

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 the Masterton District.

The total number of injury crashes in the Masterton District in 2003, decreased by one from 2002. However, the number of people killed or seriously injured in road crashes has more than doubled from 10 in 2002 to 22 in 2003. Of particular concern were the five deaths in 2003.

Cyclists and pedestrians featured prominently, making up 16 percent of all casualties. The most frequent type of crash on urban roads involved vehicles crashing while crossing or turning at intersections or driveways. There was a significantly higher proportion of these crashes in the Masterton District than in similar local authorities.

On rural roads, drivers losing control of their vehicles on bends was the most frequent type of crash. This proportion was significantly higher than for similar local authorities.

The estimated social cost of crashes in the Masterton District in 2003 was \$28.6 million, an increase of \$14.8 million compared with the previous year. A large part of the increase can be attributed to crashes on local roads.

Both local and national road safety issues are identified below. The specific concerns for the Masterton District are considered in detail overleaf, while the district's performance in relation to national issues is considered in detail on the back page.

Major road safety issues




Masterton District

- Cyclists
- Pedestrians
- Crossing/turning
- Loss of control on bends

Nationally

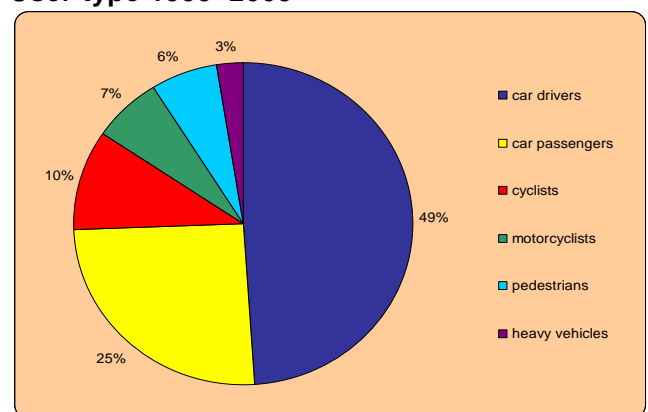
- Speed
- Alcohol
- Failure to give way
- Restraints

2003 road trauma for Masterton District

	Deaths	5
	Serious casualties	17
	Minor casualties	73
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	Fatal crashes	4
	Serious injury crashes	12
	Minor injury crashes	48
	Non-injury crashes	115

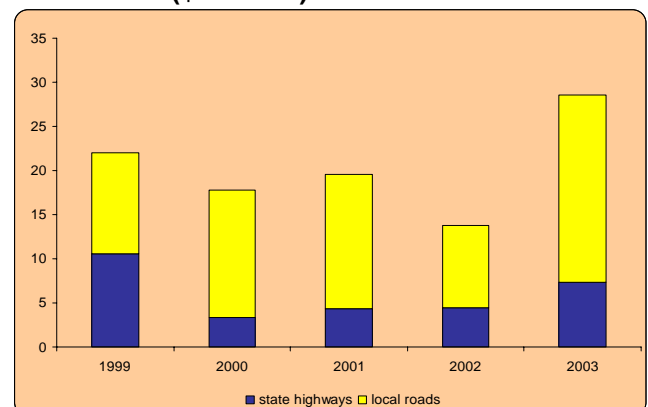
Road casualties 1999–2003

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.



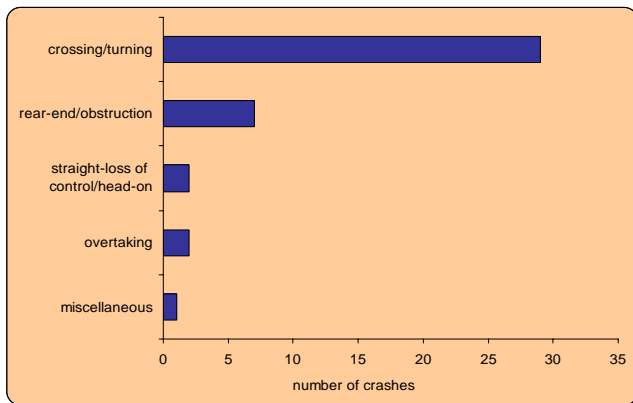
Cyclists

Between 1999 and 2003, 18 percent of the casualties on urban Masterton District roads were cyclists, double the percentage of similar authorities. Over the five-year period 42 cyclists were injured, 17 on the state highway network. Six were seriously injured.

Of those injured, 71 percent were male and 83 percent were under the age of 20.

The most common type of crash involved a cyclist being hit by a vehicle during a crossing or turning manoeuvre at an intersection or driveway.

Cyclist crash types 1999–2003



The major contributing factors were:

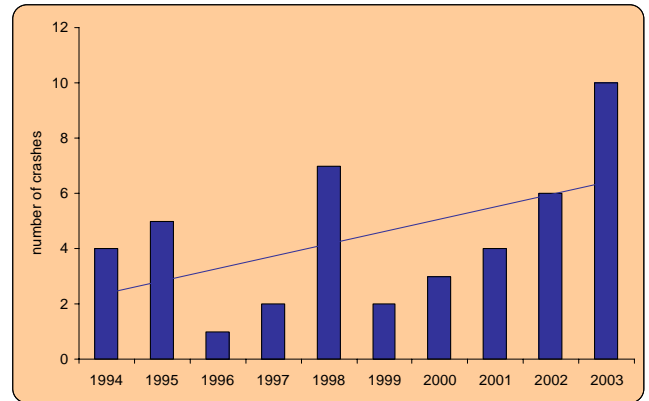
- driver failing to give way (18)
- driver not looking or seeing other party until too late (14)
- cyclist riding on a footpath (5)
- vehicle occupant opening a door without looking (5).



Pedestrians

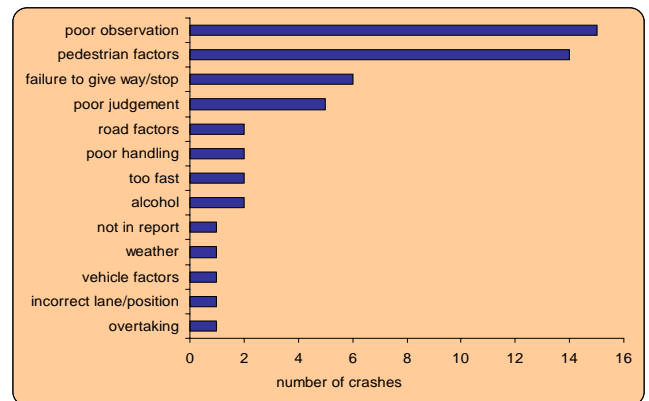
Over the past 10 years, there has been an upward trend in pedestrian casualty numbers in the Masterton District. Between 1999 and 2003, 25 pedestrians were injured with 10 of these injured in 2003 alone.

Pedestrian casualties 1994–2003



Poor observation by drivers was the major contributing factor in pedestrian injury crashes between 1999 and 2003. Twenty-three percent of crashes involved some action of a pedestrian, eg crossing the road without looking to see if a vehicle was approaching.

Contributing factors in pedestrian crashes 1999–2003



The three biggest contributing factors were:

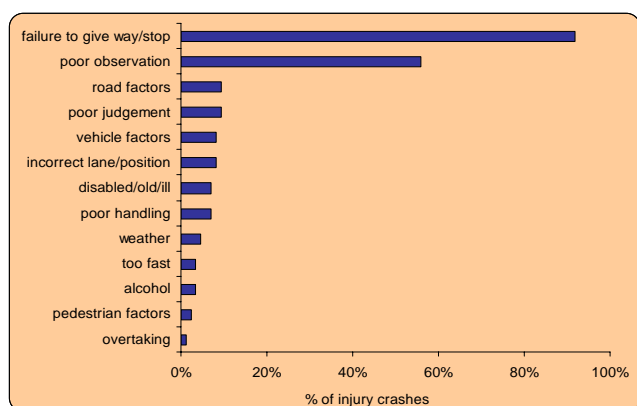
- pedestrians crossing the road heedless of traffic
- drivers failing to give way to pedestrians on crossings
- drivers not looking or seeing other party until too late.

Crossing/turning

Between 1999 and 2003, 38 percent of all urban injury crashes involved vehicles attempting a crossing or turning manoeuvre. This was significantly higher than in similar local authorities and accounted for 72 injury crashes. Forty percent of these crashes involved a cyclist.

Almost all of the crashes involved drivers failing to give way (92 percent). Poor observation featured in 56 percent of the crashes, which included failing to check properly before entering an intersection.

Contributing factors in crossing/turning crashes 1999–2003

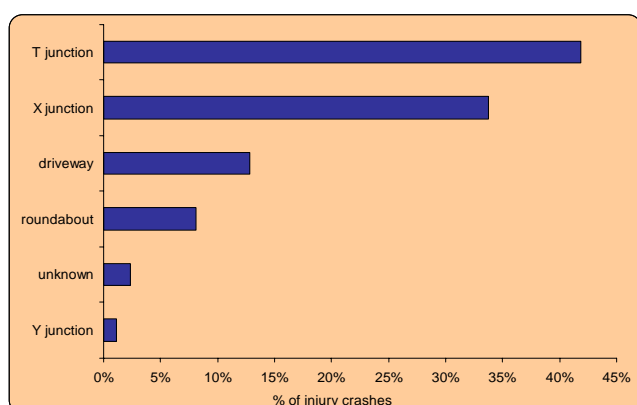


The four major contributing factors in crashes were:

- failure to give way at a Give Way sign (44)
- not checking when required to give way to traffic from another direction (37)
- failure to give way when turning into non-turning traffic (15)
- failure to stop at a Stop sign (9).

The most common types of intersections where crossing/turning crashes occurred were T junctions (42 percent) and crossroads (34 percent). Thirty-one percent of the T junction crashes occurred where there were no traffic control signs.

Intersection type of crossing/turning crashes 1999–2003

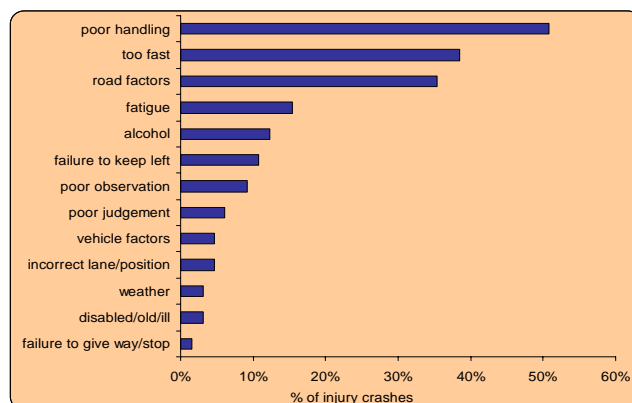


Loss of control on bends

The most common type of injury crash on rural roads in the Masterton District resulted from a driver losing control of a vehicle on a bend. Between 1999 and 2003, there were 65 occurrences of this type of crash. This amounted to 58 percent of all rural injury crashes and was significantly higher than in similar local authorities.

Major contributing factors included poor handling of the vehicle, travelling too fast for the conditions, and the road surface being slippery due to rain, ice or roadworks.

Contributing factors in loss of control crashes 1999–2003



Drivers involved were typically males (78 percent) and under 27 years of age (52 percent). Twenty-seven percent of drivers held learner or restricted licences. Two thirds were from the Wairarapa District. Over half of the crashes occurred between 6 pm Friday and 6 am Monday.

Loss of control crashes can result in either a head-on collision with another vehicle or a vehicle leaving the road and colliding with a roadside object which can increase the severity of a crash. The most commonly hit objects in loss of control crashes in the rural Masterton District included fences (27 percent), cliffs or banks (18 percent), head-on with other vehicles (18 percent) and trees (16 percent).

Speed

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

Speed was a factor in 46 injury crashes in the Masterton District between 1999 and 2003. This comprised 15 percent of all injury crashes.



Alcohol

Drivers with a blood alcohol level over the legal limit (80 mg per 100 ml) are three times more likely to be involved in a crash than a sober driver.

Between 1999 and 2003, alcohol was a factor in 32 injury crashes in the Masterton District, comprising seven percent of all injury crashes.

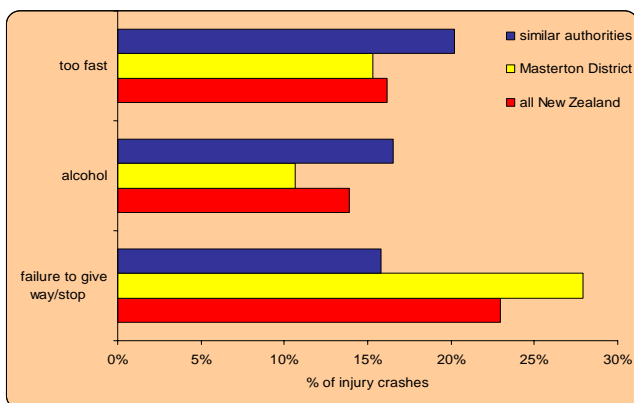


Failure to give way

Failure to give way at intersections is the third largest cause of death and injury crashes on New Zealand roads.

Between 1999 and 2003, there were 84 injury crashes in the Masterton District involving a driver failing to give way. This amounted to 20 percent of all injury crashes and was significantly more than for other similar authorities and for New Zealand as a whole.

National issues 1999–2003



Restraints

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

Between 1999 and 2003, there were 21 fatalities on Masterton District roads. Of those who died, at least two would have been saved if they had been wearing a restraint.

Results from a 2003 survey showed that 90 percent of front seat adults and 76 percent of rear seat passengers in the Masterton District were wearing safety belts. This is a lower compliance rate than the New Zealand average.

Contacts

Land Transport Safety Authority

Regional Manager

Demetra Kennedy

See LTSA staff contact details at bottom of page

Road Safety Co-ordinator

Brian Barnes

c/- Masterton District Council

P O Box 444

Masterton

Phone 06 378 9666

Masterton

Roading Manager

Hamish Pringle

PO Box 444

Masterton

Phone 06 378 9666

New Zealand Police

Road Policing Manger

Wellington Central

PO Box 693

Wellington

Phone 04 381 2000

Wellington Regional Office
Master Builders House
234–242 Wakefield Street
PO Box 27 249, Wellington
Phone 04 931 8900, Fax 04 931 8929

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