

road safety issues

Northland state highways

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 and be a resource to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries on Northland state highways.

Reported crashes for the period 2000–2004.

Highway	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Non-injury
SH 1	59	130	380	1,056
SH 10	9	43	83	204
SH 11	2	16	37	107
SH 12	16	42	109	257
SH 14	5	17	46	137
SH 15A	1	0	1	4

Even though the overall crash numbers in 2004 were down very slightly on those of 2003, the number of open road state highway crashes in Northland increased.

On a more positive note, the number of fatal crashes on Northland state highways in 2004 was the lowest recorded in the last 10 years. Urban state highway crashes also showed a reduction.

The crash reporting rate has improved in Northland over the last few years, from 41 percent in 1999 to 64 percent in 2005.

Major road safety issues

Northland state highways

Crashes at bends

Speed

Road factors

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2004 road trauma for Northland state highways



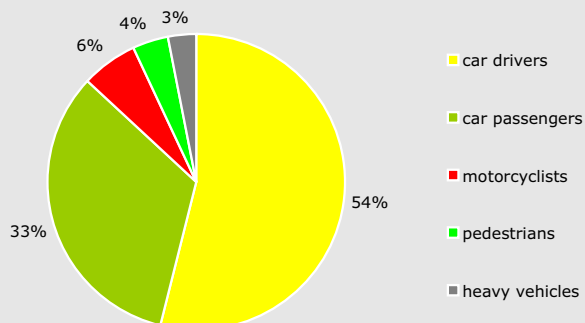
Deaths	20
Serious casualties	74
Minor casualties	281



Fatal crashes	13
Serious injury crashes	55
Minor injury crashes	185
Non-injury crashes	394

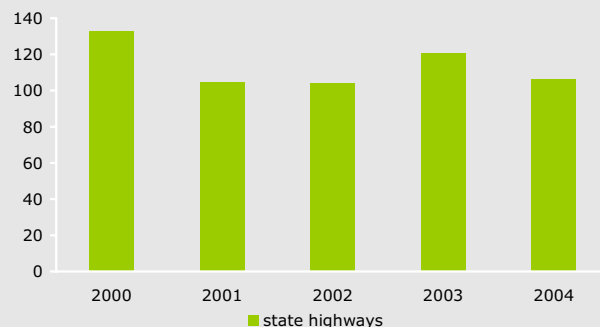
Fatal and serious casualties

User type 2000–2004



Estimated social cost of crashes*

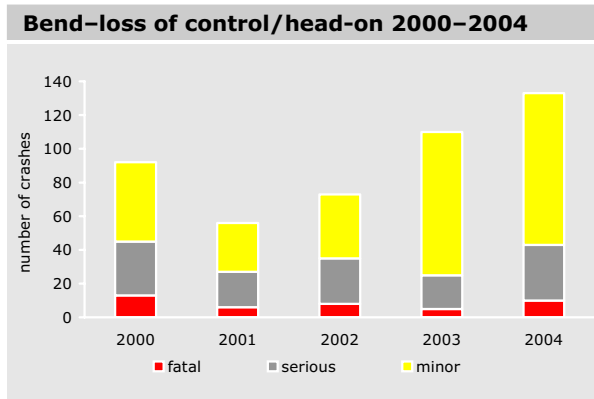
Social cost (\$ million)



*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.

Crashes at bends

When compared with all injury crashes on New Zealand's state highways, the number of loss of control and head-on crashes on the Northland state highway network are significantly over-represented. This applies to both urban and rural highways. There has been a clear increase in the number of these crashes over the last few years.



Almost a third of the 777 people injured in these crashes received fatal or serious injuries. Passengers made up 40 percent of those people injured.

The three most commonly reported contributing driver factors in these crashes were travelling too fast for the conditions, drink-driving and poor handling. The number of loss of control on bend crashes involving speed has increased significantly in the last three years (from 16 in 2002 to 58 in 2004).

Environmental conditions can also play a significant role in this type of crash. A high proportion of the crashes occurred in wet road conditions. On average, 41 percent occurred in the wet, however, in 2004 this rose to 47 percent. Night-time crashes accounted for 40 percent of the total; the average for all Northland state highway crashes is 35 percent.

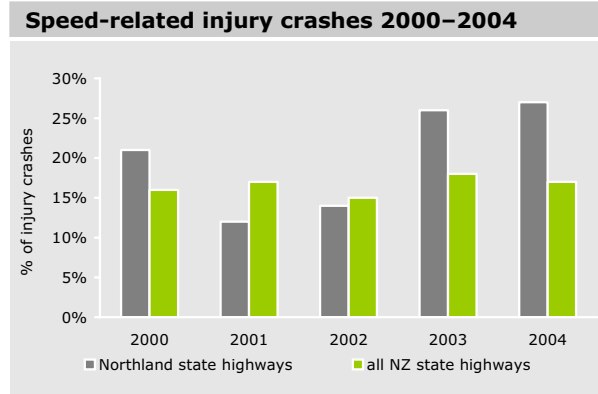
By grouping these 2000–2004 injury crashes, it is possible to identify those sections of the state highway network that have high concentrations of loss of control and head-on crashes at bends. The worst sections are:

Highway	Section	Injury crashes
SH 1	Brynderwyn	21
SH 10	Wakelin Rd – Pukewha Rd	12
SH 1	North of Hautapu Rd	9
SH 1	Akerama Rd – Ford Rd	8
SH 1	Mangapai Rd	8
SH 1	North of Portland Rd	8

The map opposite highlights all sites with five or more injury loss of control or head-on crashes at bends for the period 2000–2004.

Speed

Both the number and proportion of speed-related injury crashes has increased in recent years on the Northland state highway network. The graph below shows a clear increase between 2001 and 2004.



As highlighted in the previous section, there is a clear relationship between loss of control and head-on crashes on bends and travelling too fast for the conditions. Almost 80 percent of all speed-related crashes are of this type.

The vehicle speed at the time of the crash will affect the severity of injuries suffered by occupants of the vehicle, of those in other vehicles or by vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists or motorcyclists. Almost four out of every 10 people hurt in these crashes received fatal or serious injuries.

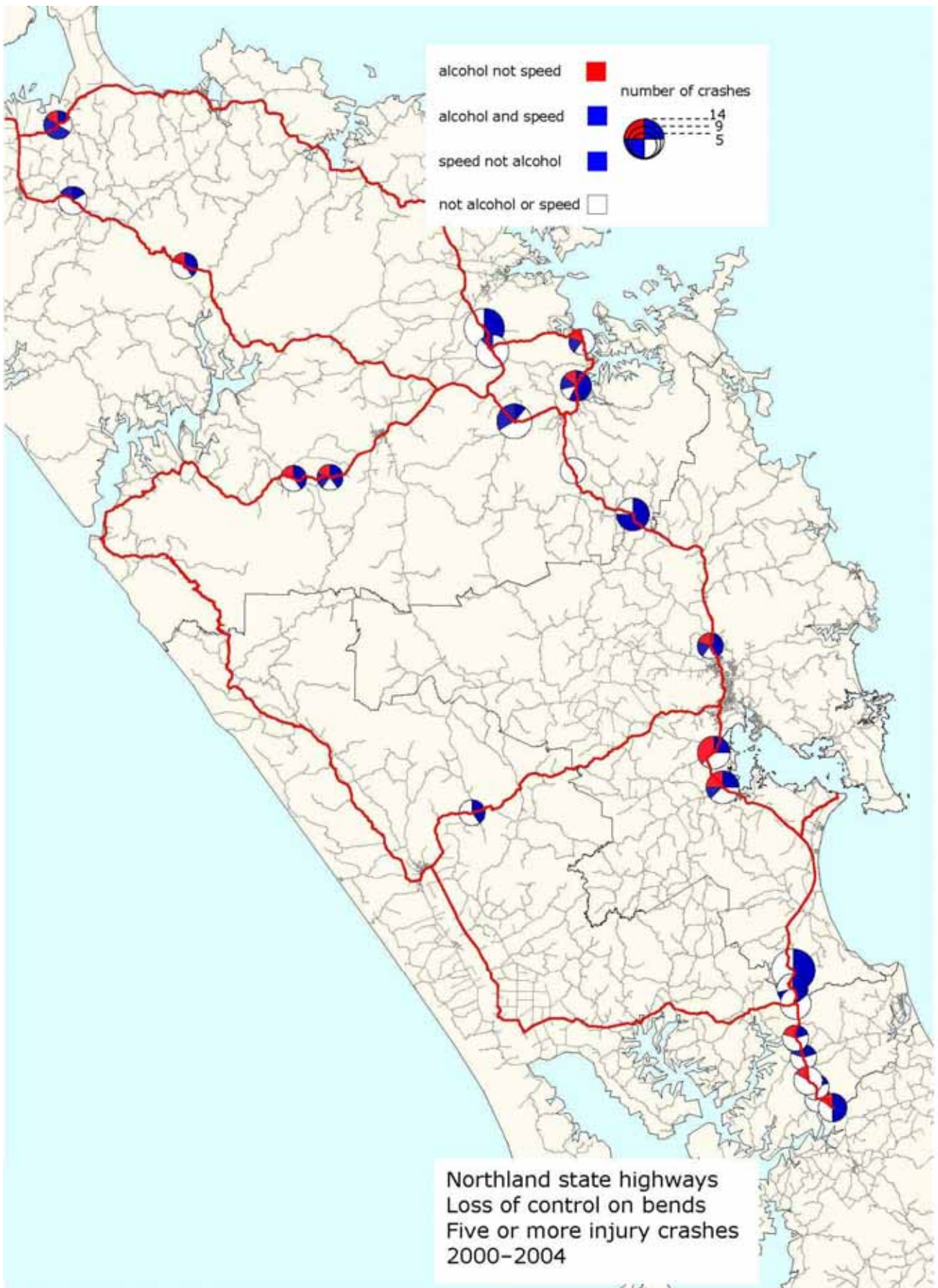
If excessive speed is combined with alcohol, the potential for error is even higher. A third of the 211 speed-related injury crashes on the highways also involved alcohol.

Specific information relating to speed-related crashes on the state highway network is shown below:

Crash characteristic	Crashes
Single vehicle	70%
Male drivers at fault	62%
Night-time	49%
Wet road	45%
Weekend	45%

In the 2004 national road safety public attitude survey, 34 percent of Northland drivers said they 'enjoy driving fast on the open road'. In Northland, five percent of drivers exceed 110 km/h on the open road and 13 percent exceed 60 km/h in urban areas.

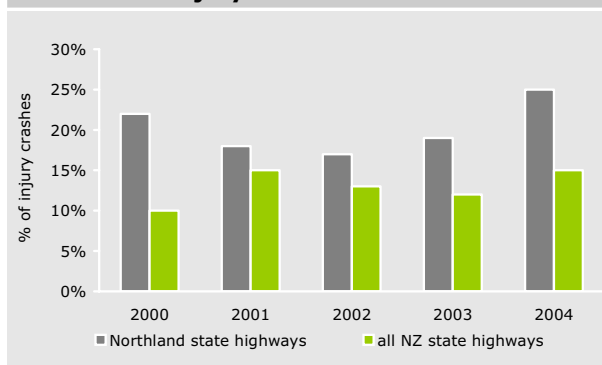
Although drink-driving is becoming an unacceptable practice within the community, there still seems to be a tolerance towards speeding. Community recognition that speed is a major contributor to the high severity of injuries in the region should result in lower average speeds and make the speeding drivers more obvious.



Road factors

Road factors continue to be reported as a contributing factor in a high proportion of crashes on Northland's state highway network (especially on rural state highways). Road factors are quoted in 17 percent of national rural state highway statistics while in Northland the figure is 23 percent (2000–2004). Both the number and proportion reported in 2004 was the highest in the last five years.

Road factor injury crashes 2000–2004



A slippery road surface was the most common road factor recorded. Two thirds of the 202 road factor injury crashes occurred when the road was wet. In 2004, there was an increase in the number of crashes occurring where there was deep loose metal and the road was under construction or maintenance (14 injury crashes included both or either of these factors).

Road environment

The Land Transport New Zealand crash reduction monitoring database shows that works implemented as a result of state highway crash reduction studies have reduced crashes by 56 percent at the study locations in the Northland Region. Safety improvements have been fully implemented at over three quarters of the 197 state highway crash locations in the region.

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes on Northland's state highways, please refer to the 2000 to 2004 road safety data report, the Land Transport New Zealand crash analysis system or contact the office below right.

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