

road safety issues

July 2002

The Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) has prepared this Road Safety Issues Report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 1997–2001 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in the Gisborne district.

The estimated social cost of 103 injury and 330 non-injury road crashes reported in the Gisborne district in 2001 was \$35.27 million. Two people died and 149 suffered injuries as a result of these crashes.

Of the 103 injury crashes reported last year, 59 (57 percent) occurred on urban roads, and 44 (43 percent) occurred on rural roads.

Until 2001 there had been a reducing trend in the number of injury crashes reported throughout the district. However, last year, a significant increase in minor injury crashes was reported on urban roads.

In the five-year period 1997 to 2001, 55 pedestrians, 52 cyclists and 51 motorcyclists were injured in road crashes. In urban areas, nearly 40 percent of road users injured were pedestrians, cyclists or motorcyclists.

The reduction in the number of injury crashes on rural state highways in 2001 could be attributed to the introduction of dedicated police highway patrols in March that year.

The number of crashes in the district has reduced significantly since a peak in 1995. However, continued effort is required to reduce the number of people injured in road crashes in the region.

Major road safety issues:

Gisborne district

Loss of control on rural roads

Intersections

Alcohol

Cyclists and motorcyclists

Restraints

Pedestrians

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2001 road toll for Gisborne district

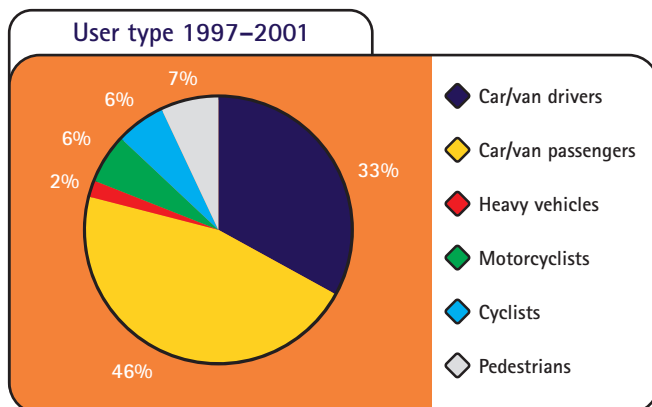


Deaths	2
Serious casualties	35
Minor casualties	112

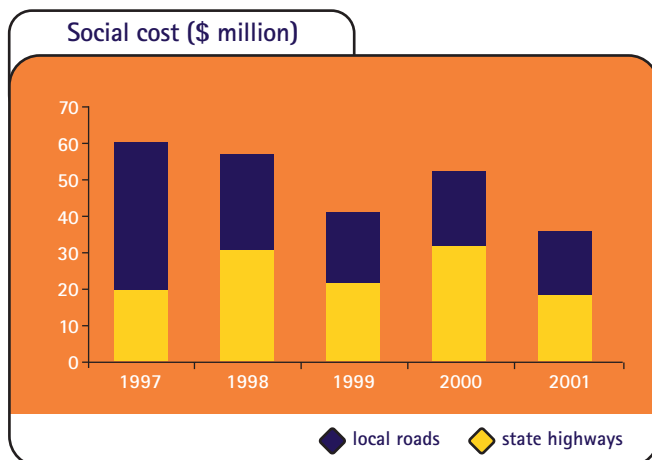


Fatal crashes	2
Serious injury crashes	25
Minor injury crashes	76
Non-injury crashes	330

Road user casualties 1997–2001



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 2001 prices.



Loss of control on rural roads

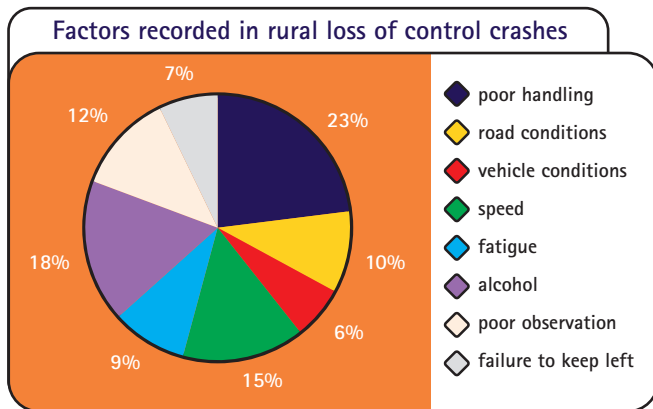
In the past five years, 226 loss of control or head-on crashes have resulted in people being injured. These accounted for 43 percent of injury crashes reported in the district.

The percentage of loss of control or head-on crashes on curves was much higher than reported in other similar districts.

Approximately 68 percent of rural loss of control injury crashes occurred on state highways in the Gisborne district.

Factors commonly associated with rural loss of control crashes included poor vehicle handling, failure to keep left, driver's inattention, poor judgement and observation, fatigue, and road and vehicle conditions. Speed and alcohol were also commonly reported contributing factors. Thirty-nine percent of the injury crashes in rural areas occurred during hours of darkness. Twenty-six percent of all rural crashes occurred in wet weather.

The objects most commonly struck by vehicles in these crashes were fences, banks, ditches, trees, poles, bridges and guard rails. A number of vehicles lost control on steep shoulders of the road or when returning to the seal from an unsealed steep shoulder.



Environmental factors commonly reported as contributing to loss of control on rural roads include:

- slippery road surface
- road under construction
- visibility restricted.

Stray farm animals on roads in the district have contributed to a number of drivers losing control of their vehicles.



Recommended actions

Engineering

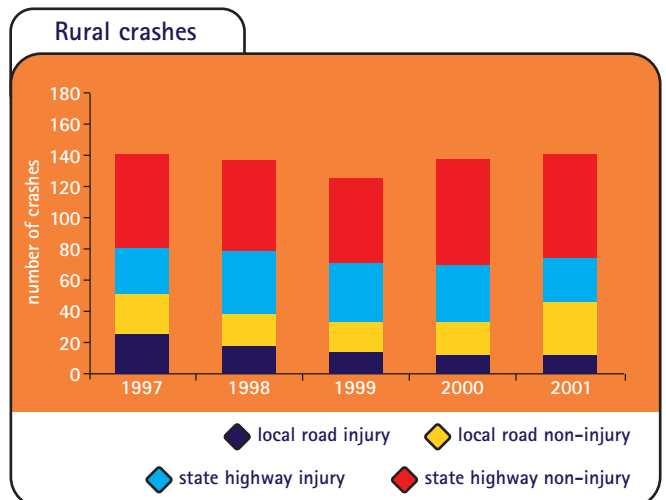
- Establish programmes to upgrade and maintain curve warning signs, markings and delineation on local rural roads to the appropriate standards.
- Continue with rural crash reduction studies to investigate and carry out remedial treatment at black spots and treatment to routes, giving priority to those with a higher incidence of crashes reported.
- Maintain roadsides clear of hazards and provide side protection where appropriate.
- Widen road carriageways and seal shoulders to provide additional vehicle wander and recovery space where feasible and cost effective.
- Maintain pavement surfaces to provide good standards for skid resistance.
- Improve road geometry.

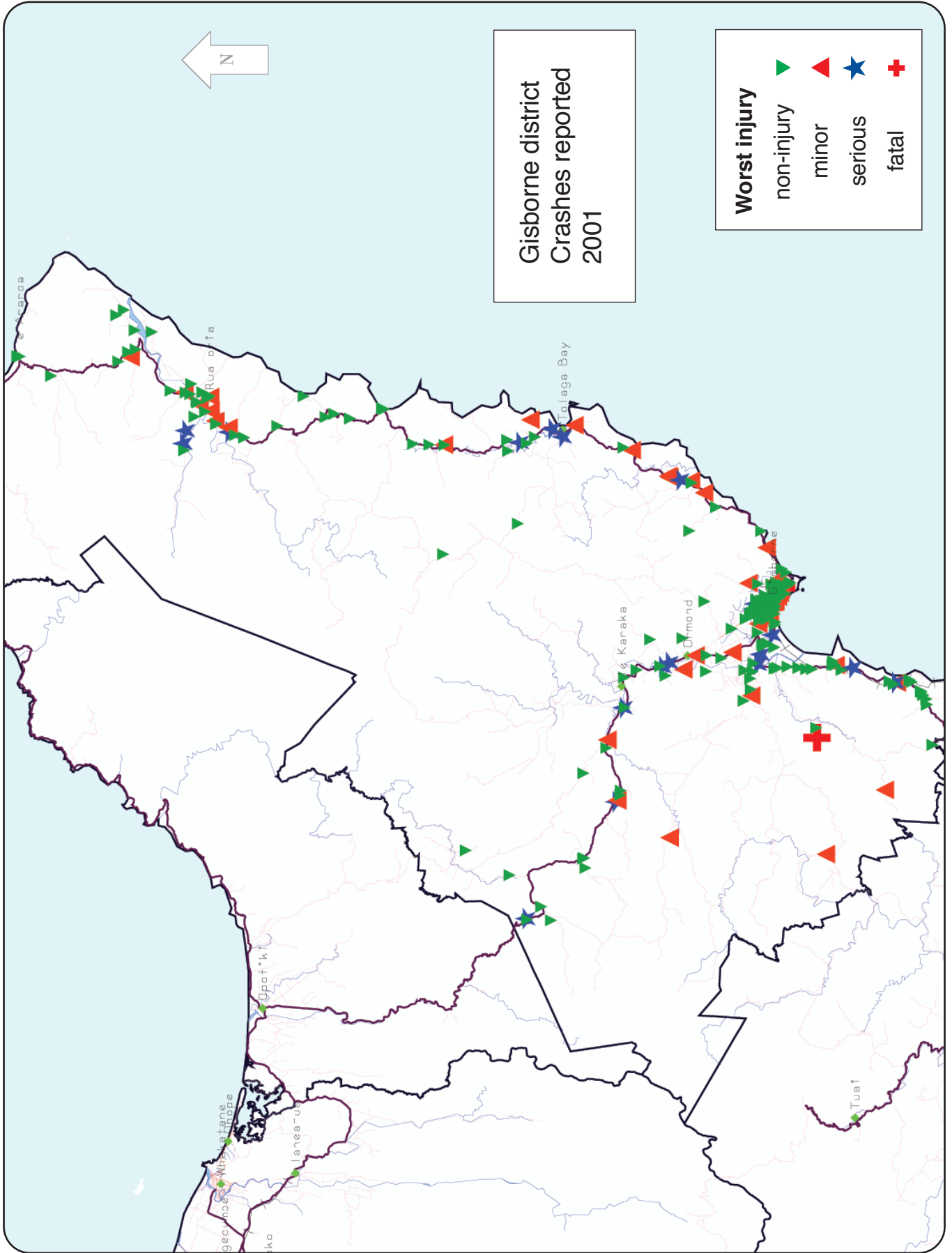
Education

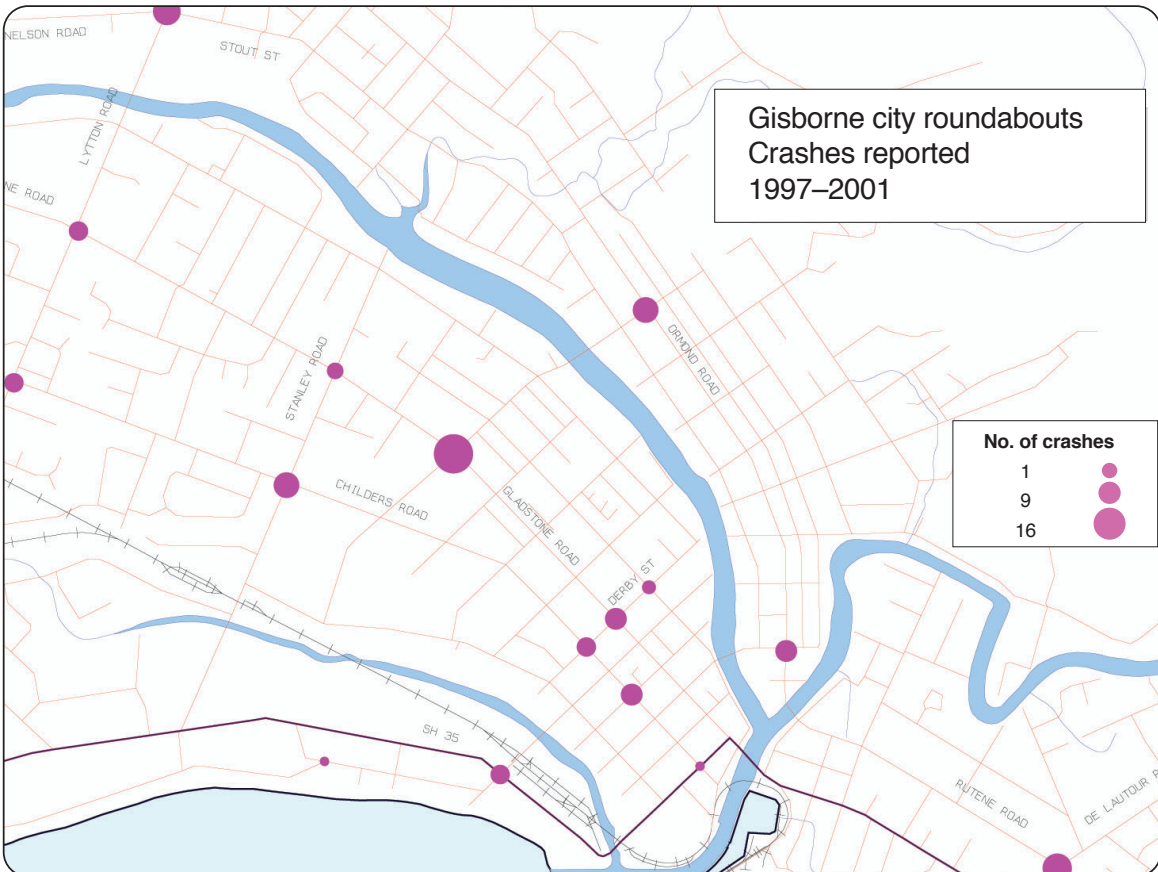
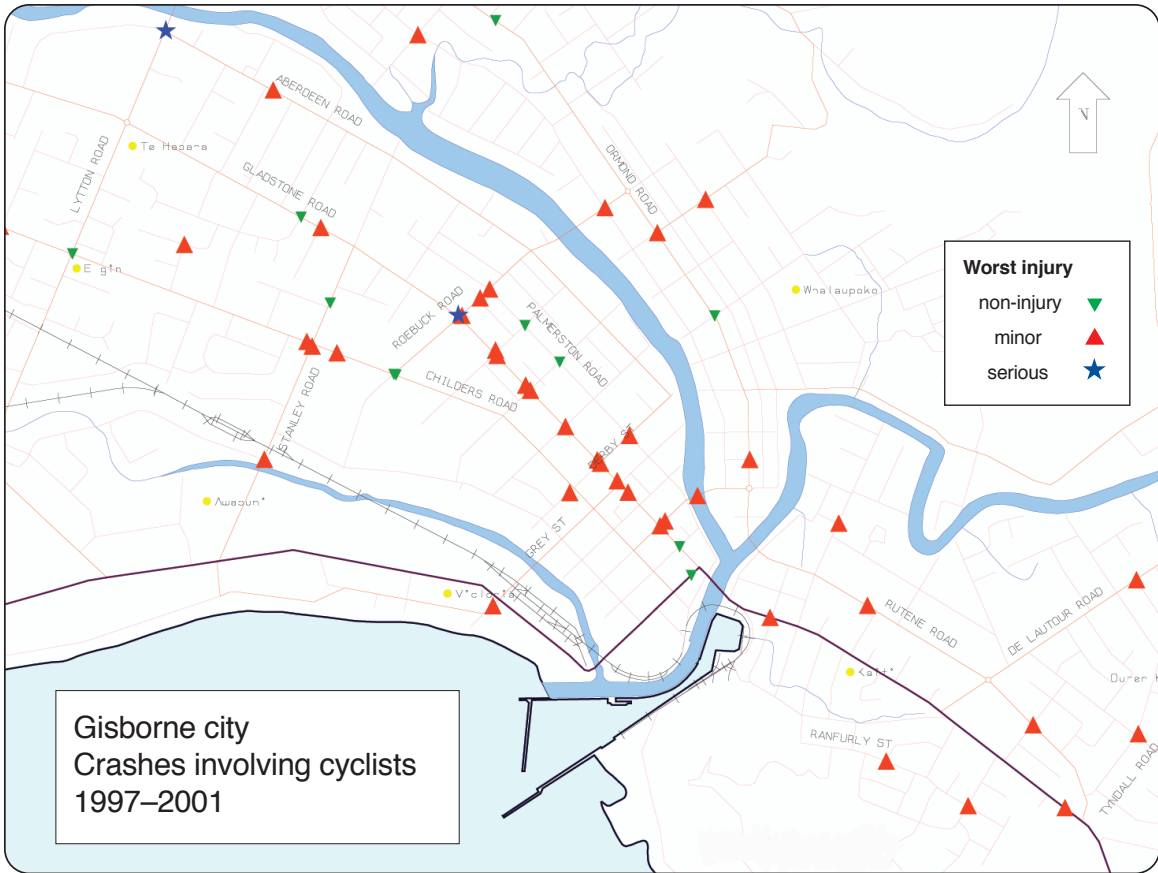
- Raise rural driver awareness of the need to drive appropriately for the road environment, through various community programmes.
- Promote messages related to general driver behaviour activities, including speed.
- Educate drivers to be aware of the risks of speeding and driving too fast for road conditions.
- Promote safe and secure stock-proof fences in rural areas.

Enforcement

- Continued enforcement focusing on inappropriate speed in rural areas.
- Target enforcement to times and locations of greatest risk.
- Co-ordinate enforcement campaigns, working in conjunction with community programmes targeting road user behaviour.
- Maintain good stock and animal control in the district.

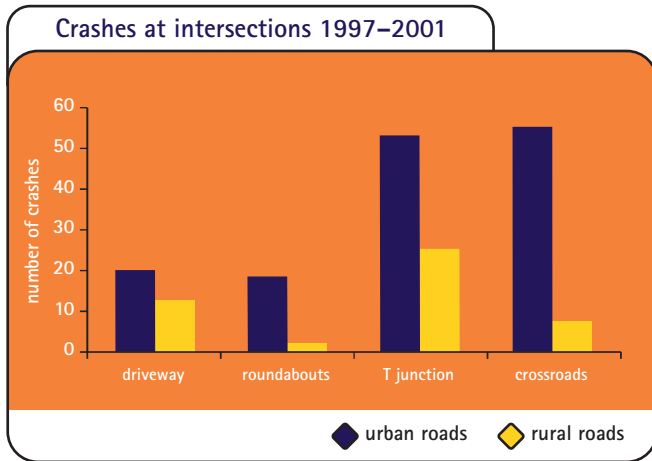






Intersections

Approximately 46 percent of all crashes reported in the Gisborne district occurred at intersections (including driveways). Approximately 18 percent occurred in rural areas and 65 percent in urban areas. In the past five years, 200 injury crashes and 657 non-injury crashes were reported at intersections.

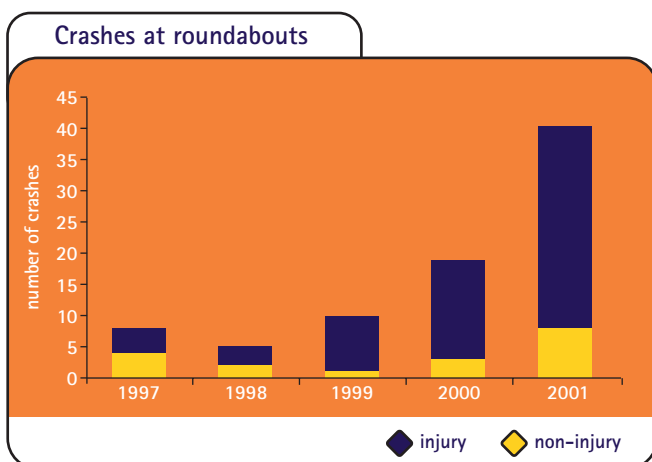


Of the injury crashes reported at intersections during the past five years:

- 105 occurred at intersections with Give Way controls
- 24 occurred at intersections with Stop controls
- four occurred at intersections with traffic signal controls
- 32 occurred at driveways or uncontrolled intersections.

Factors commonly recorded in crashes at intersections were failure to give way or stop when required, poor observation and driving in incorrect lane or position on the road. Crashes into the rear of vehicles or other obstacles were also commonly reported in Gisborne city.

There has been a significant increase in crashes at intersections where roundabouts had been installed or modified for the millennium celebrations.



Recommended actions

Engineering

- Remedy deficiencies in roundabout design and road markings to address the more recent significant increase in crashes at roundabouts.
- Continue with crash reduction studies to investigate and, if required, carry out remedial work at intersections.

Education

- Support education programmes and publicity campaigns focusing on road user behaviour at intersections, including roundabouts. Implement strategies to include radio and newspaper advertising, posters and brochures.
- Conduct campaigns to raise driver awareness of the need to check for oncoming traffic (including cyclists and motorcyclists) at intersections and also when entering and leaving driveways.

Enforcement

- Increased enforcement of compliance with Give Way, Stop and signal controls at intersections.
- Conduct enforcement campaigns targeting intersections, in conjunction with community programmes.

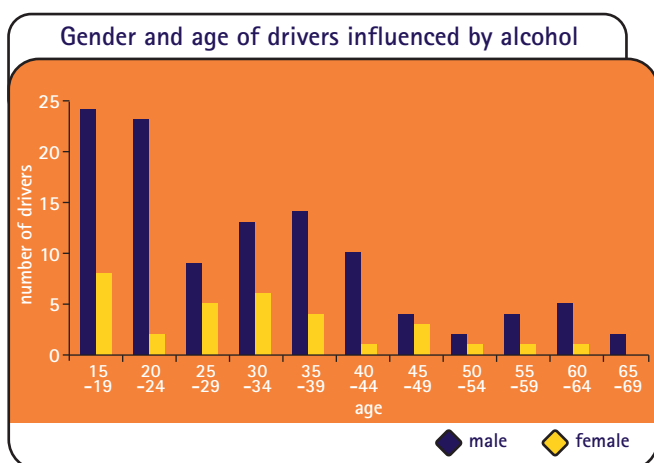


Alcohol

When compared with other similar districts and all of New Zealand, alcohol-related injury crashes were over-represented in both urban and rural areas of the Gisborne district.

Of the 525 injury crashes reported in the Gisborne district in the past five years, 113 (21 percent) had alcohol recorded as a key factor. In 43 (8 percent) of injury crashes in the urban areas and 70 (25 percent) of injury crashes in rural areas, alcohol was a recorded factor. While the percentage of injury crashes involving alcohol has trended down in urban areas, the downward trend is not evident in rural areas.

Males in the 15 to 45 year age group were predominantly involved in crashes where alcohol was a recorded factor. However females in the 15 to 40 year age group also featured in the statistics to a lesser extent.



Recommended actions

Education

- Continue with existing advertising campaigns and adopt new initiatives to promote safe drinking and driving habits, particularly among drivers in the 15 to 45 year age groups. Both urban and rural sectors need to be targeted.
- Encourage community responsibility (including licensees) by promoting host responsibility practices and designated driver schemes.
- Work with peer groups such as Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD) and other community groups to convey sober driver messages to young drivers.

Enforcement

- Target enforcement at known high-risk areas and times and to the appropriate age group.
- Co-ordinate enforcement campaigns targeting drink-driving, working in conjunction with community programmes.
- Continue to support compulsory breath testing programmes.



Cyclists and motorcyclists

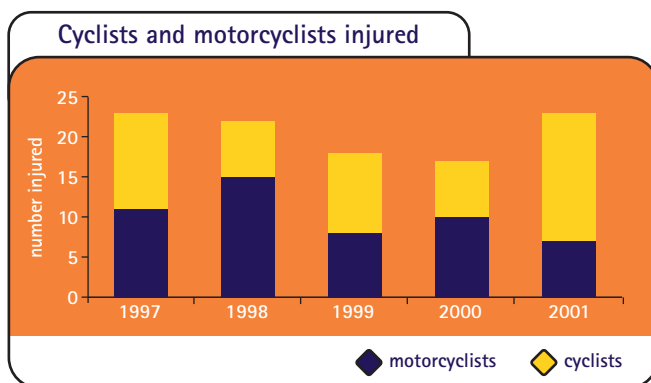
In the past five years, six cyclists suffered serious injuries and 48 suffered minor injuries. Despite a steady downward trend in cycle accidents, in 2001 16 cyclists were injured in crashes (an increase from seven in 2000).

Two motorcyclists were killed, 13 suffered serious injuries and 40 received minor injuries as a result of crashes during the past five years.

Cyclists and motorcyclists formed a high proportion (12.7 percent) of road users injured in crashes reported in the Gisborne district. When compared with other similar districts, cyclists in particular were involved in a far higher percentage of crashes. A high number of the cycle and motorcycle crashes occurred at intersections.

While numbers of motorcyclists injured in crashes has been trending down over the past 10 years, these road users often suffer more severe injuries, especially in rural crashes.

Cyclists in the nine to 15 year age group, and motorcyclists over a wider age group of 15 to 50 years, were most susceptible to being injured.



Recommended actions

Education

- Implement publicity to improve driver awareness of cyclists and motorcyclists, especially at intersections.
- Continue with existing community programmes and implement new ones targeting road user behaviour, including cyclists and motorcyclists.
- Conduct programmes to work in conjunction with nationally driven campaigns such as National Bike Week and Back to School promotions.
- Continue to support safe cycling programmes in schools.
- Introduce safe riding programmes and courses for motorcyclists.

Enforcement

- Co-ordinate enforcement campaigns, working in conjunction with community programmes targeting cycle and motorcycle safety.
- Increase enforcement of road user compliance with Give Way, Stop and signal controls at intersections.

Engineering

- Develop a cycling strategy for the city.
- Provide cycle facilities such as formal marked cycle lanes and establish cycleways to improve safety for cyclists.



Restraints

Annual LTSA surveys show that in the Gisborne region front seat safety belt use by adults is now better than the national average. There has also been an improvement in rear safety belt use. However, the rate in Gisborne region is below the national average and needs to improve. There has been a significant improvement in child restraint use in the region. This is pleasing.

Results from surveys conducted are:

- adult front safety belt compliance 94 percent (national average 92 percent)
- adult rear safety belt compliance 55 percent (national average 76 percent)
- child restraint compliance 79 percent (national average 82 percent).

The benefits of wearing safety belts are significant in the event of a crash, as they assist in preventing or reducing the severity of injuries.

Recommended actions

Education

- Continue with existing and implement new community programmes that are designed to increase safety belt wearing compliance. Strategies will include radio advertising, print media and billboards.
- Conduct programmes to work in conjunction with nationally driven campaigns, eg Kidsafe Week and Back to School promotions.

Enforcement

- Support strategic enforcement campaigns aimed at restraint use.
- Promote random spot checks for restraint wearing .
- Co-ordinate enforcement campaigns, working in conjunction with community programmes targeting restraint use.



Pedestrians

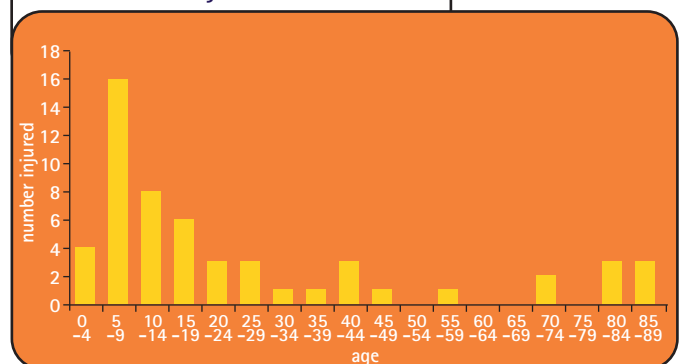
In the past five years, 55 pedestrians have been injured in the Gisborne district. This number represents seven percent of the road users killed or injured in the region last year. In the past 10 years, the trend in the number of pedestrians either killed or injured has been steadily increasing.

Most pedestrian injuries occurred in the city on main arterial or collector roads.

Pedestrians most frequently injured were those under the age of 20.

Pedestrians were more frequently injured between 8am and 9am, 11am and 1pm and 3pm and 5pm.

Pedestrians injured 1997–2001



Recommended actions

Education

- Initiate new advertising campaigns to promote pedestrian safety, targeting the three to 20 year age groups.
- Work with appropriate community groups to promote safe walking habits.
- Raise driver awareness of pedestrians as road users.
- Continue to support school-based safe walking programmes.

Engineering

- Continue with a programme to improve pedestrian facilities in Gisborne city, particularly on routes where pedestrians are more frequently injured.

New Zealand Road Safety Programme

Reducing trauma involves a multi-pronged approach, which includes education, engineering and enforcement. The New Zealand Road Safety Programme (NZRSP) provides funding to educate road users to change their behaviour through projects delivered by road safety co-ordinators and community groups. The programme also funds the New Zealand Police for their targeted enforcement activities and support of community road safety projects. Transfund New Zealand provides funding to local authorities for roading projects through its National Land Transport Programme.

Community projects

Community funding of road safety projects aims to encourage local involvement and ownership of issues, and target local resources and effort to local risks. Central to community programmes is the need to develop and motivate local partnerships in road safety to help reduce the deaths and injuries in the Gisborne district and to enhance the level of safety within the region.

Gisborne road safety community projects funded by the NZRSP for 2002/2003 have been confirmed as follows.

Project	Funding
Urban and rural alcohol	\$15,000
Speed	\$6,400
Committee-approved community projects	\$10,000
Restraints	\$8,000
Intersections	\$4,000
Other projects	\$3,900

Police enforcement

To support community projects, the New Zealand Police will deliver a further 27,790 hours in the Gisborne/Wairoa districts as follows:

Project	Hours
Speed control	4,000
Drinking or drugged driver control	8,000
Restraint device control	3,000
Visible road safety enforcement	7,000
Traffic flow supervision	190
Crash attendance and investigation	2,970
Incidents, emergencies and disasters	180

Project	Hours
Events	330
School road safety education	1,620
Police community services	500

LTSA and Gisborne and Wairoa District Councils will liaise with the New Zealand Police, who are responsible for delivering these hours appropriate to risk.

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes in the Gisborne district, please refer to the 1997 to 2001 Road Safety Data Report or the Land Transport Safety Authority Accident Investigation System, or contact the people or organisations listed below:

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Pat Aldridge

Regional Education Advisor
Kate Irvine

Senior Road Safety Engineer
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