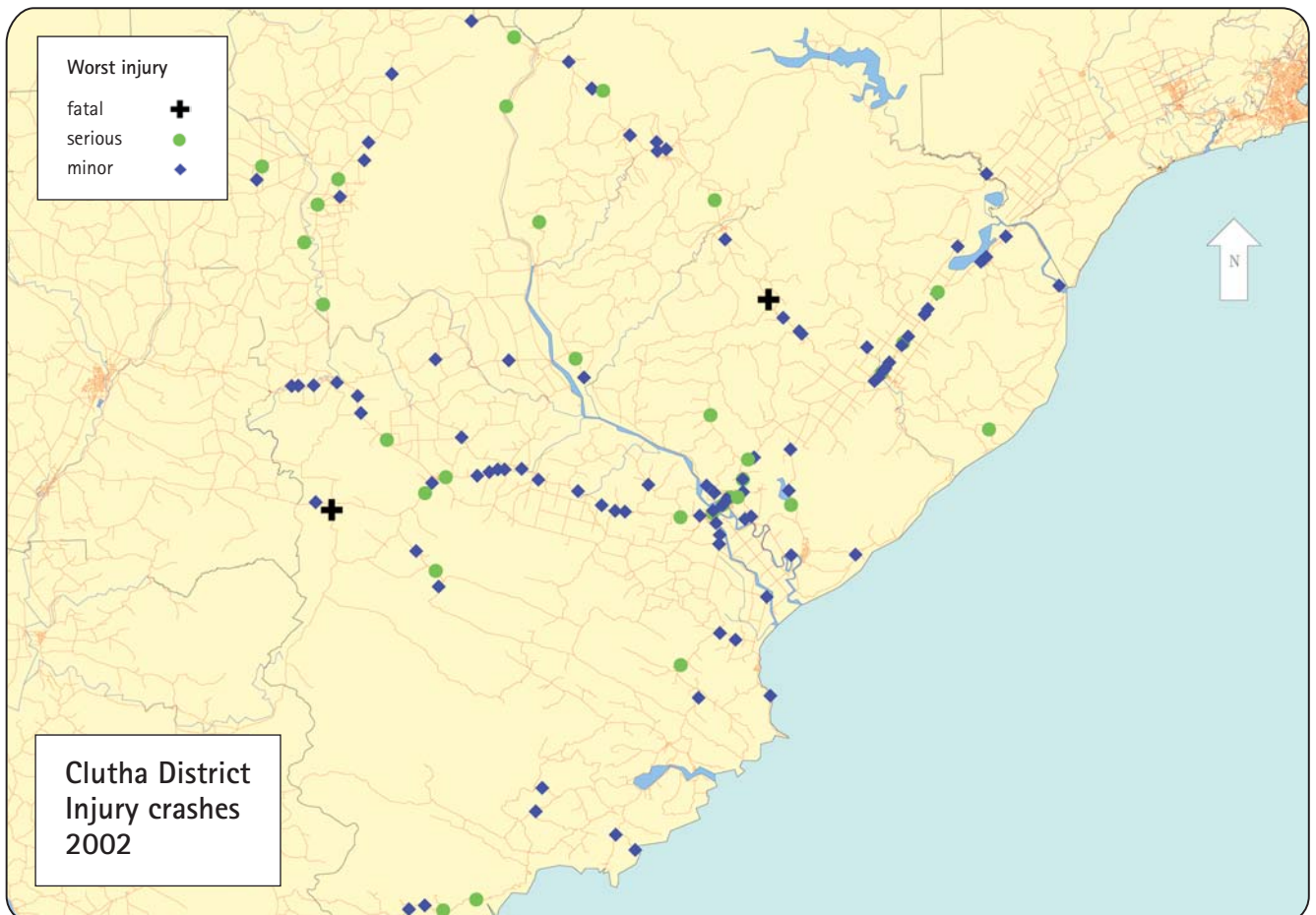


The age of people injured in crashes in the district generally follows the same pattern as the rest of the country. People between 15 and 19 years old continue to be the most common age group to be injured. The proportion of females over the age of 70 injured is slightly above the national level.

Five pedestrians were injured in the Clutha District in 2002 along with three cyclists. Their rate of involvement is much lower than is found nationally but on a par with similar local authorities.

Of the crashes that took place on the local road network nearly half were on unsealed roads. These were spread throughout the district, with four injury crashes on the unsealed section of the Southern Scenic Route. There were a further seven crashes reported on this road in 2002 that resulted in no injuries. Only three of the 15 drivers involved came from the Otago/Southland area.

The Clutha District has an extensive road network. The map below shows the location of all injury crashes that took place in 2002.



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 Road Safety Programme

Many community groups in the south have good road safety ideas to help reduce road trauma, but are often unsure of where to go for advice and funding to make these ideas a reality.

This is where the Community Road Safety Programme (CRSP) can assist. It provides funding, subject to certain criteria being met, to allow community groups to develop and run initiatives to deal with local road safety issues, in ways that meet the needs of their community.

As a guide, some of the following activities could qualify for funding:

- An activity meeting a clearly identified local road safety issue.
- Training sessions, seminars, public meetings.
- Brochures supporting a road safety activity.
- Localised advertising campaigns.
- Fees for contracting providers.
- Road safety displays.
- Small-scale survey and information gathering.

The community advisor, road safety, at the local district or city council will be able to advise if a road safety idea might qualify for CRSP assistance.

To receive a CRSP information pack contact the LTSA on the number below or alternatively email crsp@ltsa.govt.nz for an electronic copy.

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 initiatives will need to be negotiated by the community advisor, road safety.

In 2003/2004 the Police are funded to deliver 7,600 hours of road policing in the Clutha District as follows:

Project	Police hours
Strategic – alcohol/drugs, speed, restraints and visible road safety enforcement	6,470
Traffic management including crash attendance, incidents, emergencies and events	780
School road safety education	300
Police community services	100

Road environment

The Clutha District has an allocation for minor safety projects on local roads in Transfund New Zealand's National Land Transport Programme 2003–2004.

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes in the Clutha District, please refer to the 1998 to 2002 Road Safety Report or the Land Transport Safety Authority Crash Analysis System (CAS), or contact the people or organisations listed below:

Contacts

Land Transport Safety Authority
Regional Manager
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