

# 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 level of road trauma in Invercargill.

Road crashes in Invercargill over the five-year period killed 14 people and injured more than 750. There were more than 1,300 reported non-injury crashes during the same period.

The graphs in this report show a sharp increase in the number of injury crashes in 2001. This is the result of a significant increase in reporting rates rather than an increase in crashes. In 2000 it was estimated that only 55 percent of injury crashes were reported to the LTSA. After much work that reporting figure has risen to nearly 80 percent for the Southland region.

The figures for hospital admissions have remained fairly static over the same time frame. The encouraging news is that this confirms the increase in reporting rates is not due to an increase in crashes, and allows more accurate information to be used to identify road safety issues.

Overall the number of reported injury crashes rose from 103 to 165 in 2001. Both crashes and casualties were more than double the number that occurred in 1999. This increase can be attributed to the improvement in reporting levels. It does however make it difficult to report on trends in this report with any great degree of accuracy.

## Major road safety issues:

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



## 2001 road toll for Invercargill

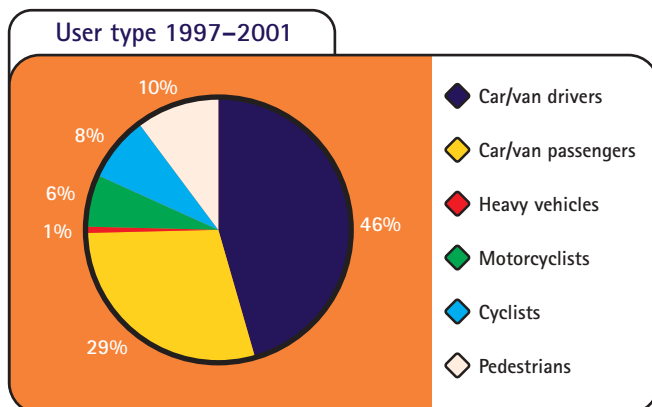


Deaths	5
Serious casualties	39
Minor casualties	205

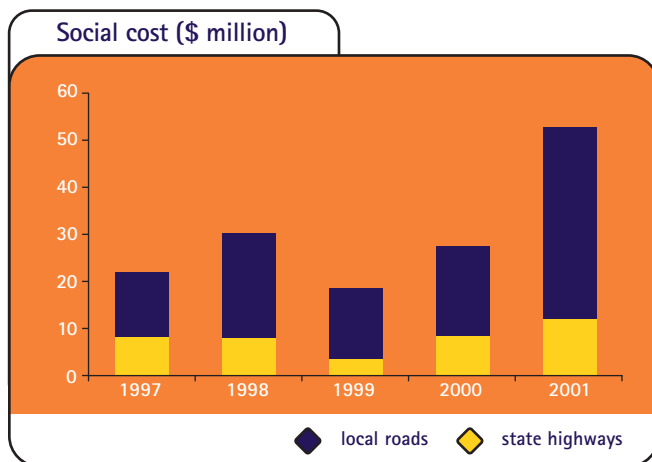


Fatal crashes	5
Serious injury crashes	33
Minor injury crashes	127
Non-injury crashes	304

## Road user casualties 1997–2001

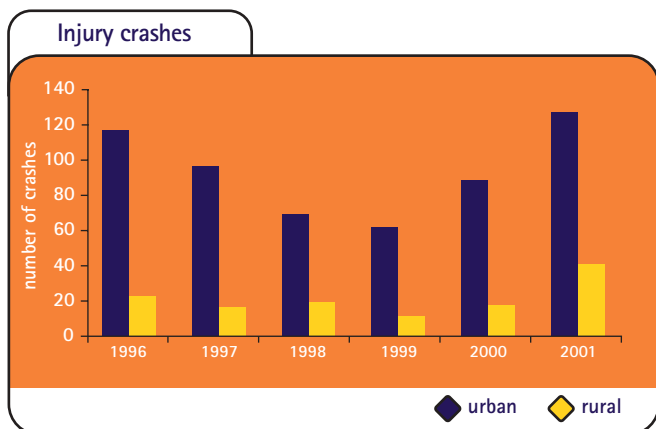


## Estimated social cost of crashes\*



\* 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.

The main issue to note this year is the significant increase in crash reporting rates that has occurred across the region. While numbers have increased, it is still possible to look at the proportions of each type of crash and comment on trends.



The above graph shows that the increase in reported crashes occurred equally in both urban and rural areas of the city.

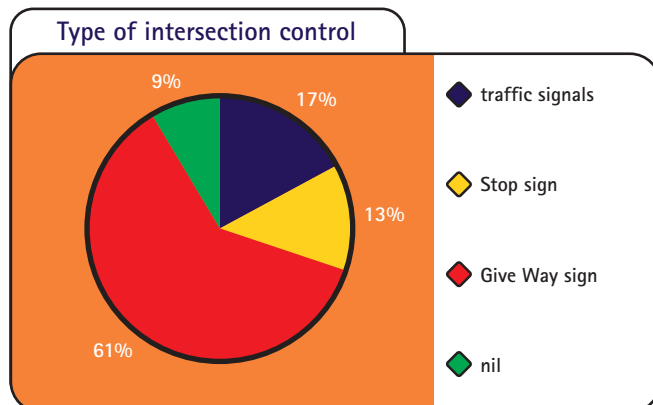
## T Intersection crashes

Intersections were highlighted as a problem in last year's report. This is not unexpected in a predominantly urban area such as Invercargill. In 2001 the proportion of urban crashes at intersections fell slightly on previous years. However, the number remained above both national and comparable authority levels.

The most common reason for an injury crash in Invercargill was a driver failing to check carefully enough before moving through an intersection. More than half of all the crashes in Invercargill during the last five years were a result of this type of driver error. In 2001 the five intersections with the most crashes in the city, including non-injuries, were:

		Number
Dee Street	Spey Street	9
Dee Street	Don Street	5
Tweed Street	Nith Street	5
Elles Road	Martin Street	5
Clyde Street	Forth Street	5

Three of those intersections are controlled by traffic signals, which should theoretically be reducing the number of crashes. The majority of intersection crashes, however, occurred at those controlled by Give Way signs. The following graph shows the type of intersection control at those sites where injury crashes occurred over the last five years.



One quarter of all the intersection crashes resulted in either a pedestrian or a cyclist being injured. These two groups of road users are particularly vulnerable when vehicles are turning.

## Recommended actions

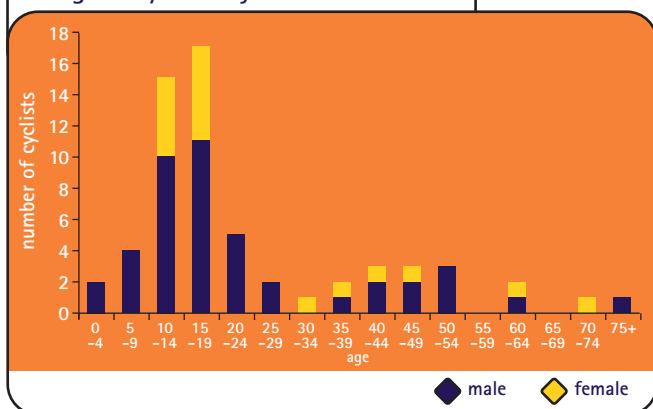
- Encourage enforcement campaigns targeting drivers who fail to stop or give way.
- Support education and advertising campaigns on the need to give way at intersections.
- Continue with the crash reduction study programme to improve known black spots.
- Continue to improve intersections by installing traffic control and safety devices.

## Cyclists

Pedestrians were highlighted as a concern in last year's report. In 2001, even with the increase in reporting rates, there was a reduction in the number of pedestrians injured on the roads in Invercargill – from 25 to 16.

The number of cyclists injured rose from eight to 23 over the same period. This was the highest level in 10 years. Half of those cyclists were under the age of 20, with the majority of those being in the 10 to 14 year-old age group. The following graph shows the age and sex of cyclists injured on Invercargill roads over the last five years. Not only were those under 20 most likely to be involved, but males were four times more likely to be injured than females.

Age of cyclists injured 1997–2001



In 2001 crashes involving cyclists were generally on the busiest roads, with Dee Street and Tweed Street accounting for one third of the total. Weather and road conditions were not mentioned as contributing factors. Most of the crashes occurred during daylight hours on dry roads. Driver or rider error was the main cause, with the most common reason being one party failing to see the other.

### Recommended actions

- Continue to support initiatives that help improve awareness of cyclists, particularly at intersections.
- Encourage safe cycling campaigns aimed in particular at the 10 to 14 year age group.
- Consider the introduction of marked cycle lanes or shared cycle/pedestrian facilities.

## 80 Speed and alcohol

The number of alcohol-related crashes in Invercargill in 2001 fell by one. However, when looking at the increased number of crashes overall, the proportion of alcohol-related crashes fell in both urban and rural areas. Ten percent of urban crashes in the city involved alcohol last year. While this figure is still too high, it has fallen from previous years and is below the national average. The same pattern can be seen in rural crashes where just below 15 percent of crashes involved alcohol, compared to over 35 percent in 2000.

Speed-related crashes increased in both urban and rural areas, yet not to the same degree as the increase in the reporting rate. As a proportion of all crashes the number fell in rural areas to 10 percent, the lowest in 10 years. In urban areas the rate remained at just over 10 percent – as it has been in previous years.

### 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

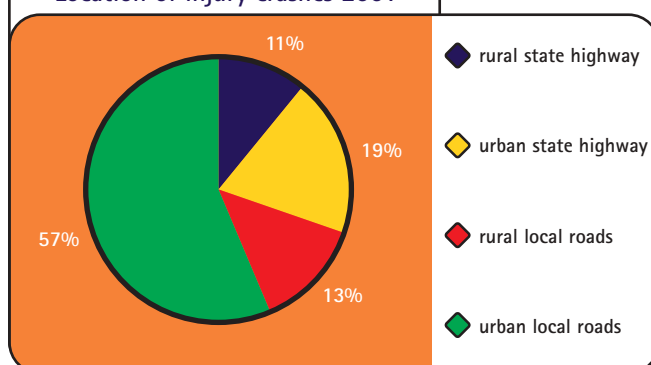
Although the number of injured pedestrians fell in 2001, the 10-year trend is still upwards. At the time of writing this report twice as many pedestrians as cyclists have been injured in Invercargill in 2002. Over the last five years the most common age group for both pedestrians and cyclists injured in crashes was 15 to 19. This is slightly higher than is found elsewhere in the country.

The proportion of crashes that occurred at night fell in 2001 and is likely to be linked to the drop in alcohol-related crashes. The proportion of crashes on wet roads increased in both urban and rural areas of Invercargill. This same pattern was seen nationally.

Following the same pattern as everywhere else in New Zealand, significantly more crashes occurred on Friday than any other day of the week.

As outlined earlier, the majority of crashes in Invercargill happened on local urban roads. The graph below gives a breakdown of crashes by location.

Location of injury crashes 2001



# 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 number of deaths and injuries in Invercargill.

Funding for community projects in Invercargill from the New Zealand Road Safety Programme for the 2002/2003 year has been confirmed as follows:

Project	Funding	Police hours
Road safety co-ordinator	\$38,000	
Drive sober campaign	\$4,000	
Intersection/pedestrian campaign	\$7,000	80
Minor projects (Southland region)	\$19,000	190

Invercargill will also be involved this year in regionally funded projects to target high-risk issues that occur throughout Otago and Southland:

Project	Funding
Regional Tourism	\$20,000
Regional Alcohol	\$30,000
Regional Speed	\$30,000
Regional Fatigue	\$20,000
Regional Industry	\$18,000

## Police enforcement

Police hours for enforcement of traffic issues are also allocated through the New Zealand Road Safety Programme. For the Invercargill city area, a further 21,065 hours will be delivered by the New Zealand Police as follows:

Project	Police hours
Strategic – alcohol/drugs, speed, restraints and visible road safety enforcement	16,210
Traffic management	4,000
School road safety education	600
Police community services	255

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