

road safety issues

July 2002

The Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) has prepared this Road Safety Issues Report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 1997–2001 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in the Selwyn district.

The number of injury crashes in the Selwyn district has been steadily increasing since the lowest number in the past decade in 1999. In the first half of this decade nearly 17 percent of all crashes occurred in urban areas of Selwyn. Over the last five years this has declined to just over 10 percent.

Males tended to be more highly represented as casualties than females. Approximately one fifth of casualties, both male and female, were between the ages of 15 and 19. Cyclists and pedestrians contributed only a very small number of casualties. The other road users who tend to be more at risk are motorcyclists. In the Selwyn district, this group suffered a brief surge in casualty numbers in 1997 and 1998, which then dropped away again, leaving car and van drivers and passengers as the major casualty group.

Generally the same road safety issues dominate the district from year to year, often related to unchanging conditions such as topography. However these reports will monitor progress in addressing these issues in order to determine whether targeted programmes are succeeding or need to be adjusted.

Major road safety issues:

Selwyn district

Intersections

Loss of control and head-on collisions

Rural alcohol and speed

Poor observation

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2001 road toll for Selwyn district

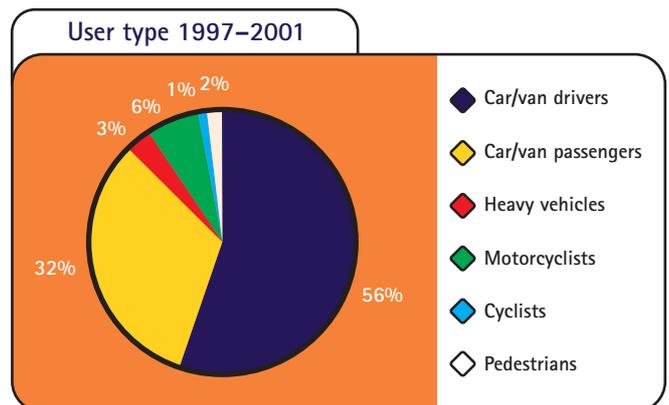


Deaths	11
Serious casualties	31
Minor casualties	105

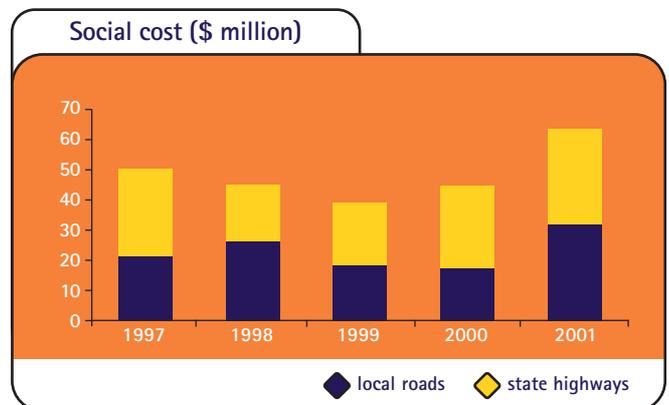


Fatal crashes	11
Serious injury crashes	21
Minor injury crashes	59
Non-injury crashes	123

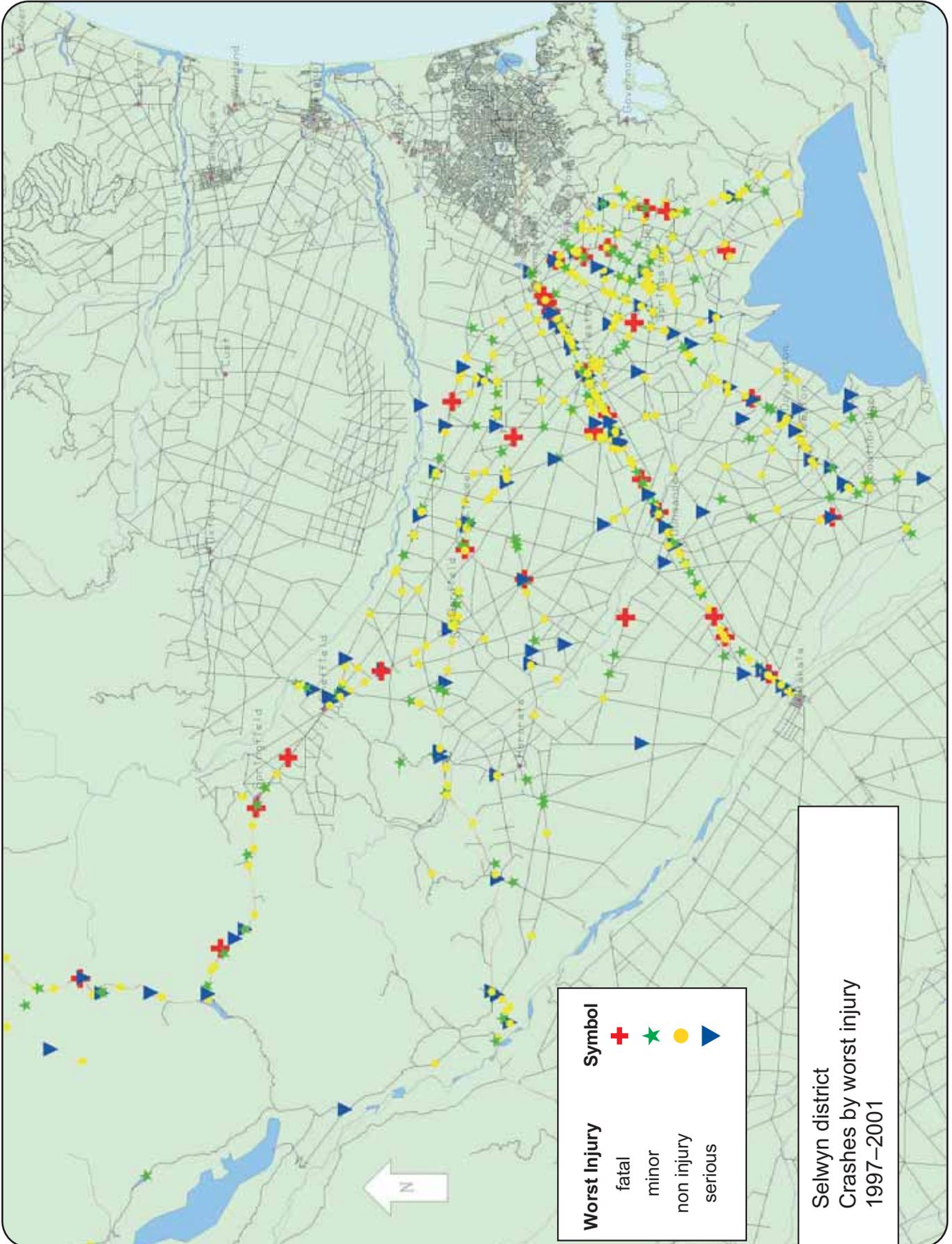
Road user casualties 1997–2001



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 2001 prices.

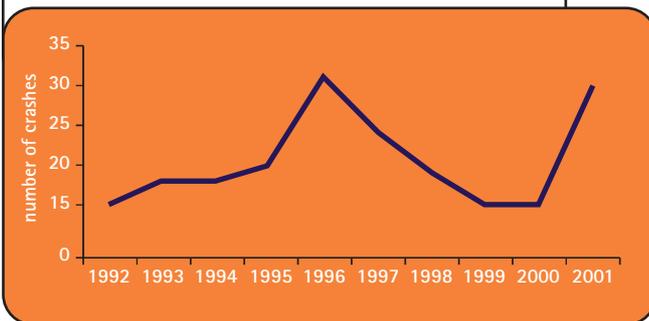


Selwyn district
Crashes by worst injury
1997-2001

Intersections

Generally the proportion of all crashes in the Selwyn district occurring at an intersection has increased. Around four out of five intersection crashes between 1997 and 2001 occurred on rural roads. Just under a third of those occurred at night, a similar proportion to national crash numbers.

Poor observation crashes at intersections



The most common cause of intersection crashes in the last five years (other than failing to give way) was poor observation. This included inattention and failure to notice signs, intersections or the behaviour of other traffic. Just under half of all crashes were caused to some degree by this failure. Misjudging another vehicle's speed or intended manoeuvre accounted for about one in seven crashes. Alcohol featured in nearly one in five intersection crashes during the five years from 1997 to 2001.

Recommended actions

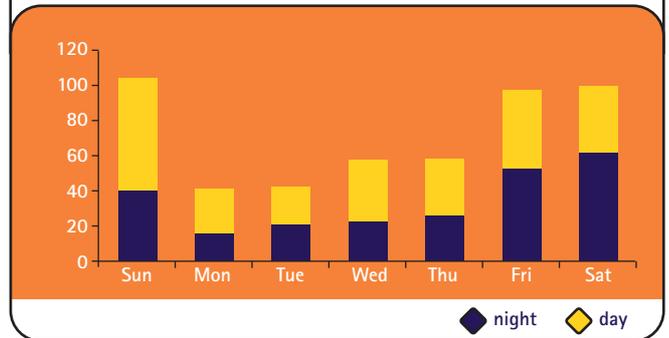
- Improve visibility of intersections by renewing signs, painting lines and trimming vegetation.
- Support campaigns that make drivers more aware of intersection dangers and encourage them to be more visually alert.

Loss of control and head-on collisions

Loss of control and head-on crashes were the most common crash types in the Selwyn district. Together they made up more than half of all crashes in the last 10 years. The following statistics give some indication as to who is having these types of crashes, when, where and why.

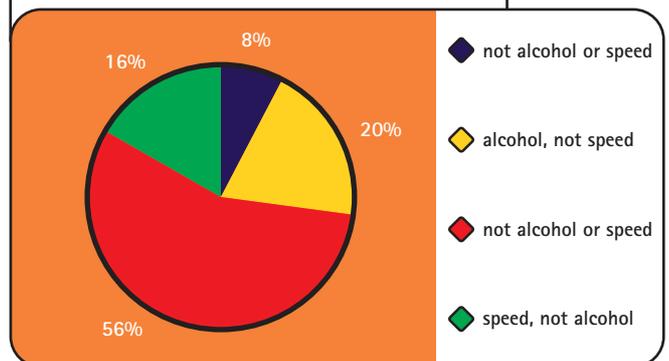
- Ninety percent of all of these crashes occurred on rural roads.
- Just under half happened at night and almost half occurred on Saturday or Sunday.
- December was the worst month for loss of control crashes.

Loss of control crashes by day of week and day/night



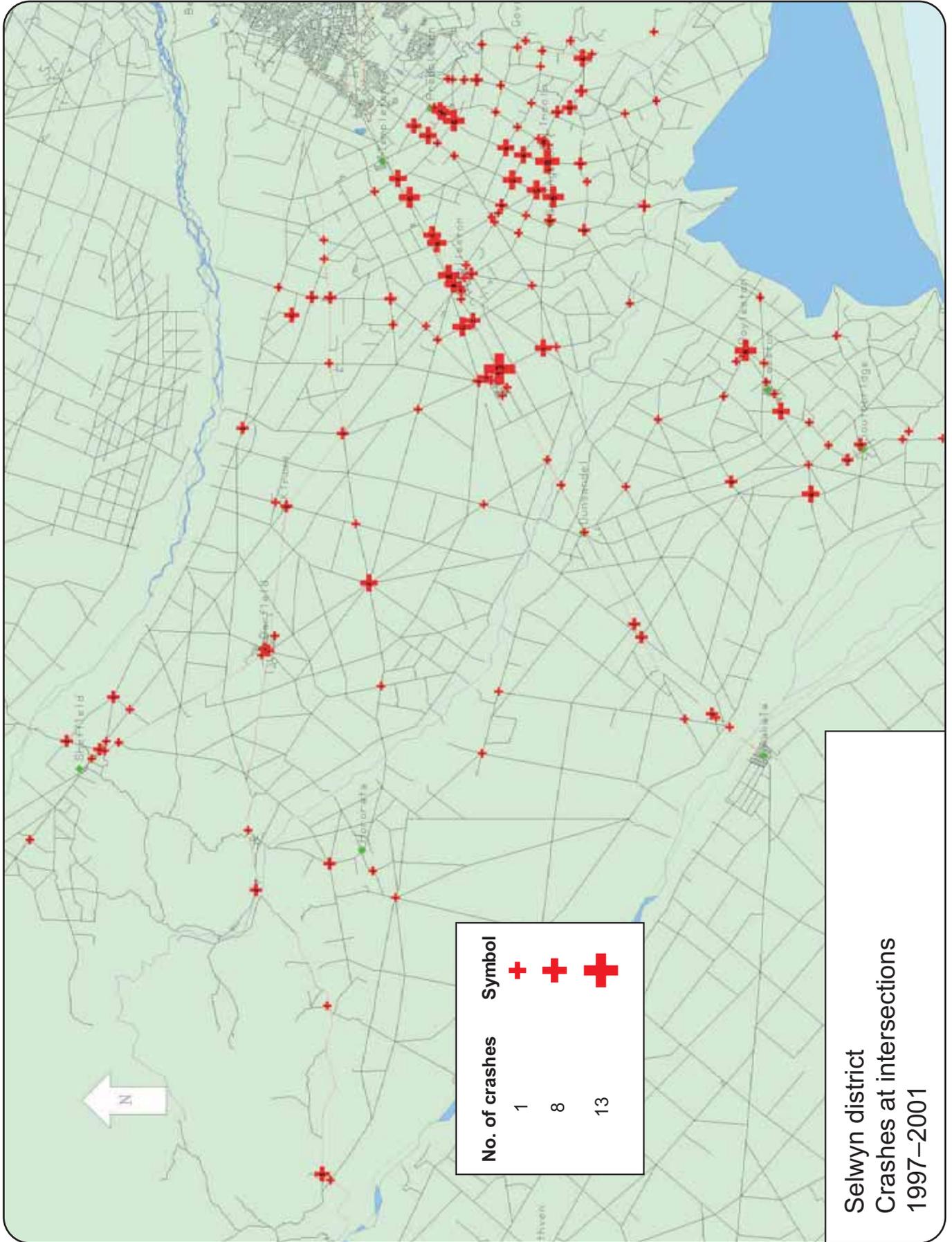
- The most common causes were alcohol, speed and fatigue, followed by poor judgement and poor handling. Common problems that caused the driver to lose control included road conditions and attempting to return to the road after straying onto the gravel or grass shoulder.
- Alcohol was a contributing factor in just over a quarter of all injury crashes, while speed was a factor in just under a quarter of all injury crashes.
- When the crash resulted in a collision with an object, that object was most likely to be either a fence or a pole.
- Two thirds of casualties were male and 15 to 19 year olds were the most highly represented age group.
- Around four out of every five crashes involved only one vehicle.

Alcohol and speed involvement in loss of control/head-on crashes



Recommended actions

- Support enforcement, particularly at weekends, targeted to at-risk areas.
- Ensure there is delineation, particularly around bends.
- Encourage seal and shoulder widening.
- Raise awareness of the need to adjust speed to the conditions.



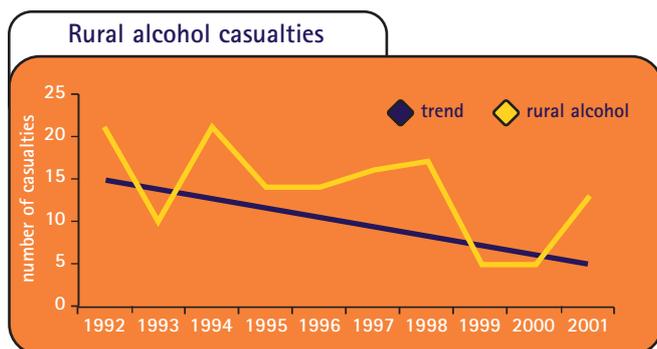
Selwyn district
Crashes at intersections
1997–2001

Rural alcohol

Alcohol involvement has been variable in the Selwyn district over the last decade. Numbers had been extremely small in urban areas and the rural numbers declined significantly in 1999 and 2000. In 2001, however, the numbers almost doubled. There are a number of possible explanations for this. There may have been lower reporting to the police over those two years. The numbers could be due to statistical variation, or they could simply be due to a rise in injury crashes involving alcohol. It is therefore still important to continue targeting the appropriate parties and causes through analysis of crash data.

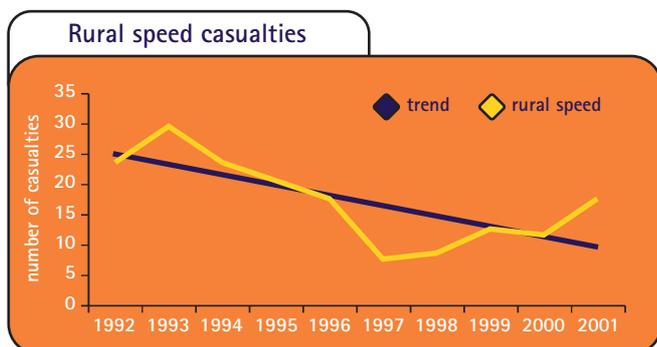
Three quarters of the alcohol-related crashes were evenly spread over Friday, Saturday and Sunday, while the remaining quarter occurred over the rest of the week (with Thursday figures higher than the preceding three days).

Two in five casualties in alcohol-related crashes were aged between 15 and 24 years, and three out of four casualties were male.



Rural speed

Speed decreased as a factor in rural crashes between 1993 and 1997, then started to increase again. It is currently just below the levels for the equivalent peer groups and the levels for all New Zealand. Speed-related crashes were most common on Friday, followed by the weekend, and were most likely to have occurred between 8pm and midnight. Just over a quarter of speed-related crashes also involved alcohol. As with alcohol, around three quarters of casualties over the last five years were male.



Recommended actions

- Support enforcement, particularly targeted to time and area.
- Conduct campaigns to reinforce the enforcement.
- Continue to maintain initiatives that will reduce the incidences of drinking and driving.
- Promote Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD) in secondary schools in the district.

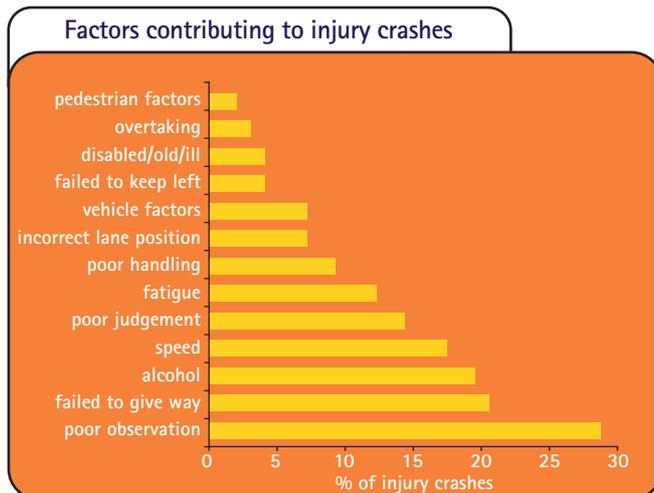
Poor observation

Poor observation is a major contributor to intersection crashes. Just under half of all crashes where poor observation was a factor involved giving way to crossing or turning traffic. Another quarter involved collisions with obstructions, some form of rear-end crash, or manoeuvring movements.

Unlike most crashes, females were heavily involved in this type of crash. Fifty-five percent of all casualties in poor observation crashes were female.

People aged 15 to 39 years old made up nearly three fifths of the female casualties and slightly less than that for males.

This is a more difficult area to target because the behaviour of the drivers at fault is not regarded as antisocial (unlike alcohol-related or speed-related crashes). Recommended improvements will tend to be in the education or engineering fields rather than enforcement.



Recommended actions

- Promote initiatives that will encourage drivers to adopt strategies to combat fatigue.
- Ensure intersections and difficult bends are highly visible.

New Zealand Road Safety Programme

Reducing trauma involves a multi-pronged approach, which includes education, engineering and enforcement. The New Zealand Road Safety Programme (NZRSP) provides funding to educate road users to change their behaviour through projects delivered by road safety co-ordinators and community groups. The programme also funds the New Zealand Police for their targeted enforcement activities and support of community road safety projects. Transfund New Zealand provides funding to local authorities for roading projects through its National Land Transport Programme.

Community projects

Community funding of road safety projects aims to encourage local involvement and ownership of issues, and target local resources and effort to local risks. Central to community programmes is the need to develop and motivate local partnerships in road safety to help reduce the level of deaths and injuries in the Selwyn district.

Funding for community projects in the Selwyn district from the NZRSP for the 2002/2003 year has been confirmed as follows:

Project	Funding	Police hours
Road safety co-ordinator (joint with Banks Peninsula)	\$16,000	0
Community alcohol action programme	\$4,000	320
Speed	\$2,000	50
Intersections (rural)	\$6,000	50

The Selwyn district will also be involved this year in regionally funded projects to target the high-risk issues of speed, alcohol, restraints and pedestrian issues. These projects have been funded as follows:

Project	General funding	Advertising funding
Regional road safety co-ordinator	\$38,000	-
Speed	\$60,000	\$20,000
Intersection safety	\$50,000	\$8,000
Fatigue	\$20,000	\$29,510
Pedestrian safety	\$10,000	\$10,000
A & P show displays	\$20,000	-
Development of safe driving policies	\$3,500	-
Regional billboard project	-	\$11,000

Police enforcement

In addition to the 420 police hours to support community projects, a further 10,210 hours will be delivered by the New Zealand Police in the Selwyn district as follows:

Project	Hours
Strategic – alcohol/drugs, speed, restraint and visible road safety enforcement	8,740
Traffic management including crash attendance, incidents, emergencies and events	2,600
School road safety education	400
Police community services	250

Road environment

The Selwyn district has an allocation for minor safety projects on local roads in Transfund New Zealand's National Land Transport Programme 2002–2003.

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road safety in the Selwyn district, please refer to the 1997 to 2001 Road Safety Data Report, or one of the contacts listed below.

Land Transport Safety Authority Regional Manager Dennis Robertson Phone 03 363 5661	Road Safety Co-ordinator Barbara Petre Phone 03 332 2382
Regional Education Advisor Bob Clements Phone 03 363 5677	New Zealand Police Strategic Traffic Manager Derek Erasmus PO Box 2109, Christchurch Phone 03 363 7417
Area Road Safety Engineer Geoff Holland Phone 03 363 5645	Transit New Zealand Area Engineer Barry Stratton PO Box 1479, Christchurch Phone 03 366 4455
Selwyn District Council Asset Manager Roading Andrew Mazey Private Bag 1, Leeston Phone 03 324 8080	

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