

road safety issues

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

The number of crashes and casualties reported in Hutt City has remained relatively static over the last five years. Car drivers accounted for 55 percent of all road casualties between 1999 and 2003. The social cost of crashes in 2003 was \$56.9 million.

The number of pedestrian casualties has remained fairly constant for the last five years, but they have been increasing as a percentage of all crashes.

Rear-end collisions or hitting obstructions were the most common crash types and constituted a higher proportion of all crashes in both urban and rural environments than in comparable cities. Parked or stationary vehicles were the objects struck most often. Failure to give way or stop at intersections was the second most common type of crash. The third most common crash type involved drivers losing control of their vehicle at bends.

Alcohol was a factor in a growing number of crashes last year. Compared with national figures, alcohol was involved in a higher percentage of crashes in Hutt City in 2003 in both urban and rural areas.

Both local and national road safety issues are identified below. The specific issues for Hutt City are considered in detail overleaf, while national issues are considered on the back page.

Major road safety issues

Hutt City

- Child pedestrians
- Intersections
- Collisions with objects
- Loss of control/head-on

Nationally

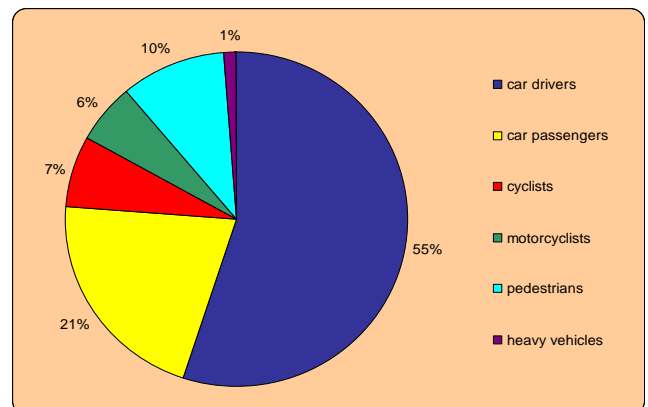
- Speed
- Alcohol
- Failure to give way
- Restraints

2003 road trauma for Hutt City

♀	Deaths	7
	Serious casualties	38
	Minor casualties	200
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🚗	Fatal crashes	5
	Serious injury crashes	32
	Minor injury crashes	152
	Non-injury crashes	480

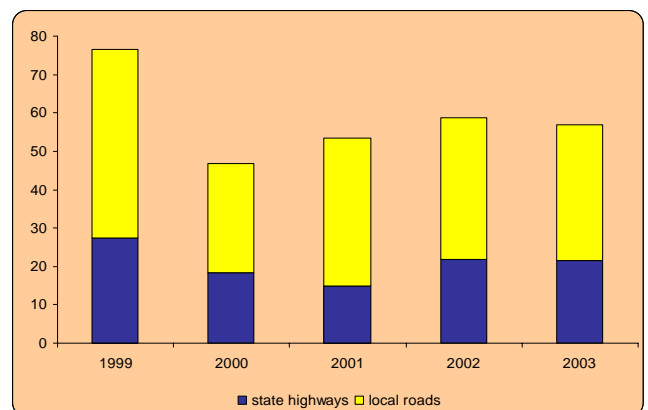
Road casualties 1999–2003

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.

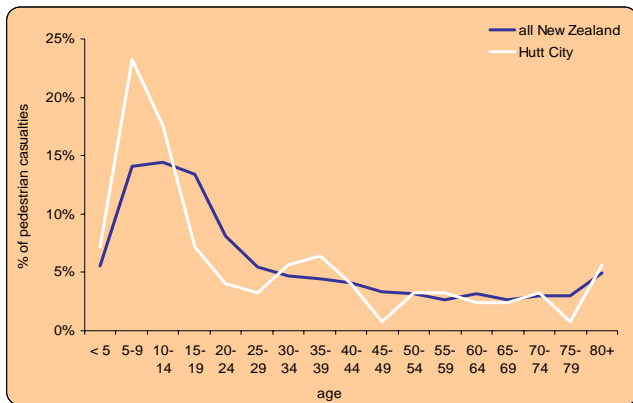


Child pedestrians

Over the last five years, the number of crashes resulting in injury to a pedestrian has remained virtually the same. There were 25 casualties in 1999, 26 in 2000, 30 in 2001, 21 in 2002 and 26 in 2003.

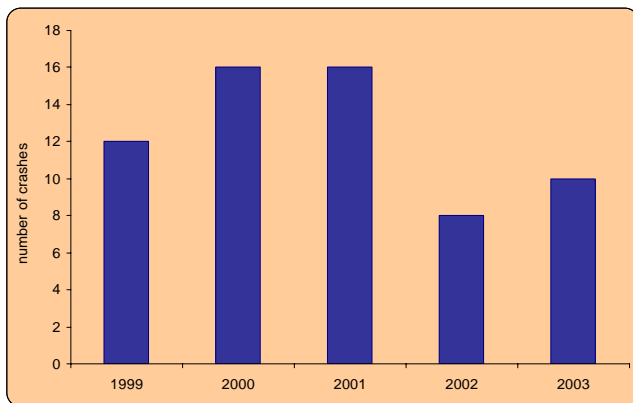
However, of particular concern is the under 15 age group which accounted for 44 percent of all pedestrian casualties. This group represents a far higher proportion of pedestrian casualties than is the case nationally.

Pedestrian casualties by age 1999–2003



Pedestrian crashes involving this age group were at their highest level in 2000 and 2001 when there were 16 in each year. The number of crashes has significantly reduced since then with eight in 2002 and 10 in 2003.

Pedestrian casualties under 15 years old 1999–2003



The most common cause for these crashes was pedestrians trying to cross the road when it was not safe to do so. The second most common cause was vehicles failing to give way to pedestrians at crossings.

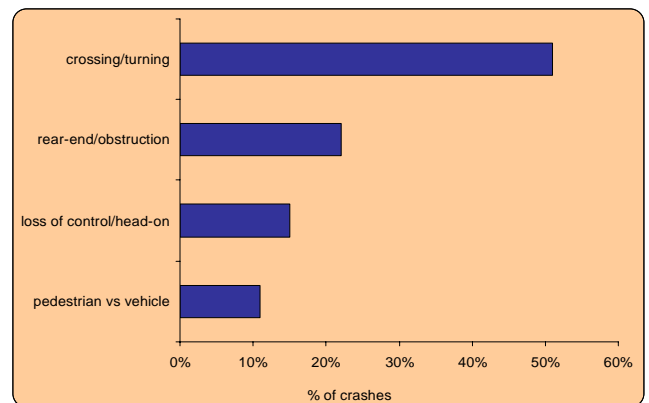


Intersections

There were 437 injury crashes (44 percent) at intersections in Hutt City between 1999 and 2003. Of these crashes, 103 occurred in rural areas and 334 occurred in urban areas.

The main factors in crashes at intersections are shown below. Issues relating to rear-end, loss of control crashes and crashes involving pedestrians are discussed elsewhere in this report.

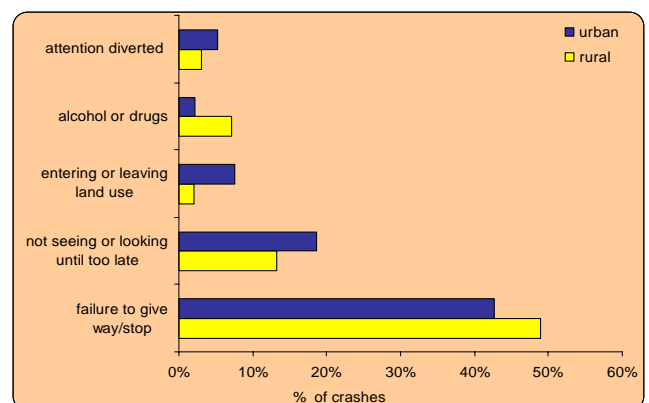
Intersection crashes 1999–2003



The vast majority of crossing or turning crashes in the urban area were on local roads with only five occurring on the state highway. In urban areas of Hutt City, the percentage of crashes caused by crossing or turning was lower than in comparable cities. However, given the number of crashes involved, attention needs to be given to this issue.

In rural areas, the vast majority of crossing or turning crashes occurred at intersections with the state highway, with only one occurring on local roads. In Hutt City, 19 percent of crossing or turning crashes happened on rural roads compared with 10 percent in comparable cities. This would indicate that there is a problem on state highways in Hutt City associated with intersections.

Main factors in crossing and turning crashes 1999–2003



By far the most common cause of crashes at intersections was failure to give way or stop, accounting for 43 percent of crossing or turning crashes in urban areas and 49 percent in rural areas. This means that on average there are 23 injury crashes per year in Hutt City as a result of drivers failing to give way or stop at intersections.

The most common location for crashes at intersections was at T intersections controlled by Give Way signs. Crashes at these locations accounted for 27 percent of all intersection crashes. Crashes at traffic signals accounted for 66 percent of intersection crashes on the state highway, with the most common location again being at T intersections.

Collisions with objects

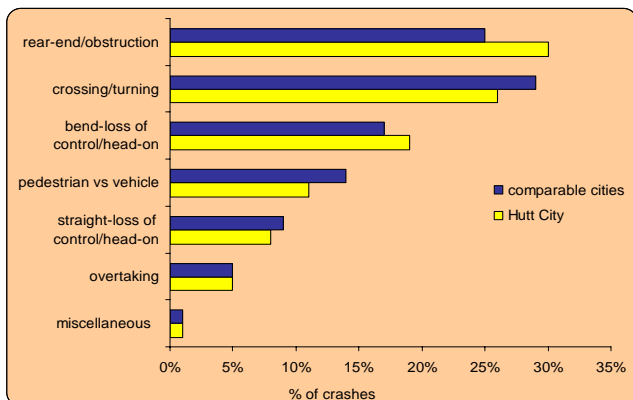
Rear-end collisions or collisions with obstructions were the most common type of crash in Hutt City. The number of crashes has increased significantly over the last three years in urban areas from 26 in 2001 to 40 in 2003.

Overall, the percentage of crashes involving rear-end collisions or collisions with obstructions was significantly higher than in comparable cities. They accounted for 30 percent of all crashes in Hutt City compared with 25 percent elsewhere. In the urban environment, 94 percent of these crashes occurred on local roads, while in rural areas 94 percent were on state highways.

In urban areas, the overriding contributory factor to these crashes was poor observation. In rural areas, it was driving too fast for the conditions and poor handling.

The most common objects struck were parked cars followed by fences and buildings.

Crash types 1999–2003

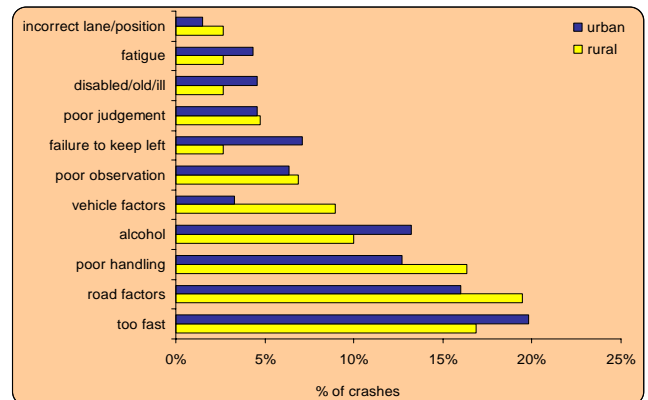


Loss of control/head-on

Drivers losing control of their vehicle on a straight road or on a bend was the second most common crash type in 2003. In total, from 1999 to 2003 there were 270 such crashes, 185 in urban areas and 85 in rural areas.

Loss of control crashes at bends in Hutt City involved a higher percentage of crashes in urban areas than those in comparable cities. In rural areas, the percentage of crashes involving loss of control at bends was less than in comparable cities. However, of those crashes in the rural environment, loss of control at a bend was the single most common type of crash on local roads. They represented 73 percent of local road crashes, far in excess of the 52 percent in rural areas of comparable cities. The above would suggest that there is a significant problem associated with bends on local rural roads in Hutt City.

Factors in loss of control crashes 1999–2003



Poor handling and driving too fast were among the top three factors in both urban and rural areas. This indicates that drivers were travelling too fast for the road conditions. Road factors were the main cause of loss of control/head-on crashes in rural areas and the second highest cause in urban areas. Road factors cover a wide range of issues, from slippery road surfaces due to weather to road defects such as potholes and include restricted visibility, obstructions and street lighting.

Alcohol was also an important factor. It was the fourth highest cause of loss of control crashes in both urban and rural areas resulting in 71 crashes between 1999 and 2003.

Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash and the greater the risk of serious injury or death.

In Hutt City, the percentage of crashes classed as involving excessive speed or driving too fast for the conditions, was lower than the national figure in urban areas but higher in rural areas. However, on local roads, the proportion of this type of crash exceeded national figures in both rural and urban areas. This was particularly so in rural areas. These figures would suggest there is a serious issue associated with speed on local rural roads.

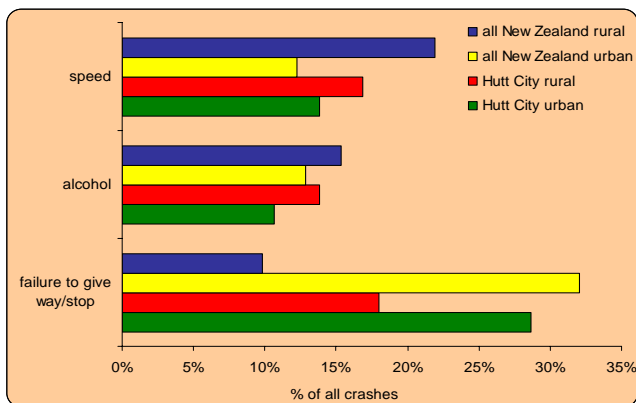


Alcohol

Alcohol has a big impact on the way people drive.

The graph below shows that the percentage of crashes involving alcohol was below the national level on all classes of road for the period 1999–2003. However, the percentage of crashes involving alcohol increased significantly in Hutt City in 2003 and was above national figures in both urban and rural areas. This increase was particularly marked in rural areas where the percentage of crashes involving alcohol in 2003 was nearly three times the 2002 figure.

National issues 1999–2003



Failure to give way

The percentage of crashes involving failure to give way was higher than the national figure in rural areas but lower in urban areas. The issues associated with failure to give way have been identified as a local issue specific to Hutt City.



Restraints

Wearing a safety belt reduces the risk of death or serious injury in a crash by 40 percent.

According to the 2003 national restraint wearing survey, the front seat safety belt wearing rate in Hutt City was 91 percent compared with the national average of 92 percent.

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