

# road safety issues

July 2003

The Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 1998–2002 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 the Queenstown Lakes District.

Road crashes in the Queenstown Lakes District over the five-year period have killed 21 people and injured more than 500. There were over 900 reported non-injury crashes over the same period.

In 2001 the crash reporting rate did not increase in the Queenstown Lakes District as much as in other areas in Otago. In 2002, however, the number of reported injury crashes in the district increased by nearly 50 percent. Comparisons with hospital admission data show that this is not due to a sudden increase in crash numbers but reflects the better and more accurate reporting of the level of injuries in those crashes. While this helps to identify problem areas in the district it does mean that it is more difficult to report on trends over the last few years.

In the Queenstown Lakes District last year more people were reported injured in car crashes than at any point over the last 20 years. There were twice as many injury crashes on the open road than in urban areas of the district.

## Major road safety issues

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

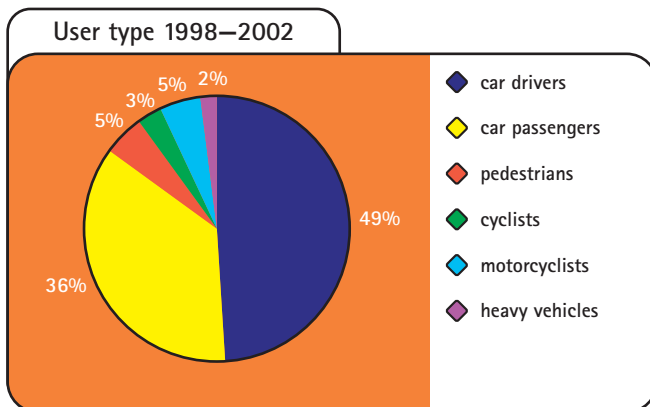
Failure to give way

Restraints

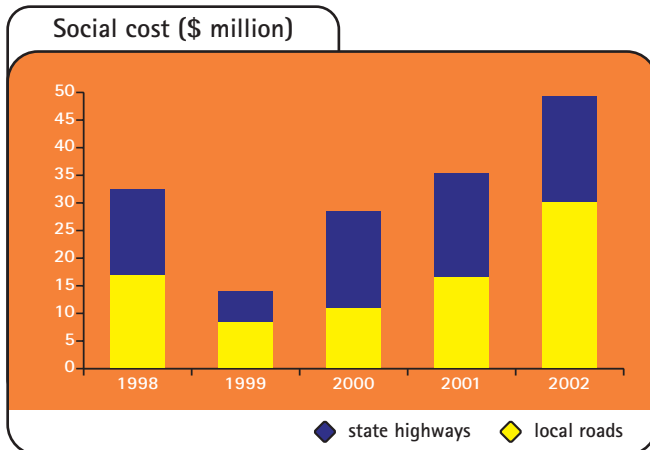
## 2002 road trauma for Queenstown Lakes District

Deaths	4
Serious casualties	49
Minor casualties	109
<hr/>	
Fatal crashes	3
Serious injury crashes	39
Minor-injury crashes	57
Non-injury crashes	223

## Road casualties 1998–2002



## Estimated social cost of crashes\*

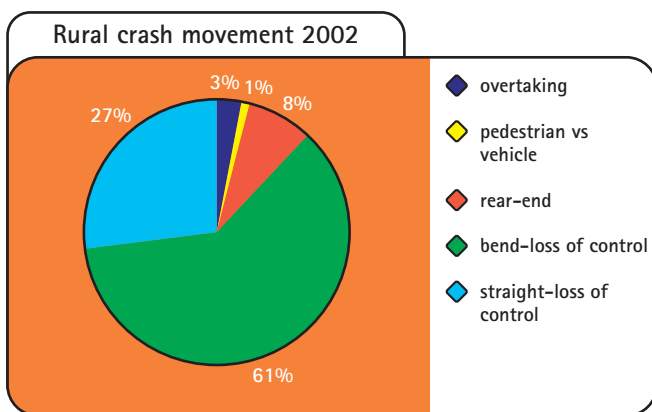


\* The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs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

## Rural crashes

Over two thirds of injury crashes that take place in the Queenstown Lakes District occur on the open road, with increased severity of the crashes being a result. The majority of these crashes are single vehicles losing control and leaving the road. 2001 was a particularly bad year for crashes in winter conditions, with a quarter of all rural crashes taking place on icy roads. 2002 was quite mild in comparison with only five injury crashes being reported where ice played a factor.

Three people died, 39 received serious injuries and 78 people received minor injuries on rural roads in the district last year. All three fatalities were in single vehicle crashes. The graph below shows the types of rural crashes that occurred in 2002.



Most of the rural crashes last year took place on dry roads in daytime conditions. Alcohol played a part in only five crashes. Fatigue is increasingly being reported as a factor in rural crashes in the district. While it is still lower than speed and alcohol involvement the combination of any of these three can become a problem. Fatigue is often difficult to prove after the event therefore the LTSA believes that this figure is greatly under-reported.

### Recommended actions

- Support campaigns on adjusting speed for different road and weather conditions and on the need to be fully alert when driving.
- Continue enforcement of and education on the issues of speed and alcohol to reduce crash numbers. These issues both play a part in loss of control type crashes.

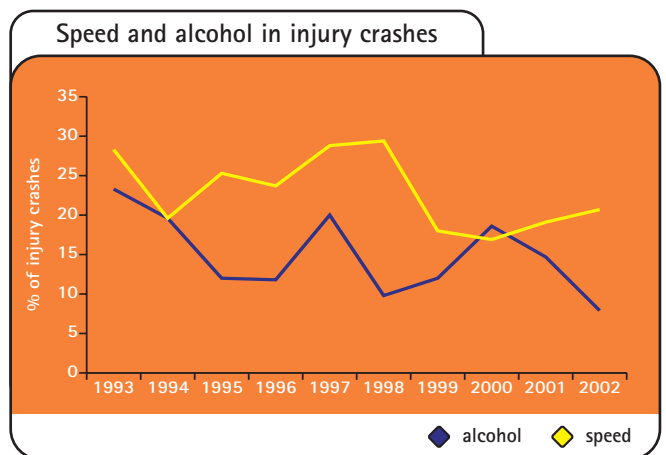


## Speed and alcohol

The number of injury crashes in the Queenstown Lakes District where alcohol was a factor fell slightly in 2002. As a proportion of all crashes the reduction was significant.

In urban areas the proportion of injury crashes involving alcohol has fallen each year since 1998 when over 25 percent of crashes had alcohol as a factor. In 2002 this had fallen to 10 percent. While the reduction is obviously good to see, this still means that one in 10 drivers crashing on Queenstown Lakes District urban roads is affected by alcohol.

In rural areas the rate of alcohol involvement is less than half that found nationally and has fallen by over 50 percent since a five-year high in 2000. The graph below shows the proportion of all injury crashes in the district that have involved alcohol over the last 10 years.



The graph above also plots the level of speed involvement in those crashes. There were only two urban crashes last year where excess speed was a factor. These crashes tend to occur on faster rural roads. On rural roads last year 25 percent of injury crashes involved vehicles travelling too fast for the conditions. Quite often this factor is associated with winter road conditions but that wasn't the case in 2002. The majority of these crashes took place on dry roads in fine conditions.

### Recommended actions

- Continue to support drink-driving strategic enforcement campaigns as well as 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.

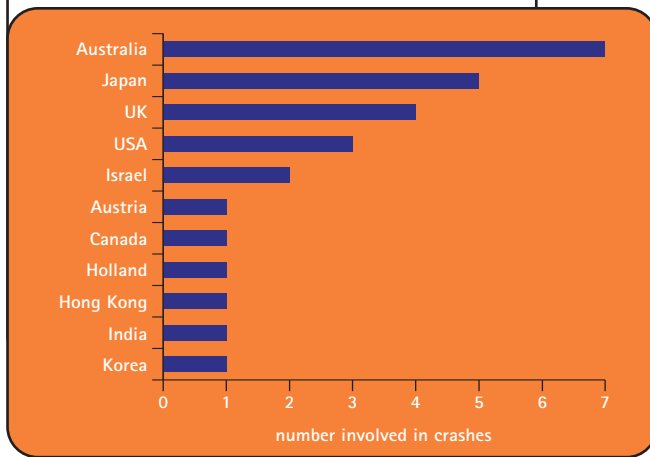


## Overseas drivers

There has been much discussion about the problem of overseas drivers on roads in the district. In 2002 the proportion of drivers with overseas licences involved in injury crashes reached a new high – 22 percent. This number is likely to increase as more tourists are encouraged to visit New Zealand.

The majority of crashes involving drivers from overseas were no different from those involving locals: failing to give way in urban areas and losing control on rural roads. Crashes caused by an overseas driver being on the wrong side of the road are thankfully rare – last year there were three of these crashes in the district. Fatigue and inattention appear to be more of a problem than the fact that some of these people are used to driving on the other side of the road.

Home location of overseas drivers 2002



The graph shows where overseas drivers who were involved in crashes last year came from. This graph is of all drivers, not just those at fault. It is interesting to note that the top three groups of people all drive on the same side of the road as we do, pointing to how difficult it is to treat overseas drivers as one group.

Because of growing concerns about this group of road users, the LTSA is embarking on a project to identify ways of improving the delivery of road safety information to overseas tourist drivers. It will also look at whether current road safety information is meeting the needs of this group. A pilot study to be undertaken as part of this project is likely to be carried out in this region because of the presence of a large number of tourist drivers.

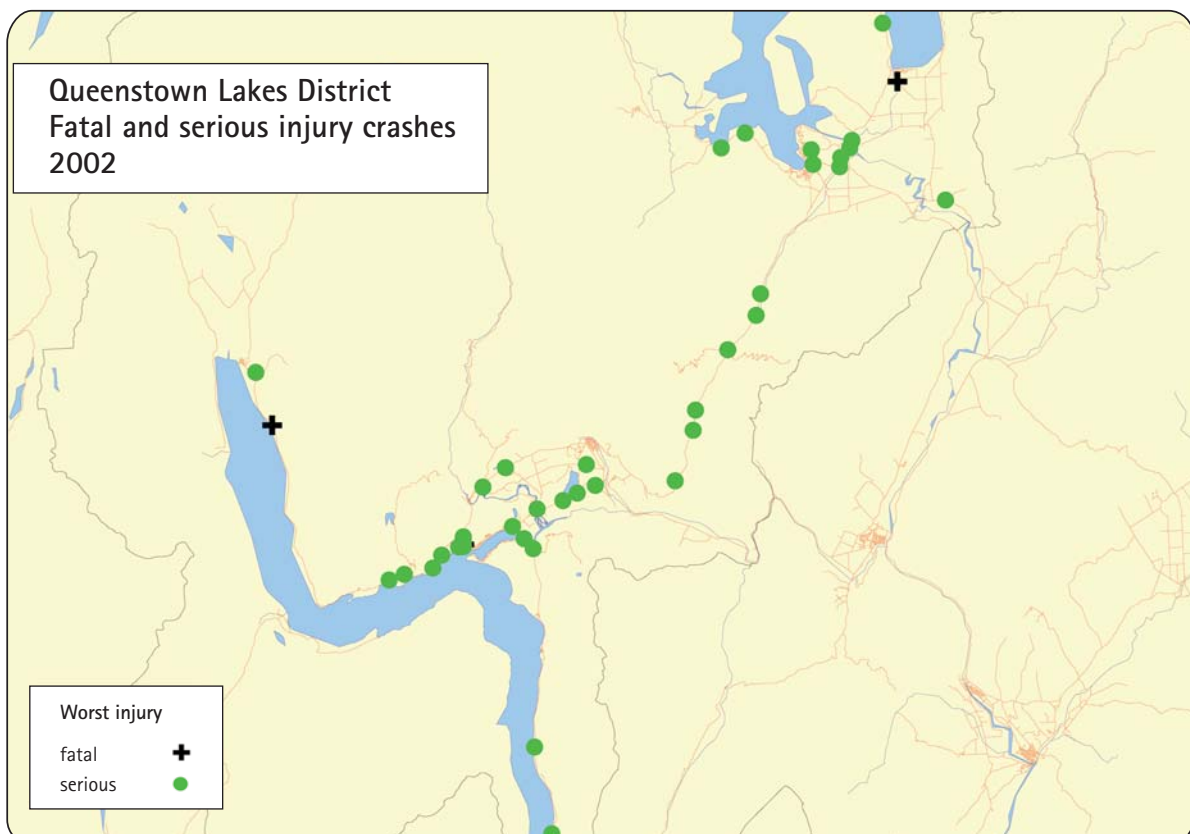
## Other issues

The number of both pedestrians and cyclists injured on the road fell last year. One pedestrian was, however, killed in the centre of Queenstown and five others injured. Two cyclists were also injured in 2002 in the district.

As in previous years, the age of road users injured in the Queenstown Lakes District follows a different pattern from the rest of the country. Those under the age of 35 are much more likely to appear in the crash statistics than those who are older.

Over the last five years the most common months for crashes were July and August, followed by December. Crashes do appear to be more seasonal events in the area than elsewhere in New Zealand which is perhaps not surprising considering the alpine environment.

Queenstown Lakes District Fatal and serious injury crashes 2002



# New Zealand Road Safety Programme

Reducing road trauma involves a multi-pronged approach, which includes education, engineering and enforcement. The New Zealand Road Safety Programme (NZRSP) is the primary planning and funding programme for road safety activity undertaken by the New Zealand Police, LTSA and community groups. Transfund New Zealand provides funding to Transit New Zealand and local authorities for roading projects through its National Land Transport Programme.

## Community Road Safety Programme

Many community groups in the south have good road safety ideas to help reduce road trauma, but are often unsure of where to go for advice and funding to make these ideas a reality.

This is where the Community Road Safety Programme (CRSP) can assist. It provides funding, subject to certain criteria being met, to allow community groups to develop and run initiatives to deal with local road safety issues, in ways that meet the needs of their community.

As a guide some of the following activities could qualify for funding:

- An activity meeting a clearly identified local road safety issue.
- Training sessions, seminars, public meetings.
- Brochures supporting a road safety activity.
- Localised advertising campaigns.
- Fees for contracting providers.
- Road safety displays.
- Small-scale survey and information gathering.

The community advisor, road safety, at the local district or city council will be able to advise if a safety idea might qualify for CRSP assistance.

To receive a CRSP information pack contact the LTSA on the number below or alternatively email [crsp@ltsa.govt.nz](mailto:crsp@ltsa.govt.nz) for an electronic copy.

## Road policing

Police enforcement hours to support community projects are now allocated to police community services hours rather than to individual projects. The delivery of these hours to support community initiatives will need to be negotiated by the community advisor, road safety.

In 2003/2004 the Police are funded to deliver 7,330 hours of road policing in the Queenstown Lakes District as follows:

Project	Police hours
Strategic – alcohol/drugs, speed, restraints and visible road safety enforcement	6,020
Traffic management, including crash attendance, incidents, emergencies and events	900
School road safety education	300
Police community services	110

## Road environment

The Queenstown Lakes District has an allocation for minor safety projects on local roads in Transfund New Zealand's National Land Transport Programme 2003–2004.

## Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes in the Queenstown Lakes District, please refer to the 1998 to 2002 Road Safety Report or the Land Transport Safety Authority Crash Analysis System (CAS), or contact the authorities listed below:

### Contacts

Land Transport Safety Authority

Regional Manager  
John Doesburg  
Phone 03 477 7789

Regional Education Advisor  
Graeme Rice  
Phone 03 477 7789

Senior Road Safety Engineer  
Jeremy Byfield  
Phone 03 477 7789

Community Advisor, Road Safety  
Margaret Smith  
Phone 03 448 6979

New Zealand Police  
Inspector Dave Cliff  
Phone 03 471 4800

Dunedin Regional Office  
AA Building, Moray Place  
PO Box 5245, Dunedin  
Phone 03 477 7789, Fax 03 474 1434  
[www.ltsa.govt.nz](http://www.ltsa.govt.nz)

LAND  
transport safety  
AUTHORITY