

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 South Wairarapa district.

The number of casualties in the South Wairarapa district in 2001 was 38, exactly the same number as recorded in the year 2000. The number of fatalities in 2001 was also exactly the same as the previous year. A closer examination of the casualty figures shows that, while the number of injuries appeared to be declining from 1992 to 1996, they started to rise again from 1996 to 2001. This suggests that a more proactive approach is needed to stop this increase.

Despite this, the crash and casualty rates for the district were actually below the average for similar provincial districts. One aspect of crashes in South Wairarapa was that rural crashes tended to produce a greater proportion of serious or fatal injuries. For the last four years, the proportion of rural injury crashes that were classified as serious was over 50 percent.

Motorcyclists were over-represented in rural injury crashes in the South Wairarapa. On urban roads, a greater percentage of car or van drivers were injured compared with similar districts. There was a slight upward trend in the number of car or van drivers injured over the 10-year period from 1992 to 2001.

Major road safety issues:

South Wairarapa district

Unsealed roads

Wet rural roads

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2001 road toll for South Wairarapa district

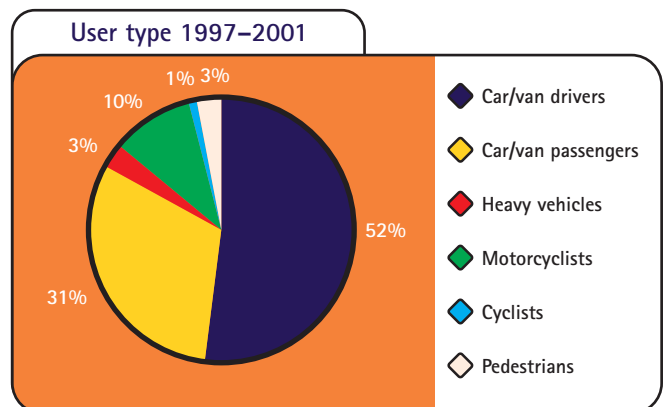


Deaths	3
Serious casualties	8
Minor casualties	27

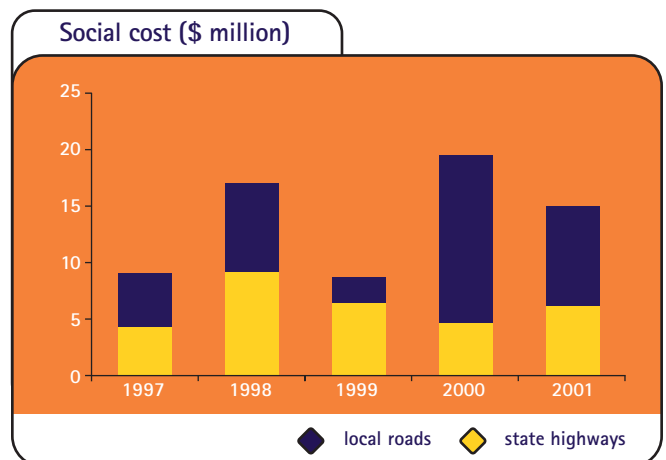


Fatal crashes	2
Serious injury crashes	8
Minor injury crashes	14
Non-injury crashes	40

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.

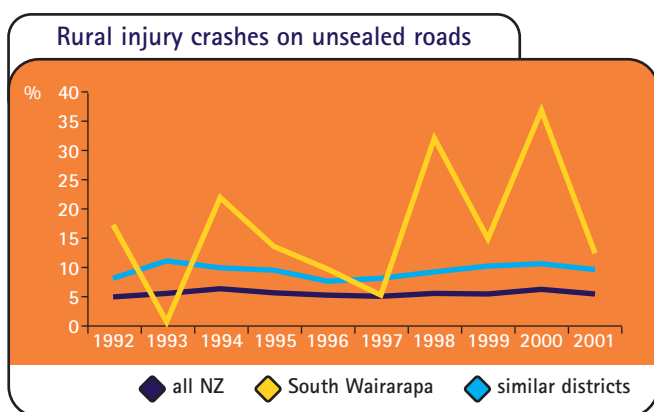


Unsealed roads

Last year we highlighted rural road crashes as an issue in the South Wairarapa district. This was partly due to the sudden rise in injury crashes from five in 1999 to 17 in 2000. The 2001 total for injury crashes on local rural roads was five.

There was, however, a closely related issue – crashes on unsealed roads. In the 1992–2001 period there were 54 injury and non-injury crashes on unsealed roads in the South Wairarapa district.

Crashes on unsealed roads is an important issue for the district due to the upward trend in the number of such injury crashes. This is graphically shown in the diagram below. In addition, the proportion in South Wairarapa of crashes on unsealed roads to all rural road crashes over the past five years is 20 percent. This is considerably higher than the national average of five percent and the similar authority average of 10 percent.



Ninety-three percent of all crashes on unsealed roads over the last decade are categorised as loss of control crashes. These may occur on bends or on straight stretches of road. The cause of such crashes is often a combination of speed and poor handling. This ties in with statistics that show that speed and poor handling as factors in rural crashes are increasing slightly. Similarly loss of control on bends is also rising.

Most of the crashes occurred during weekdays, especially between 9.30am and 3.30pm. This indicates that local drivers are more likely to be the ones who are crashing, rather than drivers from outside the district.

Recommended actions

- Encourage campaigns on the need to be fully alert when driving.
- Ensure advisory signs are appropriate, consistent and in the correct position.
- Maintain good road surfaces and drainage.



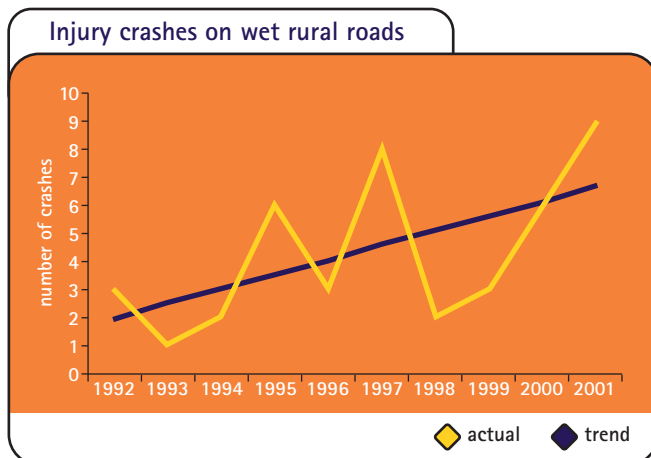
Wet rural roads

Crashes on wet rural roads are a concern. As with unsealed roads, crashes on wet rural roads are rising. There were nine such injury crashes in 2001, compared with six in 2000, three in 1999 and two in 1998.

Very few of these wet road crashes occurred on unsealed roads – only two out of 95 (injury and non-injury) in the last five years. Another less obvious aspect is that only 29 out of the 95 total number of crashes were on local rural roads. This means that around two thirds of all wet road crashes in a rural environment occurred within the state highway network.

In terms of injury crashes, about one third of wet road crashes on local rural roads resulted in an injury. This contrasts with similar crashes on the state highways in which the proportion resulting in injury was about one quarter.

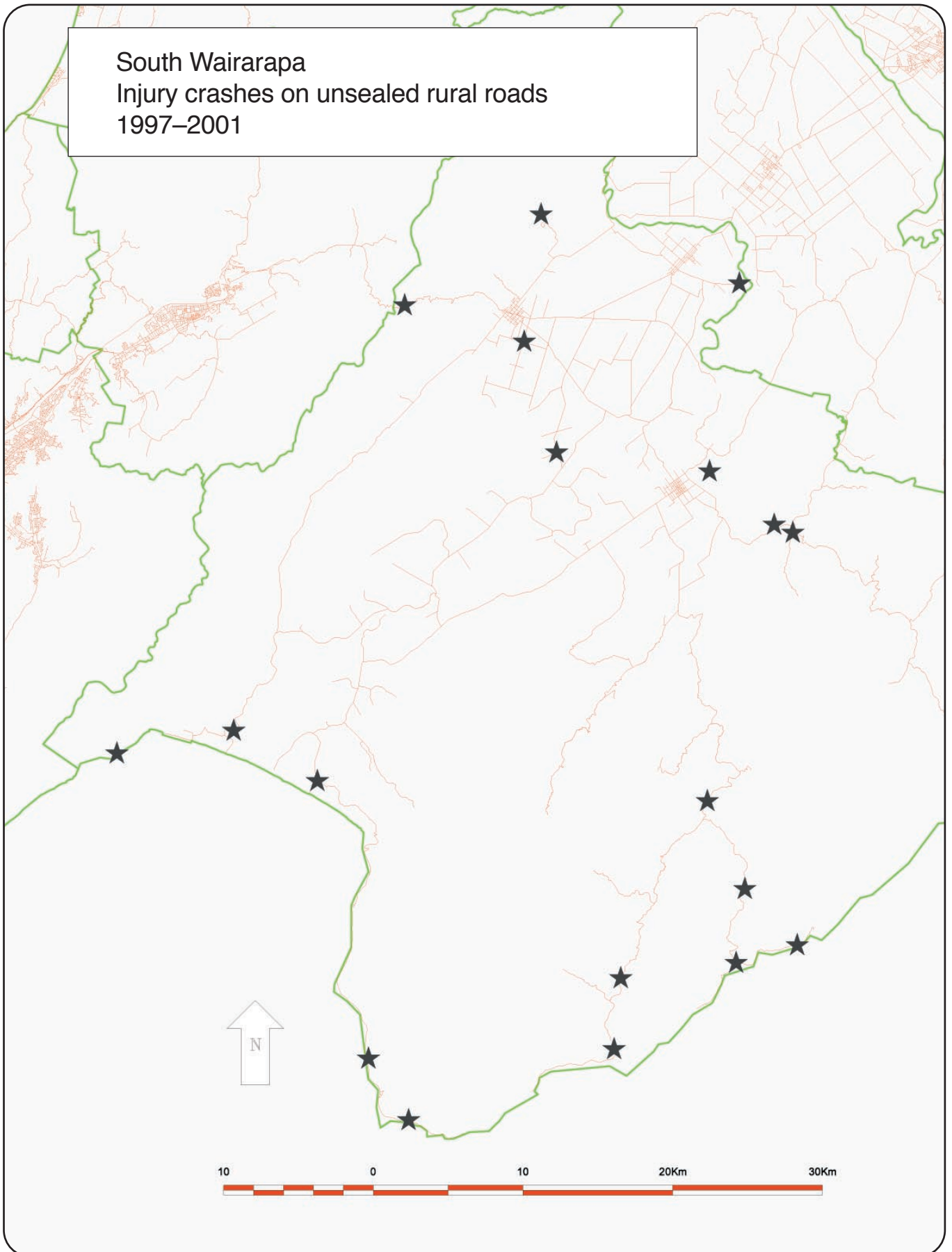
The predominant crash type was the loss of control crash which accounted for three quarters of all rural wet road crashes. The majority of these loss of control crashes occurred on bends. There was not such a clear-cut pattern with driver factors. Going too fast for the conditions accounted for one fifth of crashes and poor handling accounted for one quarter.



Recommended actions

- Investigate ways to address wet rural crashes.
- Support enforcement campaigns aimed at speed control, especially during wet conditions.
- Deliver education programmes targeted at driving in the wet.
- Promote the message of slowing down in the wet.

South Wairarapa
Injury crashes on unsealed rural roads
1997–2001



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 Roding 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 number of deaths and injuries in the South Wairarapa district.

Funding for community projects in the Wairarapa region (which includes the South Wairarapa district) from the NZRSP for the 2002/2003 year has been confirmed as follows:

Project	Funding
Road safety co-ordinator	\$27,000
Down with speed	\$3,000
Cycle in safety	\$1,000
Wairarapa intersection week	\$1,000
Stop and refresh stops	\$2,000
Be seen be safe	\$1,300
Be lady-bug safe	\$2,000

Police enforcement

In the Wairarapa region (which includes the South Wairarapa district) during 2002/2003, police will deliver 12,910 hours as follows:

Project	Police hours
Strategic – alcohol/drugs, speed, restraints and visible road safety enforcement	9,170
Traffic management including crash attendance, incidents, emergencies and events	2,540
Road safety education	720
Police community services	480

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes in the South Wairarapa district, please refer to the 1997 to 2001 Road Safety Data Report or the Land Transport Safety Authority Accident Investigation System, or contact the people or organisations listed below:

Land Transport Safety Authority

Regional Manager
Demetra Kennedy
Phone 04 382 6421

Regional Engineer
Alan Dixon
Phone 04 382 6441

Regional Educational Advisor
Roy Hitchcock
Phone 04 382 6428

Road Safety Co-ordinator

Brian Barnes
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Phone 06 378 9666

New Zealand Police

Sgt. Mike McRandle
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Phone 06 378 6166

South Wairarapa District Council

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Phone 06 306 9611

Transit New Zealand

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Phone 04 801 2580

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