

briefing notes - road safety issues

Queenstown-Lakes District

Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2003–2007 period.

The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and be a resource to help identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in Queenstown-Lakes District.

This report is the ninth road safety report for Queenstown-Lakes District. All the material unless otherwise stated in this report applies to both local roads and to Transit New Zealand (Transit NZ) roads.

In each new report one year's data is added to a five year block and the oldest dropped so it is unlikely that the core issues would change radically from report to report.

The issues chosen for this report are drawn from either the most common crash types, those that appear over-represented when Queenstown-Lakes District is compared to similar local bodies or those with high social cost (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes mainly). We have included a brief overview of crashes in the district.

We encourage local bodies to use the free access to the Ministry of Transport's Crash Analysis System to delve deeper into the highlighted issues.

Major road safety issues

Queenstown-Lakes District

Bends

Overseas drivers

Seasonal driving

2007 road trauma

Casualties Queenstown-Lakes

Deaths	5
Serious casualties	27
Minor casualties	158

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints

Crashes Queenstown-Lakes

Fatal crashes	4
Serious injury crashes	22
Minor injury crashes	98
Non-injury crashes	194

Overview

In 2007 on local roads in Queenstown-Lakes District there were 78 injury crashes and 136 non-injury crashes. In addition there were 47 injury crashes and 59 non-injury crashes on Transit New Zealand (Transit NZ) roads, both as reported by the New Zealand Police.

The table below shows the number of injuries resulting from the 125 injury crashes, by rural or urban areas for all roads, (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

Casualties by environment 2007				
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	4	15	106	125
Urban	1	13	52	66
Total	5	28	158	191

The annual numbers of fatal and serious injury crashes in the district have fluctuated over the years 1998 to 2007. There is no obvious trend with a high of 44 in 2002 and a low of 16 in 1999 and 2006. The annual numbers of minor and non-injury crashes rose to 317 in 2004 and dropped to 293 in 2007.

Crash trends				
Year	Fatal crashes	Serious injury crashes	Minor injury crashes	Non-injury crashes
1998	7	11	32	108
1999	0	16	34	197
2000	4	18	37	184
2001	4	22	42	195
2002	3	41	59	226
2003	2	35	62	219
2004	3	27	82	235
2005	2	36	90	211
2006	0	16	93	203
2007	4	23	98	195

Injury crashes 2003 - 2007

Crash type or contributory cause 2003 to 2007	Local Road Percent of injury crashes	Transit Road Percent of injury crashes
Alcohol	12%	10%
Too fast	22%	11%
Straight—lost control crash	11%	9%
Bend—lost control crash	52%	40%
Crossing / turning crash	11%	20%
Road factors	36%	27%
Vulnerable road users (Percent of casualties)	12%	10%
1, Pedestrians	6%	4%
2, Cyclists	2%	4%
3, Motorcyclists	4%	3%

Further information about 2003 to 2007 injury and non-injury crashes on local roads:

- Worst month July
- Worst day Friday
- 26 percent on wet roads
- 33 percent at night
- 17 percent at intersections
- Social cost of crashes in 2007 was \$26.1m

Further information about 2003 to 2007 injury and non-injury crashes on Transit NZ roads

- Worst month December
- Worst day Friday
- 31 percent on wet roads
- 28 percent at night
- 31 percent at intersections
- Social cost of crashes in 2007 was \$15.8m

Crashes at bends

Between 2003 and 2007 40 percent of all crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District occurred at bends. These crashes resulted in 8 fatalities, 104 serious injuries and 400 minor injuries.

There were more reported injury and non-injury crashes at bends in 2007 than in any of the previous four years. In the last five years the annual numbers of fatal and serious crashes have reduced and the minor and non-injury crashes have increased .

Crashes at bends 2003 to 2007				
Crash year	Fatal crashes	Serious crashes	Minor crashes	Non-injury crashes
2003	1	20	32	56
2004	1	20	41	79
2005	1	20	52	60
2006	0	9	52	64
2007	3	13	60	71
Total	6	82	237	330

Most crashes at bends involved a driver losing control of their vehicle and either running off the road or colliding with another vehicle.

After drivers lose control their vehicles often crash into roadside hazards such as ditches, banks, poles or trees. Hitting these objects can result in a relatively minor off-road event turning into something far more serious.

The three most common roadside hazards struck in injury crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District were upright banks (91), over banks (43) and ditches (40) from a total of 315 objects struck.

Main characteristics of injury crashes at bends	
Crash characteristic	Percentage of crashes
Single vehicle	70%
Alcohol	13%
Excessive speed for the conditions	25%
Road factors	45%
Poor handling	36%
Rural road	73%
Wet road	45%
Night time	37%

Further information about injury crashes on bends (2003 to 2007) on local roads in Queenstown-Lakes District :

- 6 deaths, 77 serious injuries and 255 minor injuries
- 63 percent of at fault drivers were male
- Most common crash type "Lost control turning right"
- Most common age group 30-39 years
- 13 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- Worst month July
- Worst day of week Friday
- Worst time period 3 pm - 6 pm

Further information about injury crashes on bends (2003 to 2007) on Transit NZ roads in Queenstown-Lakes District:

- 2 deaths, 27 serious injuries and 145 minor injuries
- 66 percent of at fault drivers were male
- Most common crash type "Lost control turning right"
- Most common age group 20-24 years
- 13 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- Worst month June, December
- Worst day of week Monday
- Worst time period 3 pm - 6 pm

Over two thirds of the crashes at bends in Queenstown-Lakes District were single vehicle lost control crashes on rural roads. About two thirds of the drivers were males.

Seasonal driving issues

The seasonal variation in weather conditions requires adjustments in driving styles to accommodate the different conditions. Other traffic patterns, e.g. tourism can also affect the safety patterns in an area.

In Queenstown-Lakes District the distribution of crashes throughout the year shows peak crash numbers in June, July, August, (mid winter), and in December and January, (mid summer).

Crashes 2003 to 2007			
Crash month	Fatal and injury crashes	Non-injury crashes	Total crashes
January	51	109	160
February	44	80	124
March	45	90	135
April	41	67	108
May	36	55	91
June	61	103	164
July	75	136	211
August	40	115	155
September	35	66	101
October	40	52	92
November	42	88	130
December	63	102	165
Total	573	1063	1636

The crashes in the two periods resulted in eight fatalities, 82 serious injuries and 367 minor injuries.

In Queenstown-Lakes District 30 percent of the injury and 33 percent of the non-injury crashes were in the mid winter period, which is 25 percent of the year. The mid summer period (17 percent of the year) had 20 percent of both the injury and non-injury crashes.

In these two periods 68 percent of the crashes were on local roads and 62 percent were multi-vehicle collisions. The two most common crash types were Lost control on a bend and Rear end/collision with obstruction crashes.

22 percent of the at fault drivers were on an overseas licence and 13 percent were on a learner or restricted licence.

Seasonal injury crashes 2003 to 2007

Crash type or contributory cause 2003 - 2007	Mid winter Percent of injury crashes	Mid summer Percent of injury crashes
Alcohol	8%	12%
Too fast	21%	21%
Poor observation	19%	39%
Bend - lost control	61%	34%
Rear end / obstruction	9%	18%
Road factors	61%	21%
Casualties (percent of casualties)		
Drivers	58%	52%
Passengers	37%	27%
Motorcyclists	1%	6%
Cyclists	1%	4%
Pedestrians	4%	10%

Further information on 2003 to 2007 injury and non-injury crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District in the mid winter period :

- Worst day Friday
- Worst time period 3 pm - 6 pm
- 44 percent on wet roads
- 40 percent at night
- 43 percent on urban local roads
- 21 percent on rural state highways

Further information on 2003 to 2007 injury and non-injury crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District in the mid summer period :

- Worst day Friday
- Worst time period 3 pm - 6 pm
- 19 percent on wet roads
- 19 percent at night
- 44 percent on urban local roads
- 23 percent on rural state highways

Overseas drivers

In Queenstown-Lakes District between 2003 and 2007 there were 163 injury crashes that involved overseas drivers. These crashes resulted in 6 fatalities, 41 serious injuries and 235 minor injuries.

These drivers include both tourists and New Zealand residents driving on an overseas licence.

Over the last five years, the annual number of reported injury crashes in the district involving overseas drivers has generally increased. This is primarily a result of increasing numbers of minor injury crashes.

Injuries in crashes involving overseas drivers

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Fatal	0	3	0	0	1
Serious	8	6	5	7	6
Minor	19	24	18	31	35
Total	27	33	23	38	42

In Queenstown-Lakes District, Lost control accounted for 49 percent of all crashes involving overseas drivers. Three quarters of these were on bends. The crash factors most often reported in crashes with overseas drivers were Poor observation, Poor handling, and Poor judgement.

Males drivers of all ages made up 63 percent of at fault drivers in these crashes.

The home locations of the overseas drivers were

South America	8
Australia	13
Europe	28
North America	14
Asia	10
United kingdom	31

Further information about the 163 injury crashes involving overseas drivers in Queenstown-Lakes District 2003 to 2007:

- The most common crash type was Loss of control
- 28 percent at intersections
- 15 percent at night
- 32 percent in wet or icy conditions
- Worst month July
- Worst day of week Friday
- Worst times midday - 6 pm

National issues

This section contains some brief information on the key national road safety issues as measured in Queenstown-Lakes District. They may have been covered elsewhere in this document or not be a specific issue.

Speed

In Queenstown-Lakes District, "Too fast" was recorded in 94 fatal and injury crashes in the district in the last five years resulting in 2 deaths and 40 injuries. Speed as a factor in crashes is increasing in the district.

80 percent of all speed-related crashes were Lost control on bends. Poor handling was the other driver factor most often associated with speed in injury crashes.

78 percent of at fault drivers in these injury crashes were males. The most common ages of these drivers were between the ages of 15 to 24 years .

Alcohol

In Queenstown-Lakes District, alcohol was involved in 57 injury crashes in the district in the last five years resulting in 82 injuries. The number of injury crashes involving alcohol is increasing.

70 percent of all alcohol crashes were in urban areas of the district. 61 percent of these were Lost control on a bend. Speed and Poor handling were the other factors often associated with alcohol in injury crashes.

94 percent of at fault drivers in these injury crashes were males. The most common ages of these drivers were between the ages of 15 to 29 years .

Failure to give way

In Queenstown-Lakes District, failure to give way or stop was reported in 83 injury crashes during the last five years resulting in 133 other injuries.

Poor observation was the driver factor most often associated with failure to give way.

69 percent of at fault drivers in these injury crashes were males. All ages of these drivers were represented.

Restraints

The Ministry of Transport conducts surveys of restraint use. The results of these surveys are at a regional level, and may not be fully appropriate to a Territorial Authority. The results are obtainable from the Ministry of Transport website.

<http://www.transport.govt.nz/belts-index/>