

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 key road safety issues in the Manawatu Wanganui Region. This region includes Palmerston North City and the Wanganui, Ruapehu, Rangitikei, Manawatu, Horowhenua and Tararua Districts.

The number of people killed or injured on the road network in this region decreased from 923 in 2002 to 868 in 2003. These deaths and injuries last year were the result of 620 injury crashes. On average, over 18 people were either killed or seriously injured every month in road crashes in the region. Despite a downward trend in cyclist and motorcyclist casualties in the region over the last 10 years, from 1999 to 2003 these two road user groups made up 13 percent of all casualties and both were above the New Zealand average for urban roads.

Within the region, the most frequent type of crash on rural roads involved drivers losing control of their vehicles. Intersection crashes were the most common crash type on urban roads. Poor driver skills, in particular poor judgement, observation or handling techniques were regularly recorded as contributing factors in injury crashes. A higher percentage of all drivers involved in injury crashes during 2003 held learner or restricted licences when compared with previous years.

The estimated 2003 social cost of crashes for the Manawatu Wanganui Region was \$259.46 million. Both regional and national issues are identified below with the specific issues for the region considered in detail overleaf.

Major road safety issues

Manawatu Wanganui Region

Intersections

Loss of control

Speed

Fatigue

Nationally

Speed


Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints

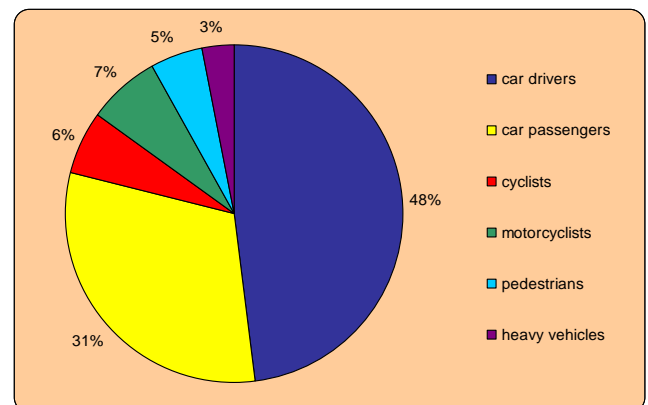
2003 road trauma for Manawatu Wanganui Region

	Deaths	31
	Serious casualties	189
	Minor casualties	648

	Fatal crashes	25
	Serious injury crashes	148
	Minor injury crashes	447
	Non-injury crashes	1,432

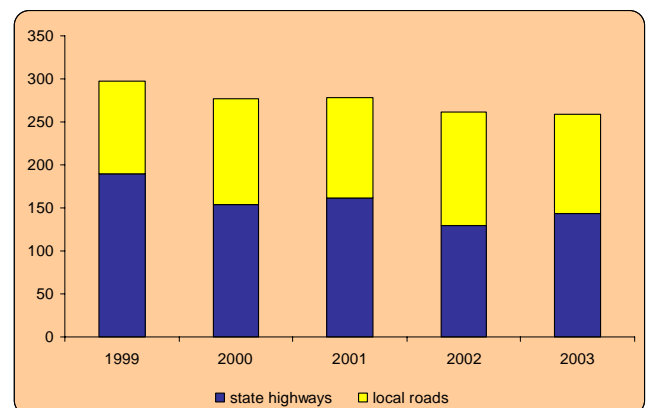
Road user casualties 1999–2003

User type 1999–2003



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)



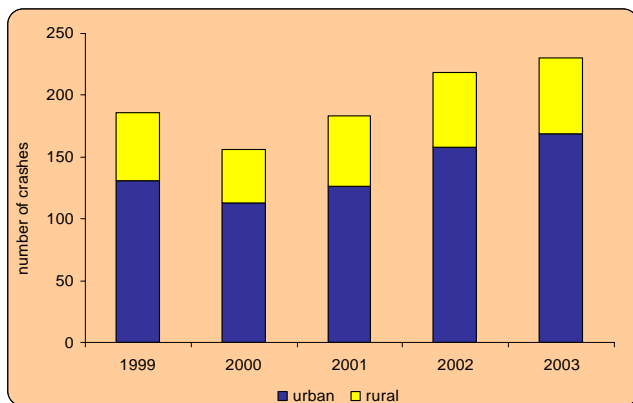
*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are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



Intersections

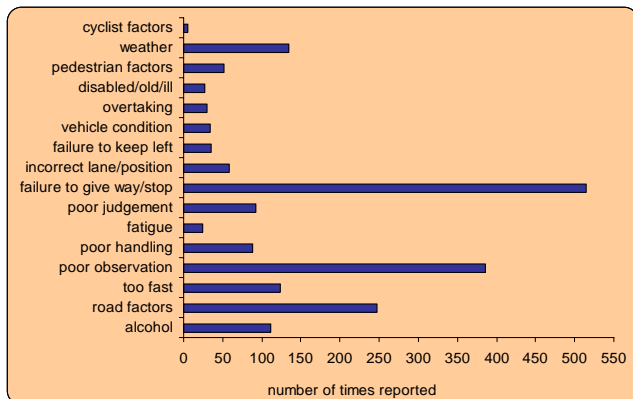
Injury crashes at intersections made up 59 percent of the reported urban road injury crashes in 2003. The number of these crashes on urban and rural roads in the Manawatu Wanganui Region has been increasing since 2000. The percentage of injury crashes occurring at urban road intersections has been higher than that for similar authorities and the national average for the last nine years. Rural intersection crashes have remained fairly constant at 15 to 18 percent of all injury crashes over the last 10 years.

Number of crashes at intersections



Failure to give way or stop and poor observation were the two most common crash factors contributing to intersection injury crashes in the region.

Factors contributing to intersection crashes 1999–2003



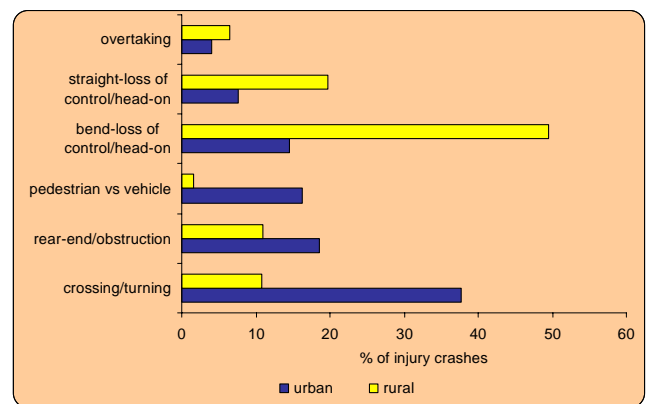
Fifty three percent (2,165) of the injury and non-injury crashes reported at the intersections in the Manawatu Wanganui Region involved a collision between vehicles making a crossing or turning movement while 19 percent (793 crashes) involved a rear-end collision.



Loss of control

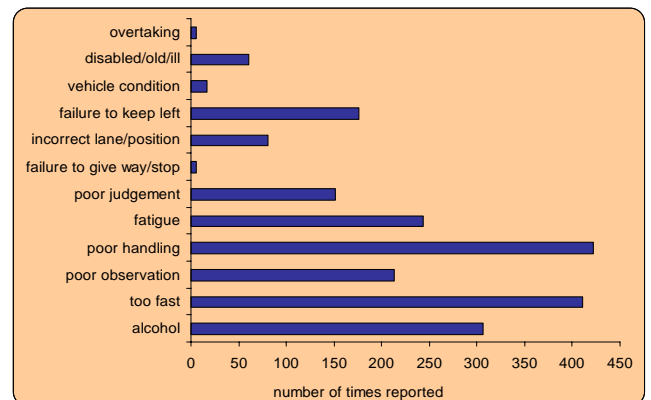
From 1999 to 2003, 69 percent of injury crashes on rural roads in the Manawatu Wanganui Region involved a driver losing control of a vehicle. The number of these crashes reported each year on bends had been increasing from 1999 to 2002. A slight reduction in the overall numbers was recorded for 2003, although loss of control crashes are still the most common injury crash movement type on rural roads in the region. A total of 301 were recorded on all roads in the Manawatu Wanganui Region during 2003, a small decrease from 307 in 2002.

Crash movement types 1999–2003



Poor handling, speed too fast for the conditions, alcohol and fatigue were the main contributing factors in the loss of control injury crashes from 1999 to 2003.

Driver factors contributing to loss of control injury crashes 1999–2003

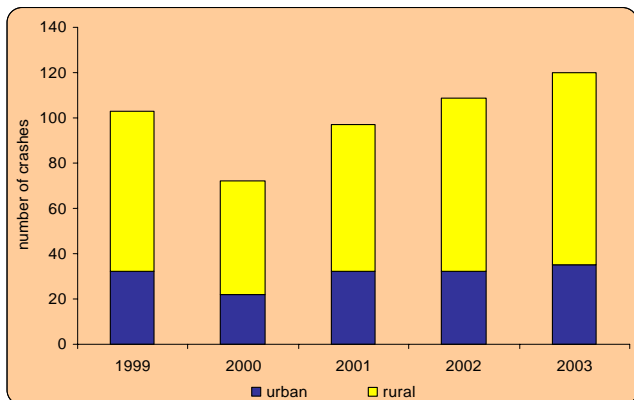


Young drivers in the 15 to 19 year age group were involved in the highest number of loss of control crashes with drivers aged less than 30 being involved in over 45 percent of the reported crashes of this type. Where licence types had been recorded, 30 percent of the drivers losing control of their vehicles did not hold a full licence.

80 Speed

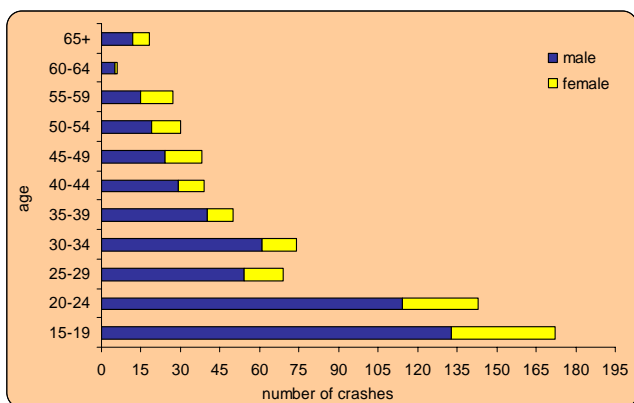
Driving at a speed too fast for the conditions was one of the main contributing factors in rural and urban road injury crashes in the Manawatu Wanganui Region for the period 1999 to 2003. Speed can be attributed to 348 (22 percent) of the rural road injury crashes and 154 (12 percent) of the urban road injury crashes during these five years. The level of involvement that speed has in injury crashes on rural and urban roads is approximately the same as that found in other similar areas and nationally.

Speed related injury crashes



Speed was more likely to be a contributing factor in crashes for young drivers rather than for older drivers. Approximately half of the crashes where speed was a factor from 1999 to 2003 involved a driver under the age of 25.

Age of drivers in speed related crashes 1999–2003



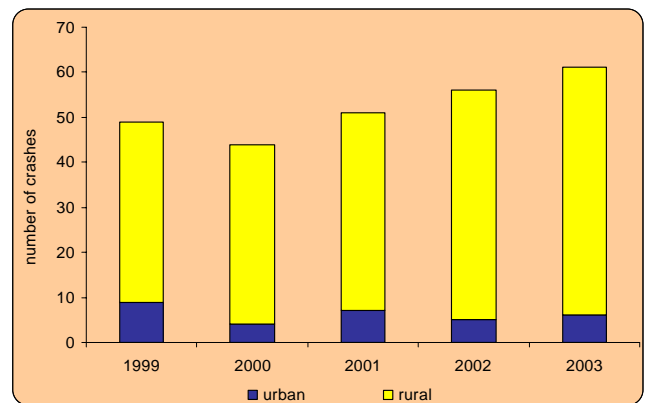
Vehicle speed is a major determinant of the outcome of a crash. Research has shown that as speed increases, the likelihood of a crash also increases. Higher speeds will result in more severe injuries in the event of a crash.

Zzzz 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.

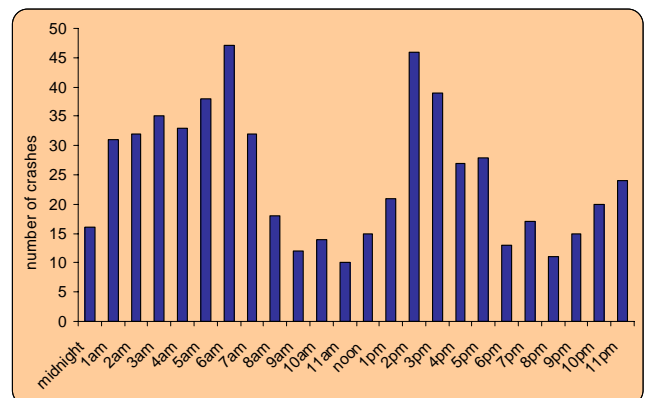
Identification of the effects and presence of driver fatigue are subjective and are generally considered to be under-reported. However, fatigue was still recorded as a contributing factor in just over 14 percent (230) of all crashes causing injury on rural roads within this region during the period 1999 to 2003. This percentage is significantly higher than for similar regions and the national average.

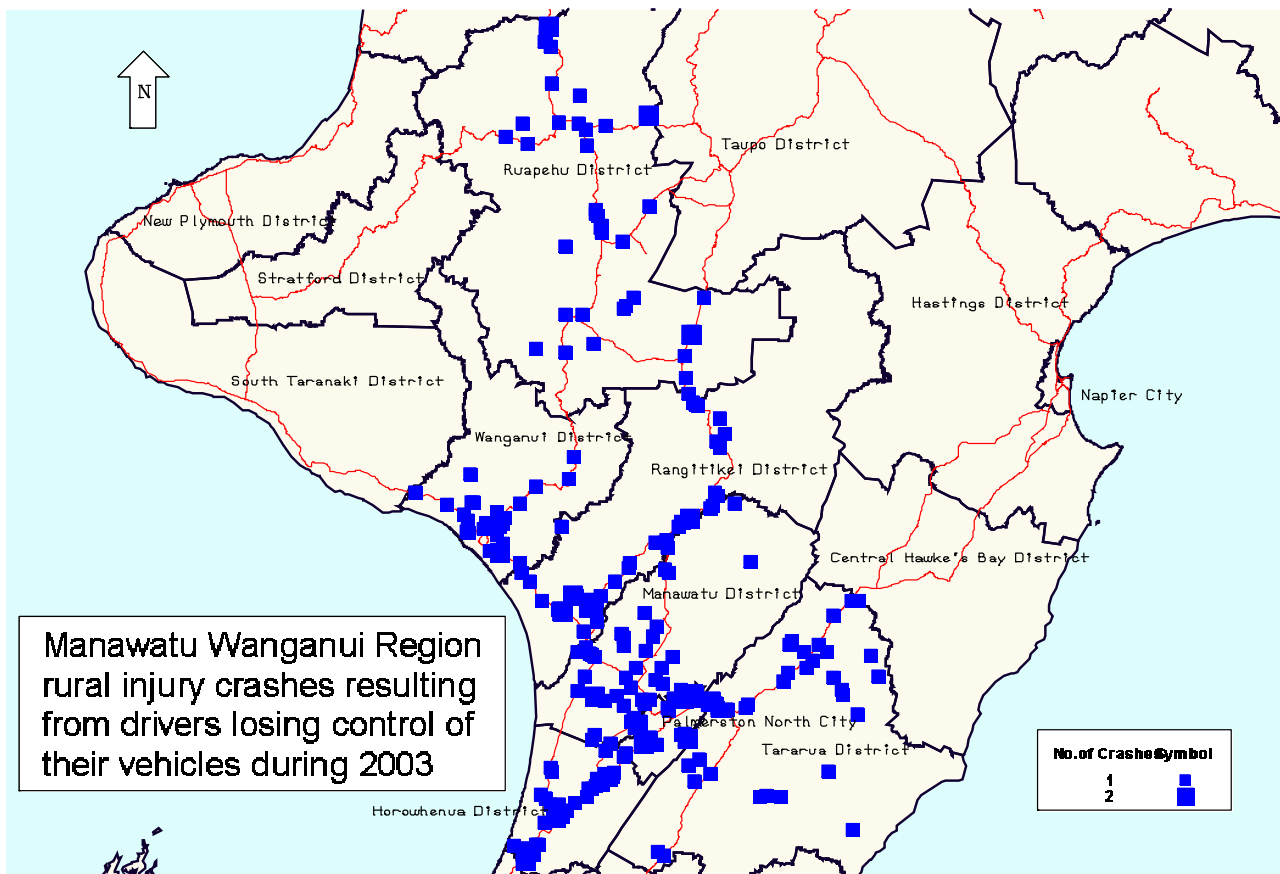
Injury crashes involving fatigue



Combinations of long periods of driving, insufficient rest stops and driving at certain times of the day are all known to contribute to driver fatigue and to crashes. The human brain has an in-built clock that co-ordinates daily cycles. The clock is programmed to make us feel sleepy in the early hours of the morning and during the mid-afternoon. The number of crashes involving fatigue appears to be highest at these times within the Manawatu Wanganui Region over the 1999–2003 period.

Fatigue-related crash times





Contacts

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Road controlling authorities

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