

road safety issues

The Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported traffic crash data and trends for the 1999–2003 period. The intent of the report is to highlight key road safety issues in the Horowhenua District.

The number of road users injured on Horowhenua District roads during 2003 was 128. This number was an improvement on 2002 when 135 casualties were reported. The estimated social cost of traffic crashes in the Horowhenua District during 2003 was \$32.24 million, a reduction from the previous year, which was \$40.84 million.

Reducing road trauma involves a multi-pronged approach, which includes education, engineering and enforcement. A combination of these initiatives should be used to address the major road safety issues affecting the nation and the local area.

Horowhenua District must also consider the specific major road safety issues affecting local road users. The national major road safety issue of failure to give way also features prominently in the crash statistics for the Horowhenua District. Drivers losing control of their vehicle is a common type of crash in the Horowhenua District, particularly on rural roads with speed limits greater than 70 km/h. Road users aged over 65 years are over-represented in crashes on Horowhenua District roads and driver fatigue has also been identified as a local issue.

Major road safety issues

Horowhenua District

- Intersections
- Fatigue
- Loss of control
- Older road users

Nationally

- Speed
- Alcohol
- Failure to give way
- Restraints

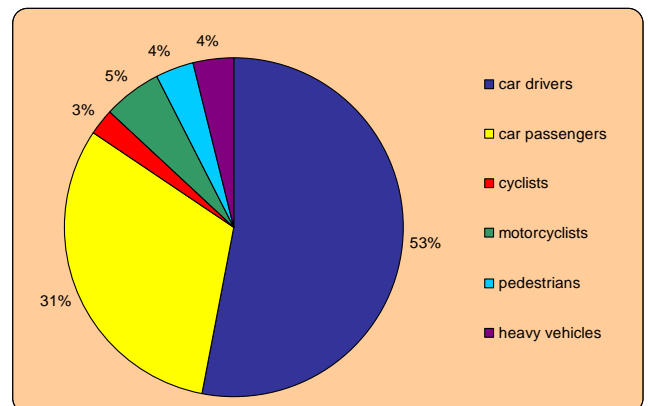
2003 road trauma for Horowhenua District

Deaths	2
Serious casualties	22
Minor casualties	104

Fatal crashes	2
Serious injury crashes	19
Minor injury crashes	73
Non-injury crashes	152

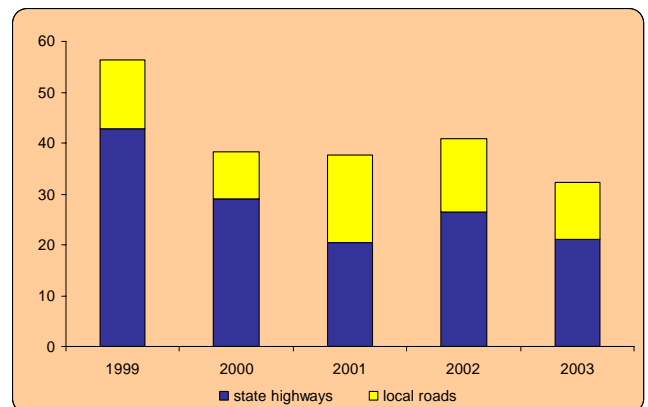
Road user casualties 1999–2003

User type 1999–2003



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)



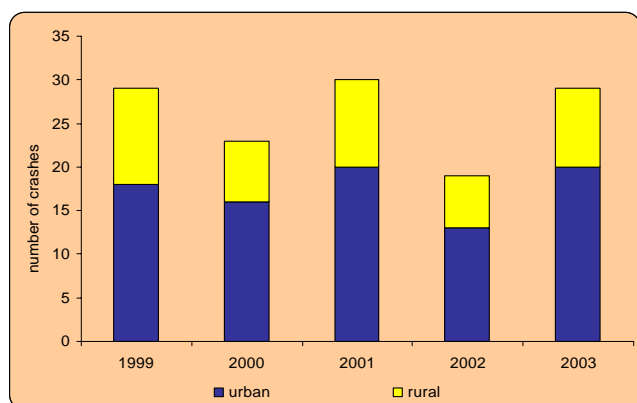
*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2002 prices.

Intersections

While the number of injury-causing intersection crashes within the Horowhenua District has fluctuated over the 1999–2003 period, over this time 30 percent of injury crashes have occurred at intersections. More than half of the reported injury crashes occurred at intersections in urban areas with speed limits of 70 km/h or less..

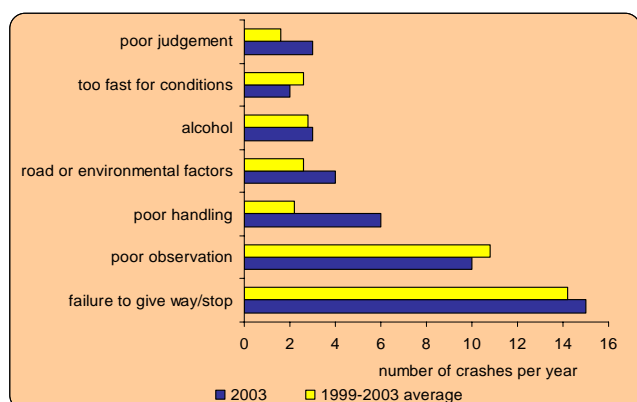
Over 65 percent of injury-causing crashes recorded at intersections in the Horowhenua District over the 1999–2003 period occurred on urban roads.

Injury crashes at intersections



The majority of intersections within the Horowhenua District require road users to exercise the give way rules explained in *The Official New Zealand Road Code*. Factors relating to driver behaviour such as failure to give way or stop and poor observation were commonly reported as contributing to intersection injury crashes in recent years.

Factors involved in injury crashes at intersections

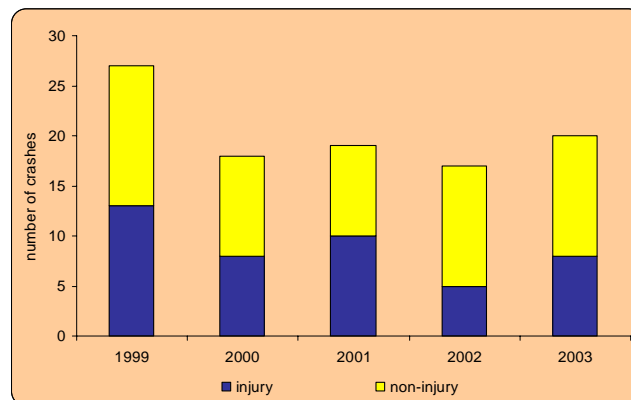


Fatigue

Staying alert is crucial for safe driving. Fatigued drivers may have slower reaction times, putting themselves and others in danger when they encounter unusual, unexpected or emergency situations.

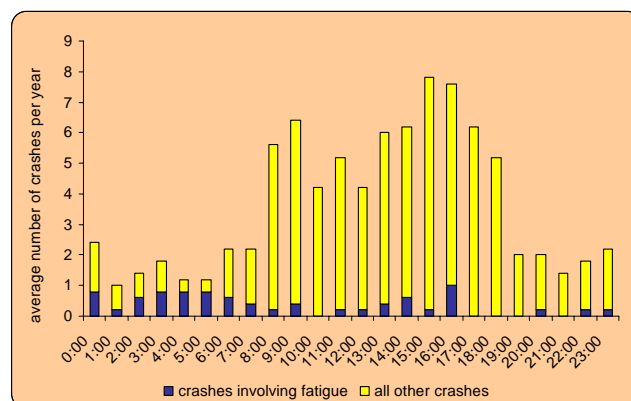
Identification of the effects and presence of driver fatigue is subjective and it is generally under-reported in crash statistics. However, fatigue was still recorded as a contributing factor in 10 percent of injury crashes in the Horowhenua District over the 1999–2003 period. Ninety percent of injury crashes involving fatigue occurred on rural roads with speed limits greater than 70 km/h.

Fatigue-related crashes



The human brain has an in-built clock to co-ordinate daily cycles. The clock is programmed to make us feel sleepy in the early hours of the morning and during the mid-afternoon. Between 1999 and 2003 in the Horowhenua District, the number and proportion of crashes involving fatigue appear to be highest at these times.

Time of injury crashes 1999–2003

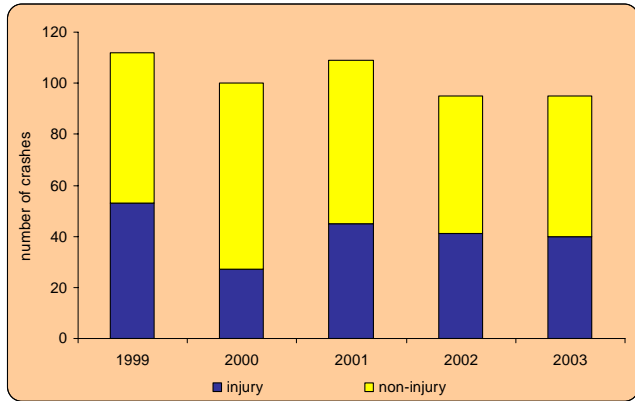




Loss of control

In the Horowhenua District, the total number of reported crashes involving drivers losing control of their vehicle in 2003 was 95. Forty of these caused injuries to road users. Over the 1999–2003 period, more than 40 percent of injury-causing crashes have involved loss of control.

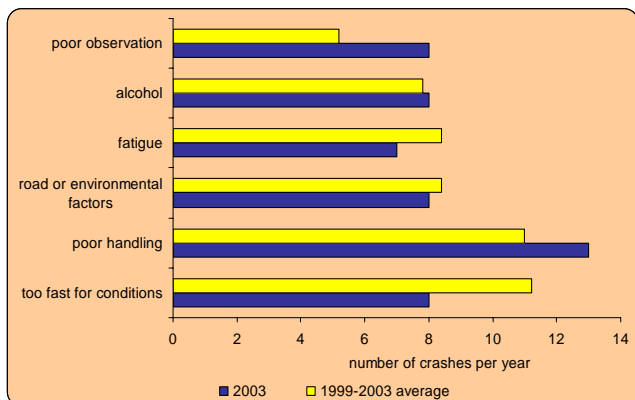
Loss of control crashes



Between 1999 and 2003, over 75 percent of loss of control type crashes occurred on rural roads with speed limits greater than 70 km/h.

Travelling at a speed too fast for the conditions and poor handling were the leading contributing factors to loss of control injury crashes in the Horowhenua District in recent years. The influence of road or environmental factors such as slippery road surface due to rain, oil or loose material such as gravel, or an obstruction on the road caused by a slip or a fallen tree, were also contributing factors.

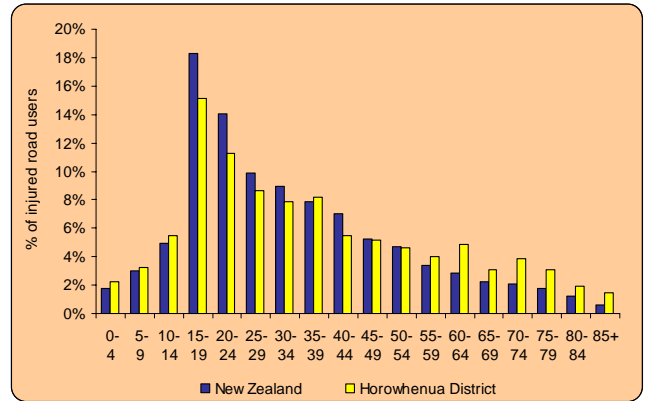
Factors in loss of control injury crashes



Older road users

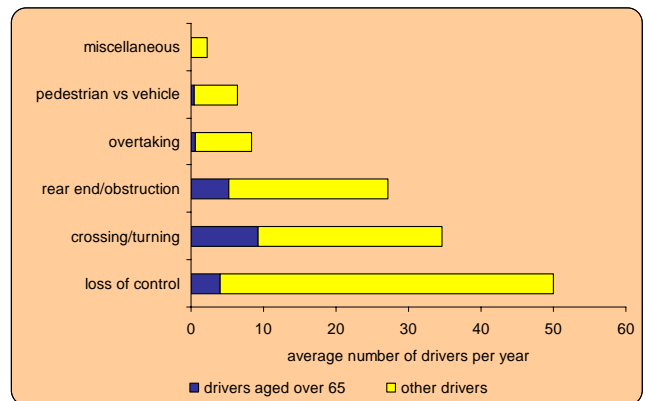
The age distribution of injured road users for the whole of New Zealand is different from the Horowhenua District. The proportion of injured older road users in the Horowhenua District is greater than the nationwide proportion.

Age of injured road users 1999–2003

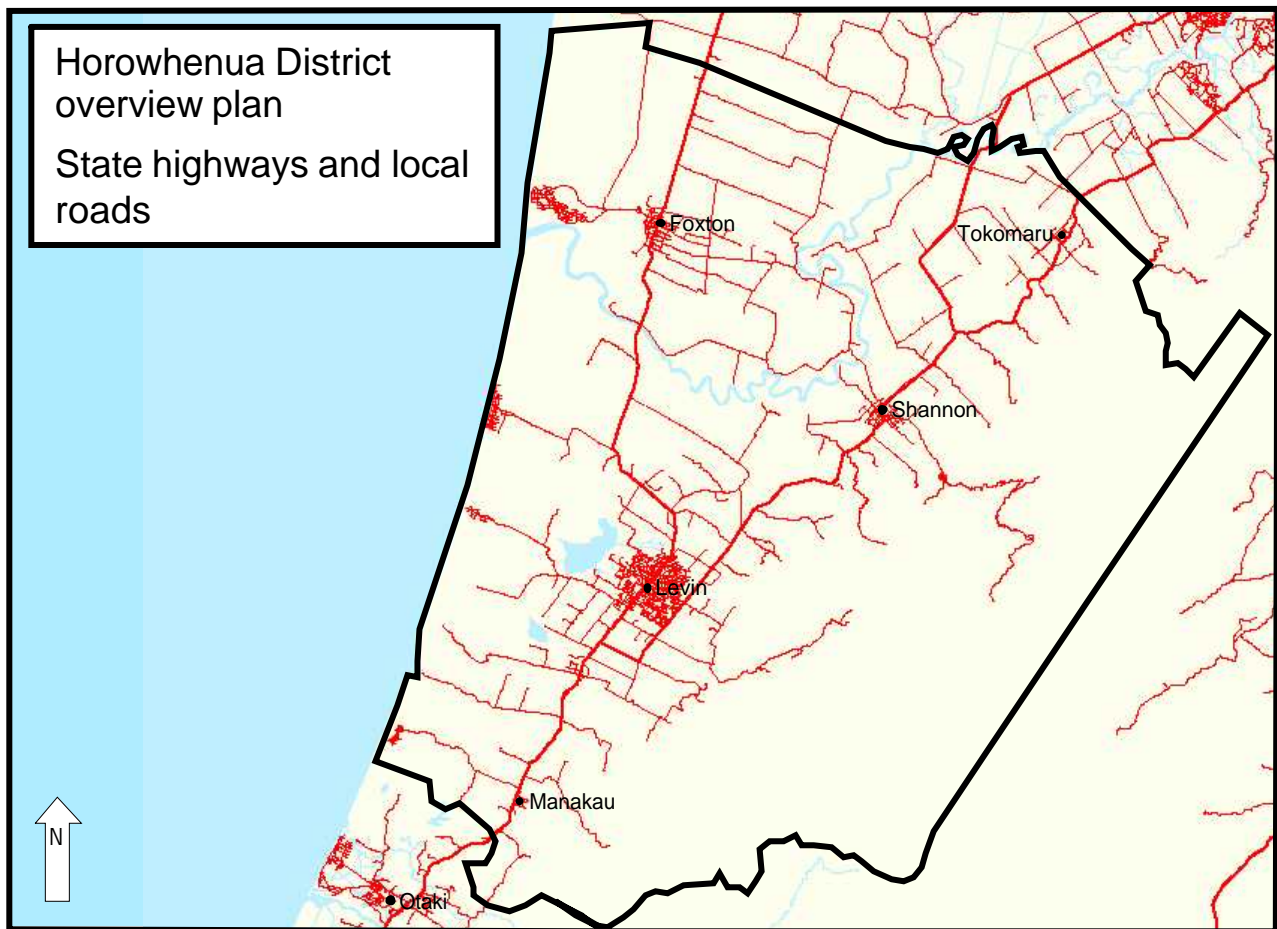


Overall, loss of control was the most common injury crash type reported within the Horowhenua District during the 1999–2003 period. However, for injury crashes involving drivers aged over 65 years, crossing/turning movements and hitting the rear-end of a vehicle or an obstruction were the most common crash movements recorded.

Injury crash types involving older drivers 1999–2003



A high proportion of crashes involving older road users occurred at intersections. Over the 1999–2003 period in the Horowhenua District, over 45 percent of injury crashes involving drivers aged over 65 years occurred at intersections.



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