

road safety issues

Hutt City

Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2000–2004 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues in Hutt City.

Following a sustained decline in crash and casualty numbers in Hutt City between 1995 and 2000, the past five years have seen the number of injury crashes plateau. Although 80 percent of crashes in Hutt City occurred on urban local roads, comparisons with the crash rates of other similar local authorities suggest there is also scope to address safety issues on rural state highways.

While crash numbers have remained steady for the past five years, the social cost has shown a slight upward trend, with an overall figure of \$59 million in 2004.

Drivers made up 54 percent of all casualties in Hutt City. Statistics showed an increase in the number of learner and restricted drivers involved in crashes over the past five years. Crashes often occurred at intersections or when driver lost control of their vehicle, injuring themselves and other road users such as pedestrians.

Both local and national road safety issues are identified below. Details of specific issues for Hutt City are considered overleaf, while details of national issues are outlined on the back page.

Major road safety issues

Hutt City

- Pedestrians
- Intersections
- Loss of control
- Novice drivers

Nationally

- Speed
- Alcohol
- Failure to give way
- Restraints



2004 road trauma for Hutt City



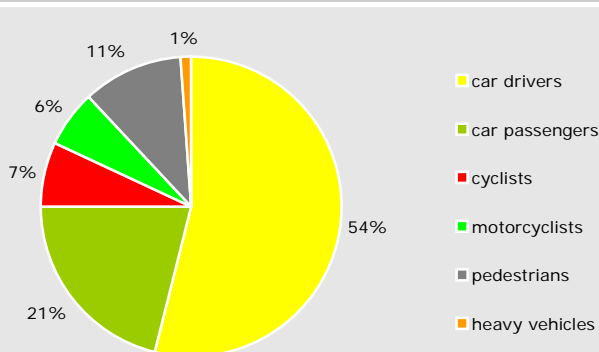
Deaths	7
Serious casualties	37
Minor casualties	190



Fatal crashes	6
Serious injury crashes	33
Minor injury crashes	149
Non-injury crashes	549

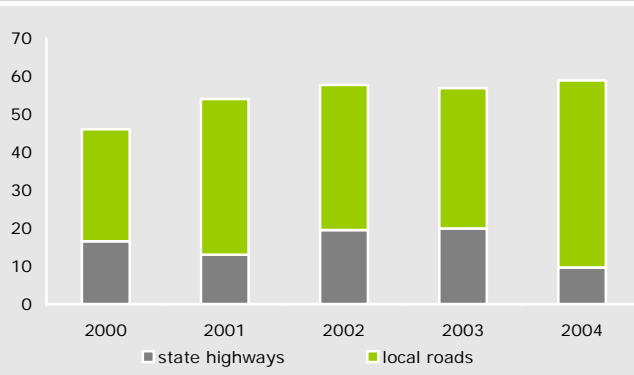
Road casualties 2000–2004

User type 2000–2004



Estimated social cost of crashes*

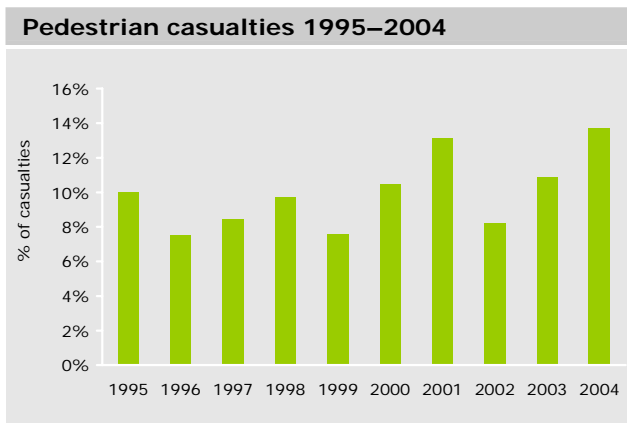
Social cost (\$ million)



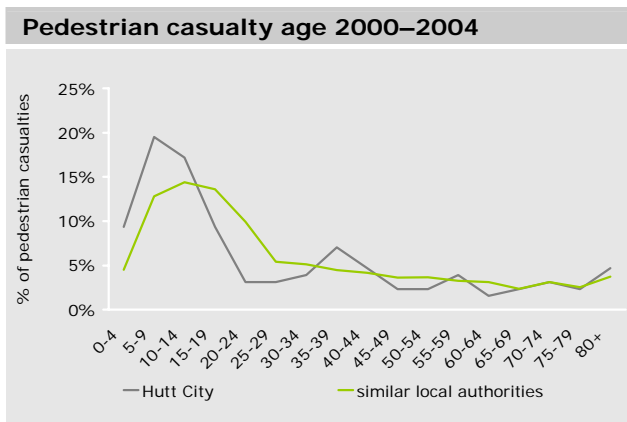
*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2004 prices.

Pedestrians

Pedestrians made up 11 percent of all casualties in Hutt City between 2000 and 2004. Of the 136 pedestrian casualties, 34 were killed or seriously hurt.



Child pedestrians up to the age of 15 years were particularly vulnerable. This group represented a higher proportion (46 percent) of pedestrian casualties than was the case for similar local authorities.



Crashes involving school-age children typically occurred on weekdays at the beginning or end of the school day.

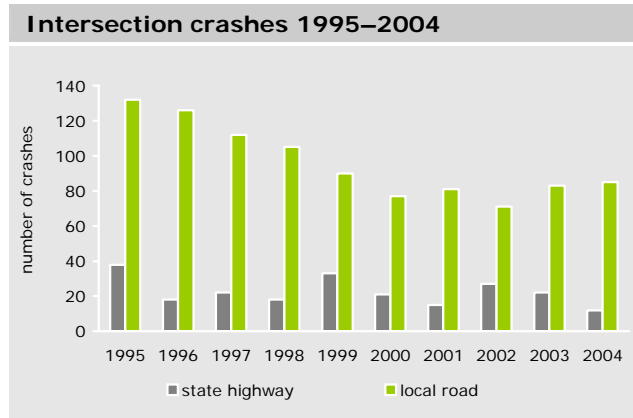
Collisions with pedestrians often occurred at locations away from an intersection and without any pedestrian crossing facilities. However, it should be noted that 22 percent of crashes involving a pedestrian occurred at a pedestrian crossing.

Intersections

Between 2000 and 2004, there were a total of 494 crashes at intersections and driveways in Hutt City. Of these, 80 occurred at private driveways and accesses.

In total, intersection and driveway crashes resulted in 12 deaths and 83 serious injuries to road users.

Eighty percent of these crashes occurred on urban local roads and 19 percent at rural state highway intersections.



A quarter of those injured in intersection and driveway crashes were vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists or motorcyclists. Cyclists in particular were over-represented in crashes at roundabouts compared with other types of intersection.

Crashes at intersections and driveways typically involved a collision between vehicles either crossing or turning, or a vehicle being hit from behind – for instance, when in a queue waiting to pass through the intersection.

Twelve percent of intersection crashes occurred at roundabouts and a further 19 percent occurred at intersections controlled by traffic signals. The two main types of crash at traffic signal controlled intersections involved rear-end collisions with vehicles queuing at the signals, and those attempting to make a right turn and being hit by an oncoming vehicle.

One third of crashes at T junctions in Hutt City had no form of priority control (Stop, Give Way or traffic signals) at the intersection.

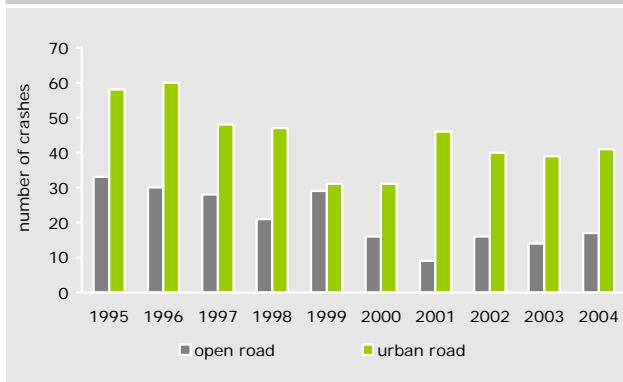
Loss of control

Between 2000 and 2004, 269 crashes involved drivers losing control of their vehicles, either on a straight section of road or on a bend, resulting in the death or serious injury of 80 road users. A further 285 road users sustained minor injuries as a result of such crashes.

Three quarters of loss of control crashes occurred in urban areas. Loss of control crashes in rural areas were evenly divided between state highways and local roads.

Driving too fast for the conditions, poor handling of the vehicle and alcohol-impaired driving were the main factors involved in loss of control crashes. One or more young and inexperienced drivers under the age of 20 were involved in 30 percent of loss of control crashes.

Loss of control crashes 1995–2004



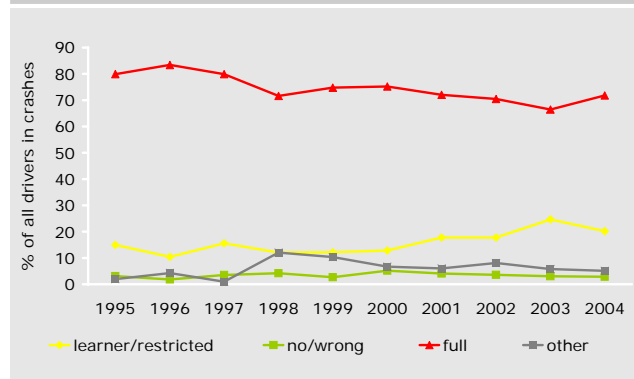
Compared with other crash types in Hutt City between 2000 and 2004, a high proportion of loss of control crashes occurred during the hours of darkness and on wet or icy roads.

Loss of control crashes can result in either a head-on collision with another vehicle or the vehicle leaving the road, potentially hitting a roadside object. Such an occurrence may increase the severity of a crash. Vehicles leaving the road in Hutt City often hit objects such as poles, posts and trees as well as banks and fences.

Novice drivers

There has been an upward trend in the proportion of drivers on learner and restricted licences being involved in crashes in Hutt City over the past five years. Between 2000 and 2004, 29 percent of crashes involved one or more learner/restricted licence holders.

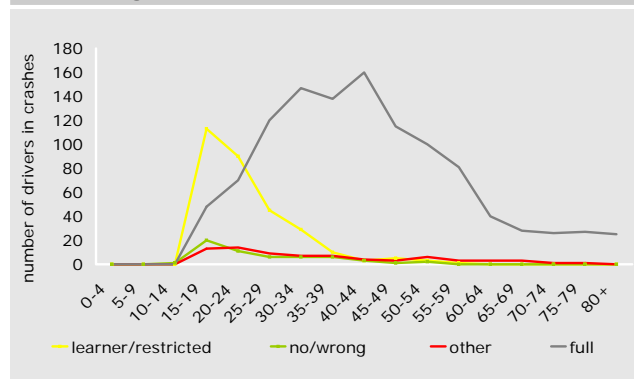
Driver licence status 1995–2004



Factors reported in crashes involving learner and restricted drivers included poor observation skills, failure to give way and speed too fast for the conditions.

Thirty-eight percent of drivers with a learner or restricted licence involved in a crash were between 15 and 19 years old. It should be noted, however, that a further 30 percent were aged 20 to 24 years and 25 percent aged between 25 and 34 years. In essence, learner and restricted licence holders that were involved in crashes weren't just young drivers, but were also those in older age groups that might be expected to have progressed to a full licence.

Driver age and licence status 2000–2004



Three quarters of the learner and restricted licence holders involved in a crash resided in Hutt City.

Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash and the greater the risk of serious injury or death. Twenty-four percent of crashes involving speed in Hutt City between 2000 and 2004 resulted in a death or serious injury.

Half of all speed-related crashes between 2000 and 2004 occurred during the hours of darkness, particularly on wet or icy roads. Alcohol contributed to 24 percent of speed-related crashes in Hutt City during this period. Excessive speed frequently led to drivers losing control of their vehicle, particularly on a bend.

Alcohol

Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive. People who drink and drive (with a blood alcohol level over 80 mg per 100 ml) are three times more likely to be involved in a crash than a sober driver.

Alcohol was identified as a factor in 12 percent of crashes in Hutt City between 2000 and 2004; 29 percent of these crashes resulted in either fatal or serious injuries. Alcohol-related crashes tended to occur at night, particularly at the weekend, and often involved drivers losing control of their vehicle.

Failure to give way

While most failure to give way crashes result in non-injury or minor injuries, failing to give way at an intersection can have severe consequences. Between 2000 and 2004, there were four fatal and 39 serious injury crashes in Hutt City involving a driver failing to give way.

Failure to give way has been identified as a local issue specific to intersections in Hutt City.

Restraints

Wearing a safety belt reduces the chance of death or serious injury in a crash by 40 percent. Whether in the front or the back seat, the risk of serious or fatal injury if not wearing a safety belt is virtually the same.

Results from the 2004 national restraint wearing survey showed that the front seat safety belt wearing rate for Hutt City was 96 percent, compared with the national average of 94 percent. The 2003 rear seat belt wearing rate was 80 percent, compared with the New Zealand average of 81 percent.

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