



# briefing notes - road safety issues

## Queenstown-Lakes District

New Zealand Transport Agency, (NZTA), has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data for the 2005–2009 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues to help identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in Queenstown-Lakes District.

In March 2010 the Government released a new strategy, “Safer Journeys”, to build on the gains made under the Road Safety to 2010 Strategy. The focus of these Issues Reports has changed to reflect the new strategy. Many of the issues reported on in the past fit neatly into the new strategy. An explanation of where things fit is included in this report.

The issues chosen for this report are drawn from: the most common crash types, those that appear over-represented when Queenstown-Lakes District is compared to similar local bodies, those with high social cost, (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes), or those that are a priority under Safer Journeys.

We have included a brief overview of crashes in the district.

We encourage Queenstown-Lakes District to use its free access to the Ministry of Transport’s Crash Analysis System (CAS), to delve deeper into the highlighted issues and other road safety issues in the district. Also the NZTA Southern Performance Information Team in Christchurch is available to provide further information or assistance if required.

Major road safety issues	Note Issues are not in any order	2009 road trauma	
<b>Queenstown-Lakes District</b>		<b>Casualties</b>	<b>Queenstown-Lakes District</b>
Bend - loss of control or head on		Deaths	2
Young drivers		Serious casualties	30
Road factors and roadside hazards		Minor casualties	120
<b>Nationally</b>		<b>Crashes</b>	<b>Queenstown-Lakes District</b>
Speed		Fatal crashes	2
Alcohol / Drugs		Serious injury crashes	26
Young Drivers		Minor injury crashes	80
Roads and Roadsides		Non-injury crashes	260
Motorcyclists			

## Safer Journeys

For the past few years road safety in New Zealand has been directed by the Road Safety to 2010 strategy. This strategy was introduced in 2003 and aimed to reduce deaths and casualties from road crashes.

In March 2010 the Government released a new strategy, "Safer Journeys", to build on the gains made under the Road Safety to 2010 strategy.

Under this new strategy, road safety will be looked at from a system wide approach rather than focusing on the road user. The emphasis will be on improving all the parts road transport system that impact on safety; the road, the vehicle, travel speeds and the road user.

A number of areas were chosen as the areas of focus under the strategy. These areas were assigned a priority, based on research that shows five major areas of concern, five areas of lesser concern, and three areas where continued focus is needed, or concern is emerging.

These divisions are shown in the table opposite. This table is a direct extract from page 12 of the Safer Journeys document, which can be found at:

<http://www.transport.govt.nz/saferjourneys/Documents/SaferJourneyStrategy.pdf>

In this year's Road Safety Issues Briefing Notes changes have been made to the wording, and to the data presented, to better reflect and emphasise the connections to the new strategy

On the following page we present a table that shows the areas of "high concern" under the Safer Journeys strategy. This table allows some relative comparison of the Safer Journeys priorities across the local bodies and regional authorities in the Otago / Southland Region of the New Zealand Transport Agency.

**Table 3 – Safer Journeys' areas of concern and the Safe System**

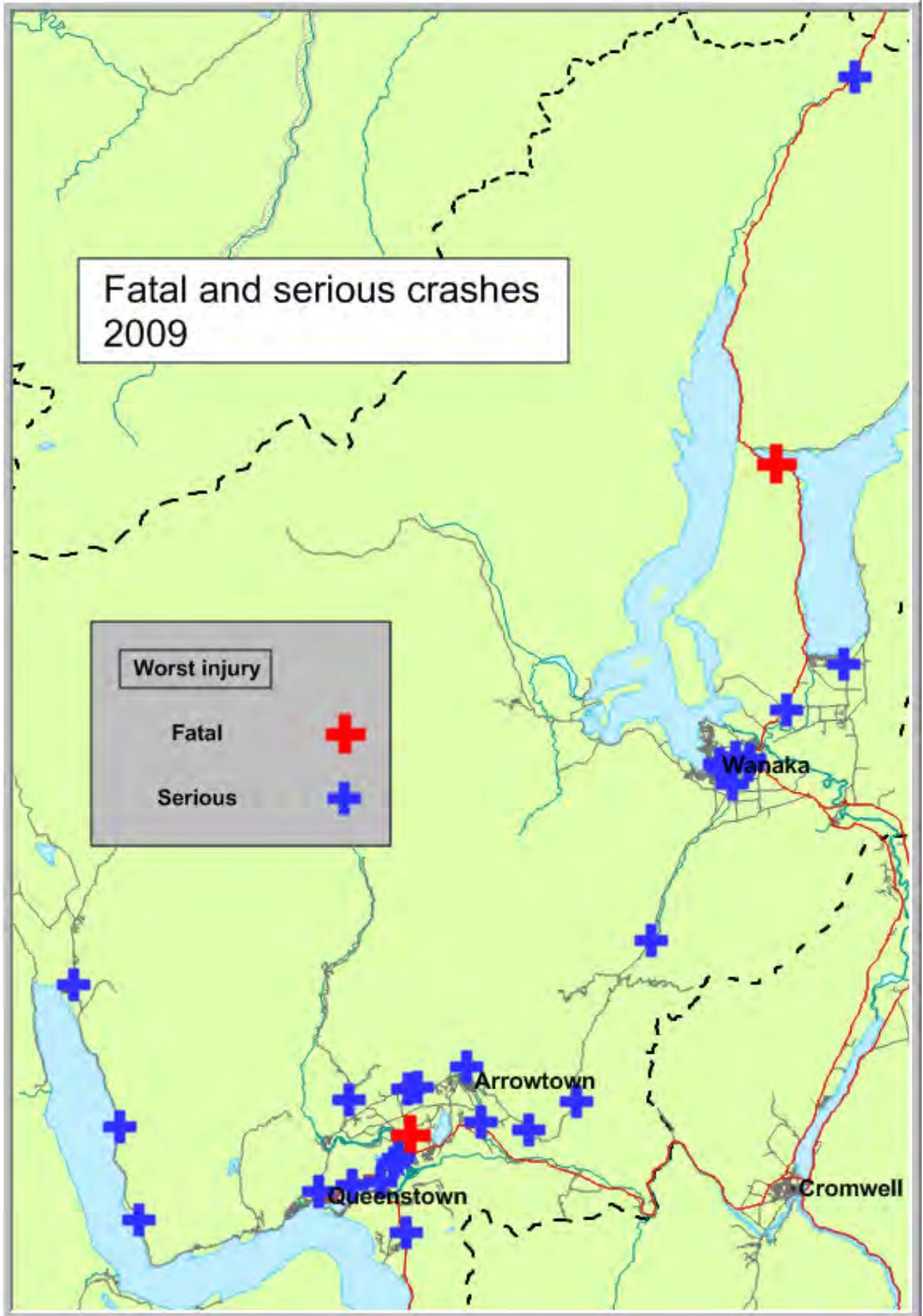
AREAS OF CONCERN WE WILL ADDRESS	WHERE WE WILL TAKE ACTION ACROSS THE SAFE SYSTEM			
	SAFE ROADS AND ROADSIDES	SAFE SPEEDS	SAFE VEHICLES	SAFE ROAD USE
<b>Areas of high concern</b>				
Reducing alcohol/drug impaired driving			✓	✓
Increasing the safety of young drivers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Safe roads and roadsides	✓			
Safe speeds	✓	✓	✓	
Increasing the safety of motorcycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Areas of medium concern</b>				
Improving the safety of the light vehicle fleet			✓	✓
Safe walking and cycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
Improving the safety of heavy vehicles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reducing the impact of fatigue	✓	✓	✓	✓
Addressing distraction	✓		✓	✓
Reducing the impact of high risk drivers		✓	✓	✓
<b>Areas of continued and emerging focus</b>				
Increasing the level of restraint use			✓	✓
Increasing the safety of older New Zealanders	✓	✓	✓	✓

For some priorities (eg motorcycling), complementary action will be taken across all four areas of the Safe System. For others (eg reducing the impact of drink driving or safe roads), more effort would be focussed on one or two of the four Safe System areas.

Source  
 Safer Journeys, Road Safety Strategy 2010-2020  
 Ministry of Transport  
 March 2010

Status of the areas of “high concern” from Safer Journeys 2020 - Otago / Southland Region  
(table is based on 2005 to 2009 fatal and serious crashes - local roads as well as State Highways)

Area of concern	Reducing alcohol and drug impaired driving	Increase the Safety of young drivers	Safer roads and roadsides		Reducing speed related crashes	Increasing the safety of motorcycling
Measure	Percentage of crashes with this factor	Percentage of at fault drivers 24 years or less	Percentage of crashes with an object struck	Number of intersections with two or more fatal or serious casualties in the last five years	Percentage of crashes with this factor	Percentage of crashes involving a motorcyclist
Waitaki District	19	35	52	0	19	16
Central Otago District	18	35	59	3	16	18
Queenstown-Lakes District	20	41	51	2	20	19
Dunedin City	17	44	46	21	21	13
Clutha District	14	36	61	1	22	15
Southland District	20	38	61	1	24	21
Gore District	16	53	46	1	20	18
Invercargill District	15	49	49	19	21	17
Otago Region	17	41	50	27	20	15
Southland Region	18	44	49	21	21	19
New Zealand	23	34	45	446	23	18



## Overview

In 2009 on Queenstown-Lakes District local roads there were 71 reported injury crashes, of which 20 were fatal or serious. In addition, on State Highways there were 38 reported injury crashes of which 8 were fatal or serious.

The table below shows the number of casualties resulting from the 109 injury crashes by rural or urban areas (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

Casualties 2009 Queenstown-Lakes District				
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	2	21	78	101
Urban	0	9	43	52
Total	2	30	121	153

All deaths, seventy percent of serious injuries, and almost two thirds of minor injuries were sustained in crashes on roads in rural areas of the District.

There are no obvious trends in the crash data

Crash trends in Queenstown-Lakes District				
Year	Fatal Crashes	Serious Crashes	Minor Crashes	Total Crashes
2000	4	18	37	59
2001	4	22	42	68
2002	3	41	59	103
2003	2	35	62	99
2004	3	27	82	112
2005	2	36	91	129
2006	0	16	93	109
2007	4	25	100	129
2008	3	23	71	97
2009	2	26	81	109

The following table illustrates where the issues considered for this report fit within the Safer Journeys priority. The numbers and percentages give an indication of how they fit in the priorities for Queenstown-Lakes District.

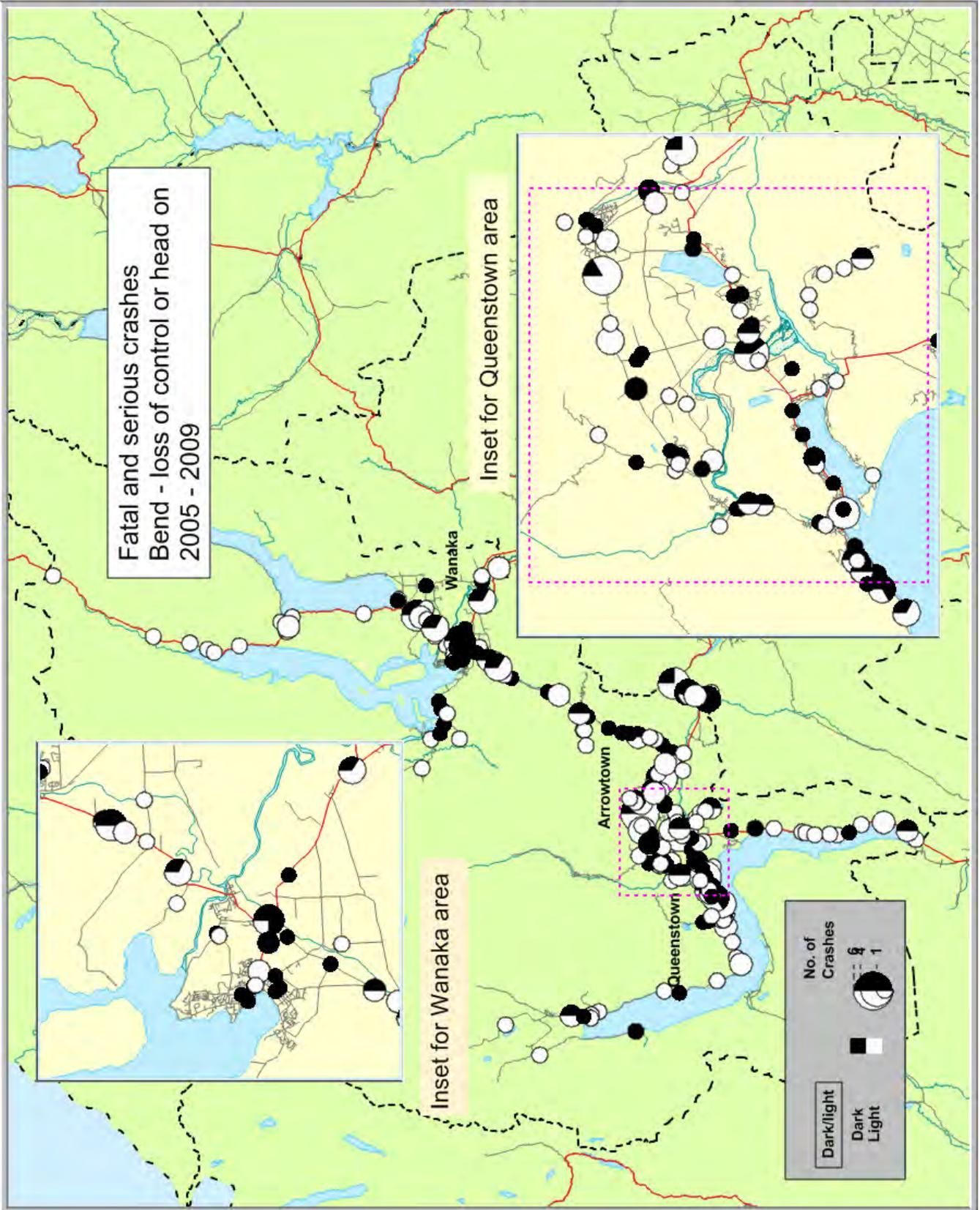
Crash characteristics (2005 to 2009) Queenstown-Lakes District				
Crash type or contributory cause	Percent fatal and serious crashes	Percent all injury crashes	No. of injury crashes	Safer Journeys priority
Alcohol	20	12	71	1
Too fast	20	18	105	1
At bends	50	49	281	1
On straights	15	11	65	1
Intersections	20	22	127	1
Road factors	26	30	172	1
Motorcycling	19	7	43	1
Young drivers	41	39	219	1
Fatigue	6	4	25	2
Distraction	15	4	27	2
Pedestrians	6	5	29	2
Cycling	8	4	25	2
Heavy vehicles	10	7	38	2
Older road users	2	3	16	3
Overseas drivers	22	23	135	-

Further information about the 351 injury crashes on local roads in Queenstown-Lakes District, 2005 to 2009:

- 8 deaths, 105 serious injuries and 428 minor casualties
- Five year age group with most at fault drivers in injury crashes: 20 to 24 years (24 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$21.63 m

Further information about the 222 injury crashes on State Highways in Queenstown-Lakes District, 2005 to 2009:

- 6 deaths, 49 serious injuries and 270 minor casualties
- Five year age group with most at fault drivers in injury crashes: 20 to 24 years (19 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$11.89 m



## Bend - loss of control or head on

Between 2005 and 2009, 49 percent of all injury crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District were bend - loss of control or head on crashes. These crashes resulted in 10 deaths, 75 serious injuries and 354 minor injuries.

Bend - loss of control or head on crashes Queenstown-Lakes District (2005 - 2009)				
Crash year	Fatal crashes	Serious crashes	Minor crashes	Total
2005	1	18	42	61
2006	0	5	46	51
2007	3	14	52	69
2008	3	8	31	42
2009	1	15	43	59
Total	8	60	214	282

The number of fatal and serious crashes fluctuate between a high of 19 in 2005 and a low of 11 in 2008. There are no obvious trends in the numbers.

Young drivers, those aged from 15 to 24 years, made up 47 percent of the at fault drivers in these crashes. Within this age group, males accounted for 64 percent of drivers. Overall males represented 61 percent of the at fault drivers

At fault drivers in Bend - loss of control or head on crashes 2005 to 2009			
Ages	Male	Female	Total
15 to 19	33	17	51
20 to 24	50	28	78
25 to 29	21	16	37
30 to 39	30	19	49
40 to 49	20	14	34
50 to 59	7	8	15
60 to 69	5	2	7
70 and over	2	1	3
Total	168	106	274

If drivers lose control, their vehicles they may crash into roadside hazards such as ditches, banks, poles or trees. Hitting roadside objects can result in a minor off-road event becoming more serious.

The most common roadside hazards struck in injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District were cliffs or banks (80), fence (41), over bank (38), tree (37) and ditches (32) from a total of 290 objects struck.

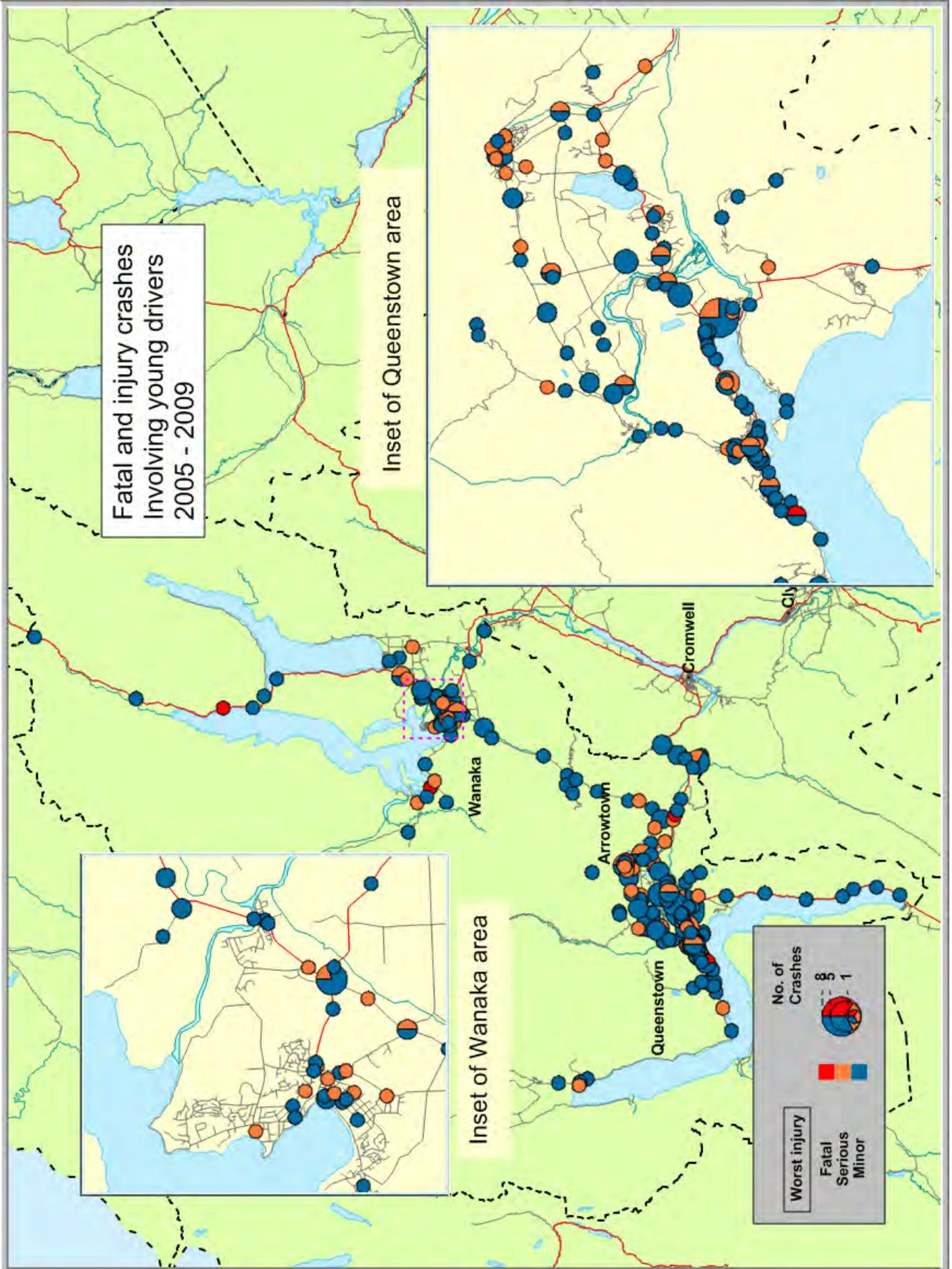
A roadside hazard was struck in 74 percent of bend - loss of control crashes in the district.

Further information about the 187 injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes on local roads in Queenstown-Lakes District, (2005 to 2009):

- 7 deaths, 61 serious injuries and 234 minor injuries
- 18 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 34 percent of crashes involved speed too fast for the conditions
- 43 percent involved road factors
- 57 percent involved poor handling
- 68 percent were on rural roads
- 40 percent were on wet or icy roads
- 43 percent were at night
- Worst month June
- Worst day of week Saturday
- Worst time period 3 pm till 6 pm

Further information about the 95 injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes on State Highways in Queenstown-Lakes District, (2005 to 2009):

- 3 deaths, 14 serious injuries and 120 minor injuries
- 11 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 23 percent of crashes involved speed too fast for the conditions
- 44 percent involved road factors
- 56 percent involved poor handling
- 89 percent were on rural roads
- 48 percent were on wet or icy roads
- 40 percent were at night
- Worst month June
- Worst day of week Sunday



## Young drivers

Young drivers are those aged less than 25 years. This analysis is based on injury crashes only as driver age is not recorded in non-injury crashes.

In Queenstown-Lakes District between 2005 and 2009, 39 percent of injury crashes involved young drivers. These crashes resulted in 5 deaths, 64 serious injuries and 303 minor injuries.

The total number of casualties from injury crashes involving young drivers do not reveal any obvious trends,

### Casualties from crashes involving young drivers Queenstown-Lakes District

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total
2005	0	19	53	72
2006	0	4	68	72
2007	4	15	70	89
2008	1	12	48	61
2009	0	14	64	78
Total	5	64	303	372

Thirty percent of the 263 young drivers in these crashes had a learner or restricted licence. Nearly two thirds of them were males .

Three quarters of the young drivers were local residents. An additional 19 percent were other South Islanders. Ten percent were overseas drivers.

### Young drivers at fault in injury crashes Queenstown-Lakes District (2005 - 2009)

Licence type	Female	Male	Total
Full	29	76	105
Learner	10	5	15
Restricted	28	35	63
Overseas	24	36	60
Never licensed	1	3	4
Disqualified	0	4	4
Other (unknown, wrong class)	4	8	12
Total	96	167	263

### Injury crashes involving young drivers Queenstown-Lakes District (2005 - 2009)

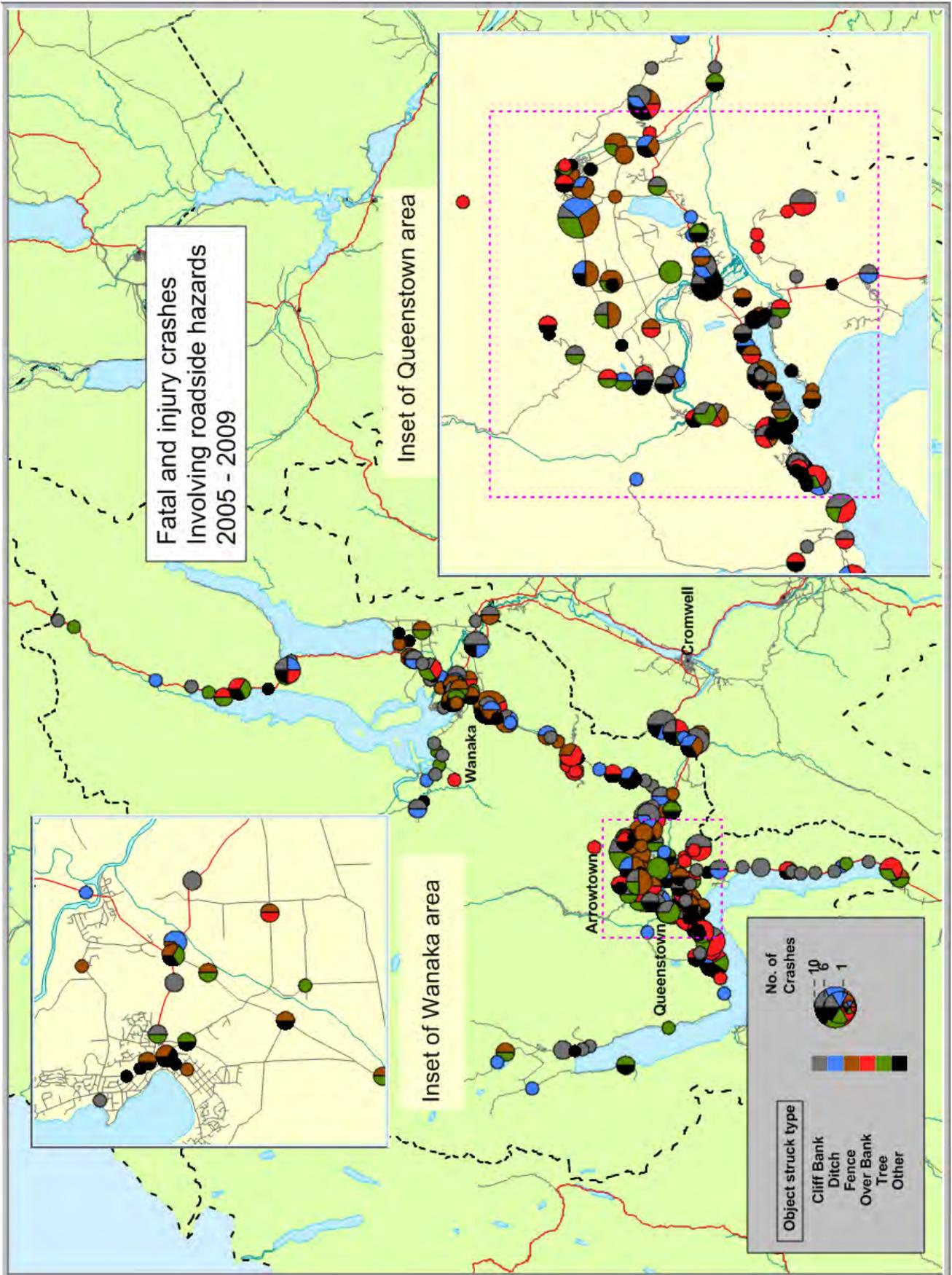
Crash type or contributory cause	Urban roads	Rural roads
Alcohol	24	14
Speed	18	44
Failed to stop/Give way	21	14
Poor handling	30	76
Poor observation	58	48
Poor judgement	23	50
Lost control - bend	37	96
Rear end / obstruction	29	13
Crossing / turning	18	13

Further information about the 161 injury crashes involving young drivers on local roads in Queenstown-Lakes District 2005 to 2009:

- 3 deaths, 49 serious injuries 189 minor injuries
- 60 percent were single vehicle crashes
- 48 percent were on urban roads
- 19 percent at intersections
- 39 percent at night
- 30 percent wet or icy roads
- Worst month July
- Worst day of week Saturday
- Worst time 3 pm to 6 pm

Further information about the 87 injury crashes involving young drivers on State highways in Queenstown-Lakes District 2005 to 2009:

- 2 deaths, 15 serious injuries 114 minor injuries
- 55 percent were single vehicle crashes
- 26 percent were on urban roads
- 30 percent at intersections
- 37 percent at night
- 34 percent on wet or icy roads
- Worst months March, December
- Worst day of week Thursday
- Worst time 3 pm to 6 pm



## Road Factors - including roadside hazards

A safe road has appropriate design standards, good delineation, adequate surface skid resistance and a roadside free of hazards.

In 2009 in Queenstown-Lakes District, "road factors" were a contributing factor in 30 percent of fatal and injury crashes.

Road factor related injury crashes Queenstown-Lakes District					
Road type	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Urban	5	12	9	10	8
Rural	32	27	34	18	17
Total	37	39	43	28	25

### Types of road factors in injury crashes Queenstown-Lakes District (2005-2009)

Road factor type 2005 to 2009	Number reported
Slippery road *	159
Road surface in poor condition	23
Road obstructed	2
Visibility limited	10
Signs or signals (needed or faulty)	3
Markings (needed or faulty)	4
Street lighting	3

\* NZTA does not assume that a wet road is necessarily "slippery". A "slippery" factor is added only if the attending Police Officer specifically mentions "slippery road".

Between 2005 and 2009, in Queenstown-Lakes District, 54 percent of all fatal and injury crashes involved a roadside hazards were being struck.

Roadside hazards may contribute to the overall crash outcome by increasing injury severity, but can in themselves be a contributory factor in a crash. Occupants in an errant vehicle striking a large tree close to the road edge are likely to sustain worse injuries than if the tree were not present. If a similar tree had low branches and was located close to intersection it could contribute to a lack of visibility.

In the injury crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District where a roadside hazard was struck 9 people died, 79 received serious injuries and 363 minor injuries.

The object most commonly struck in injury crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District from 2005 to 2009 are shown below.

### Most common types of hazard struck (Injury crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District 2005 - 2009)

Type of hazard	Number of times hazard struck
Cliff or bank	96
Fence	64
Over bank	50
Tree	50
Ditch	47

Further information about the 111 road factor related injury crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District on local roads (2005 to 2009):

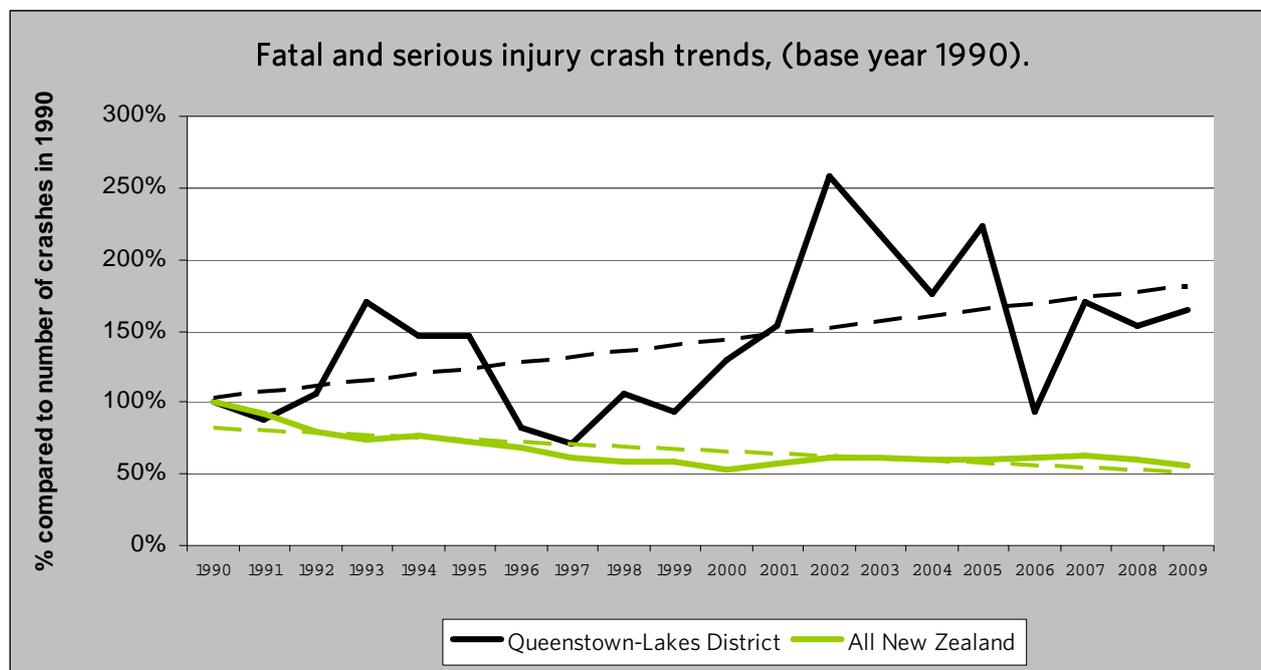
- 3 deaths, 26 serious injuries and 144 minor injuries
- Most common crash type, bend - loss of control or head on
- 8 percent at intersections
- 32 percent urban
- 72 percent wet or icy road
- 29 percent night time
- Worst month June
- Worst day of week Friday

Further information about the 61 road factor related injury crashes in Queenstown-Lakes District on State Highways (2005 to 2009):

- 1 deaths, 11 serious injuries and 77 minor injuries
- Most common crash type, bend - loss of control or head on
- 15 percent at intersections
- 15 percent urban
- 77 percent wet or icy road
- 30 percent night time
- Worst month June
- Worst day of week Friday

## Looking back - the last two decades.

The vision of the Government's "Safer Journeys" road safety strategy is "A safe road system that is increasingly free of road deaths and serious injuries". The chart below illustrates the progress made in reducing fatal and serious casualties since 1990, for both Queenstown-Lakes District and for the country as a whole.



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