

# road safety issues

**T**he 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 New Plymouth District.

The number of casualties was higher in 2003 than the previous year. This was reflected in the two percent increase in the number of road crashes recorded. In 2003, there were two less fatalities than in the previous year but 22 more serious casualties. Road users in the 15 to 19 age group made up 21 percent of all casualties.

In the 1999–2003 period, three quarters of all road-user casualties were occupants of cars and vans. The number of cyclist and pedestrian casualties remained high. Motorcyclist casualties increased, making up nine percent of all road-user casualties in this period.

Between 1999 and 2003, 54 percent of all injury crashes in the district occurred on urban roads, particularly at intersections. Intersection crashes increased by 20 percent in the past year. On rural roads, a large number of injury crashes occurred when drivers lost control of their vehicle on a bend in the road. The estimated social cost of crashes in the New Plymouth District for 2003 was \$60.9 million, an increase of \$4.2 million on the previous year.

Both local and national road safety issues are identified below. The specific concerns for the New Plymouth District are outlined in detail overleaf.

## Major road safety issues

### New Plymouth District

- Intersections
- Loss of control
- Motorcyclists
- Younger road users

### Nationally

- Speed
- Alcohol
- Failure to give way
- Restraints



## 2003 road trauma for New Plymouth District



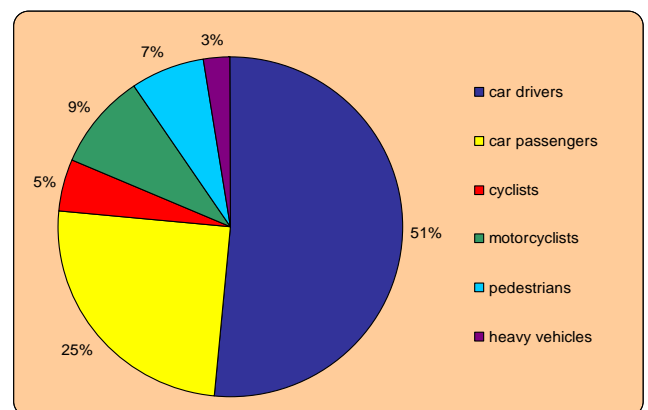
Deaths	2
Serious casualties	53
Minor casualties	241



Fatal crashes	2
Serious injury crashes	45
Minor injury crashes	165
Non-injury crashes	348

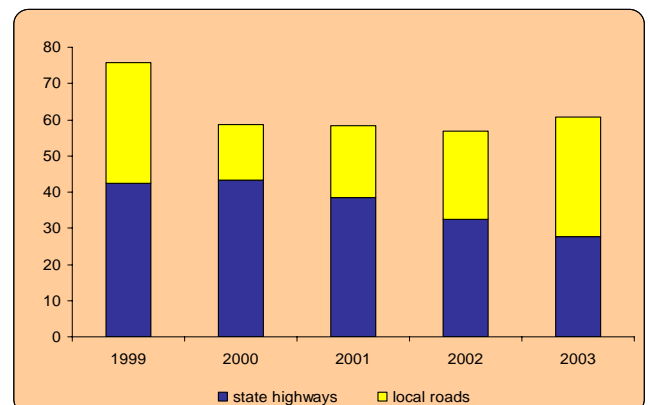
## Road casualties 1999–2003

### 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.



## Intersections

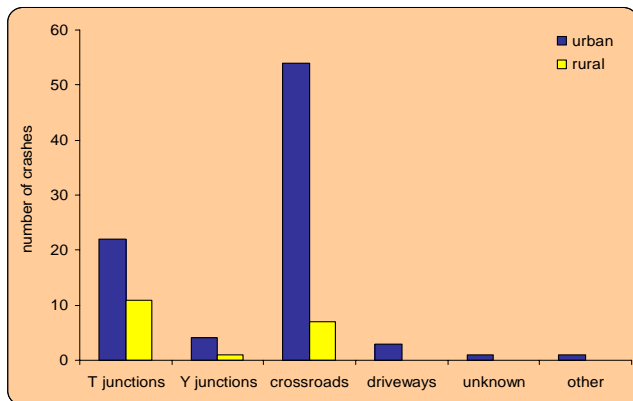
Failure to give way is one of the four major factors contributing to road crashes in New Zealand. In the New Plymouth District, failure to give way was also a major cause of concern.

There were 261 intersection crashes in 2003 in the New Plymouth District resulting in 17 serious, 87 minor injury crashes and 157 non-injury crashes.

Crashes at intersections made up 61 percent of all injury crashes on urban roads over the five-year period. This was approximately 10 percent higher than national levels.

In 2003, 63 percent of all urban crashes in the New Plymouth District occurred at intersections. On rural roads, the proportion of injury crashes occurring at intersections decreased from 34 percent in 2002 to 24 percent in 2003. Between 1999 and 2002, there was a steady annual increase in rural intersection crashes.

### Crashes by intersection type 2003



In 2003, 59 percent of injury crashes at intersections involved collisions between vehicles making crossing or turning movements. A further 16 percent were involved in a rear-end collision. Of those vehicles crossing or turning, 63 percent failed to give way or stop at a controlled intersection and 18 percent did not stop at traffic lights. Forty-nine percent of drivers exhibited poor observation skills.



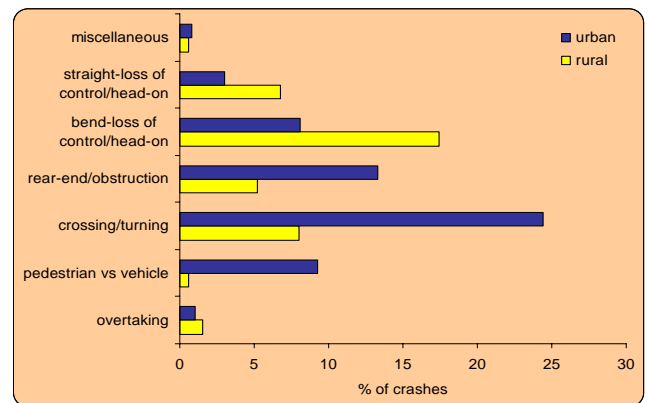
## Loss of control

Poor handling, driving too fast for the conditions, poor observation and alcohol were the main contributing factors involved in loss of control crashes.

Between 1999 and 2003 in the New Plymouth District, 318 injury crashes occurred as a result of road users losing control of their vehicles. This equates to 35 percent of all injury crashes during that period.

Nineteen percent of all urban injury crashes occurred as a result of loss of control. On rural roads, 60 percent of all injury crashes occurred as a result of road users losing control of their vehicles. For 2003, the majority (43 percent) of rural loss of control crashes took place on bends in the road. This was a significant increase of 12 percent from 2002.

### Crash movement types 1999–2003



During 2003, there were 72 loss of control injury crashes in the New Plymouth District, accounting for 34 percent of all injury crashes in the district. Thirty-eight crashes occurred on urban local roads and a further 34 on rural local roads. Of the urban crashes, 33 took place on bends and five on straight sections of roads. The main contributing factors to these crashes were people driving too fast, poor handling and alcohol.

Of the 34 loss of control injury crashes on rural roads, 27 occurred on bends and seven on straight roads.

Of all the road users injured as a result of loss of control crashes during 2003, one third were between the ages of 15 and 19. Apart from the injury crashes, there were 93 non-injury crashes reported as a result of loss of control in the New Plymouth District during 2003.

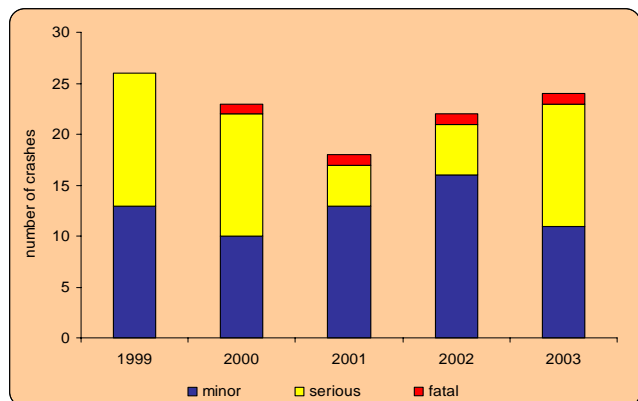
Loss of control crashes result from a combination of a number of factors such as speed, alcohol and young road users.



## Motorcyclists

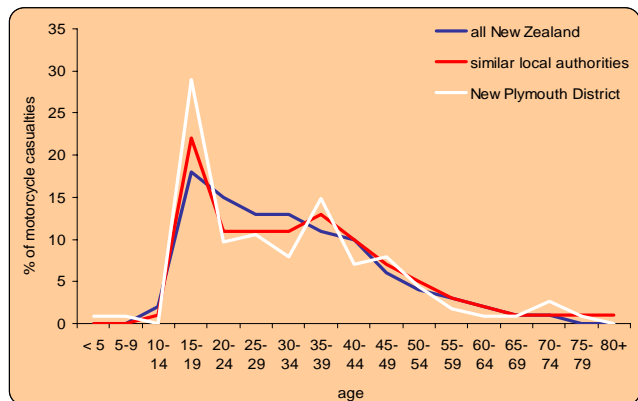
The last two years have seen a steady increase in the number of motorcyclist casualties in the New Plymouth District. When compared with similar authorities and the New Zealand average, local figures were almost four percent higher. Motorcyclist casualties contributed to nine percent of all road casualties in the New Plymouth District.

### Motorcyclist crashes by severity of injury



Crash data for the last five years shows a predominance of casualties in the 15 to 19 year age group. In the New Plymouth District, motorcyclist casualties in this age group represented 28 percent of all motorcyclist casualties during the 1999–2003 period. This was six percent higher than for similar authorities and 10 percent higher than the New Zealand average. Of the 24 motorcycle injury crashes during 2003, 38 percent happened as a result of vehicles and motorcyclists turning or crossing into each other. Factors relating to 29 percent of motorcyclists' loss of control crashes included alcohol, speed, poor observation or a combination of these factors.

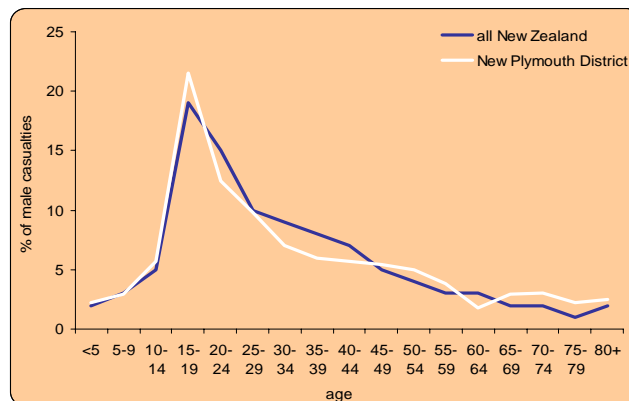
### Age of motorcyclist casualties 1999–2003



## Younger road users

Younger road users, especially those in the 15 to 19 year age group, continue to have the highest number of casualties. This is not only applicable in the New Plymouth District, but in New Zealand as a whole. However, over the last five years, the casualty numbers of this particular age group was on average higher than in similar local authorities and the New Zealand average.

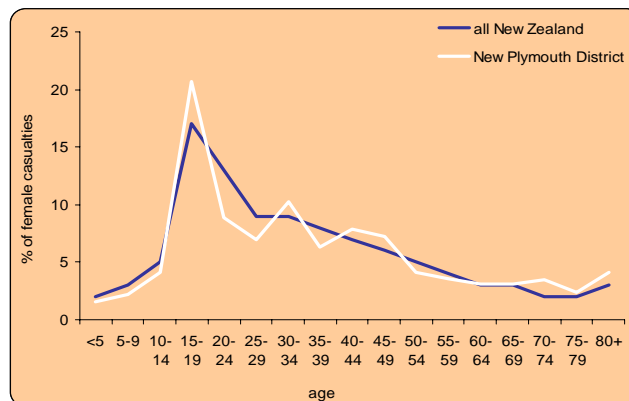
### Age of male casualties 1999–2003

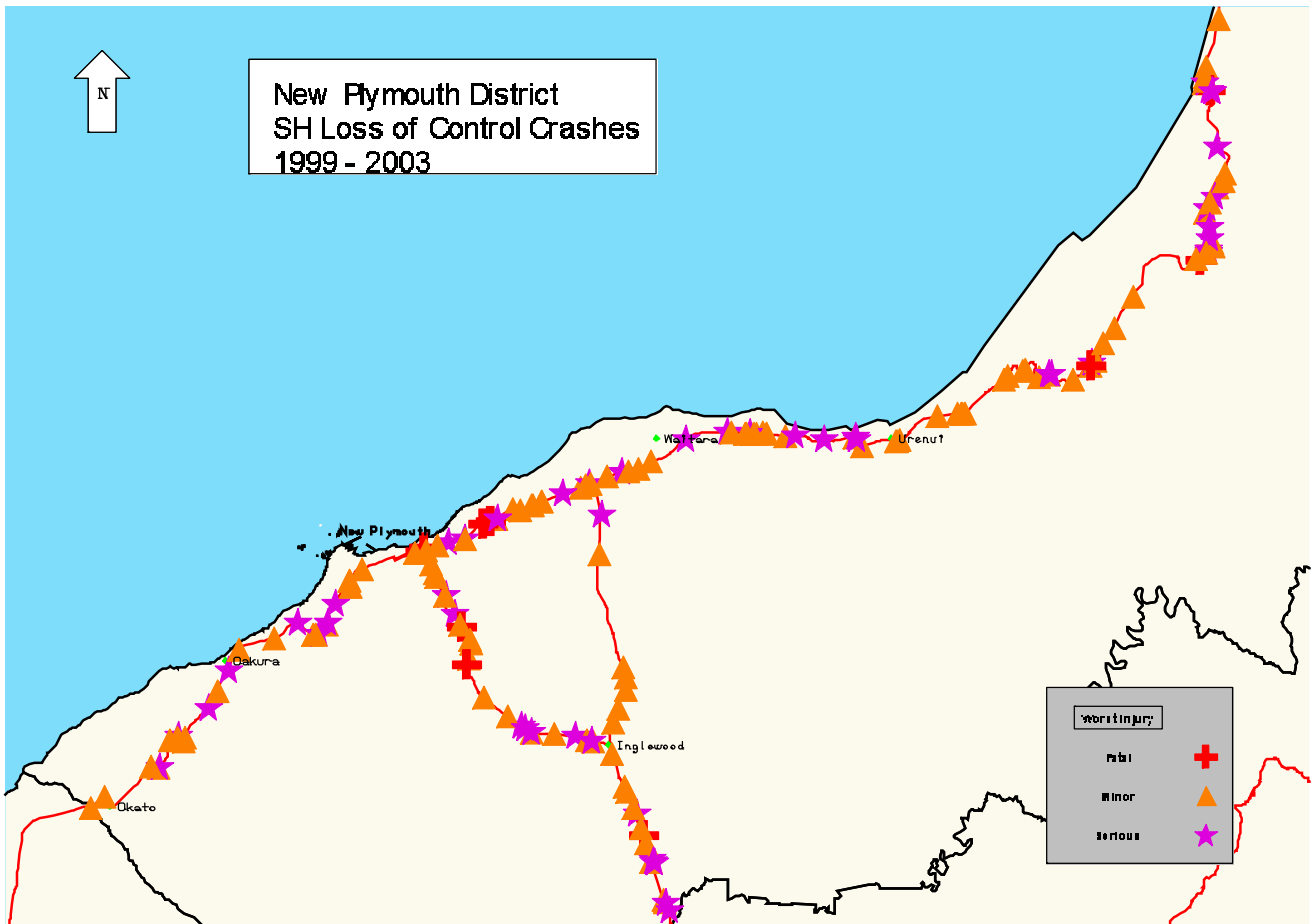


When considering all injury-related crashes during 2003 in the New Plymouth District, road users in the 15 to 19 year age group were involved in 26 percent of crashes. Male drivers in the 15 to 19 year age group made up 11 percent of all casualties and females, eight percent. Female passengers injured in crashes made up around six percent of the total casualties.

Seventy-two of the road users in the 15 to 19 year old age group involved in injury crashes during 2003 were on either a learner or restricted licence. Poor observation by drivers holding a learner or restricted licence was the main contributing factor leading to injury crashes in the New Plymouth District. Thirty percent of these drivers failed to give way or stop. The high casualty rate for this age group is reflective of a combination of inexperience, speed and alcohol.

### Age of female casualties 1999–2003





## Contacts

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