

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 number of road deaths and injuries in the South Wairarapa District.

Injury crashes reduced by five, to 19 in 2002. Casualty numbers are the lowest they have been in five years. The proportion of fatal and serious injuries, however, has been higher than in similar authorities for the last five years.

Drivers losing control of their vehicles on bends was a major cause of rural crashes. In the urban area, crossing/turning crashes comprised over 35 percent of the crashes. Failure to give way or stop was significant in urban areas when compared with similar authorities.

Eleven percent of the crash casualties between 1998 and 2002 were motorcyclists. This is higher than in similar authorities. The number of crashes involving learner drivers has been slowly increasing over the past five years.

The estimated social cost of crashes in the South Wairarapa District in 2002 was \$14 million, a slight decrease on the previous year.

Both national and local road safety issues are identified below. The specific concerns for the South Wairarapa District are considered in detail overleaf.

Major road safety issues

South Wairarapa District

Loss of control on bends

Learner/restricted licence holders

Motorcyclists

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

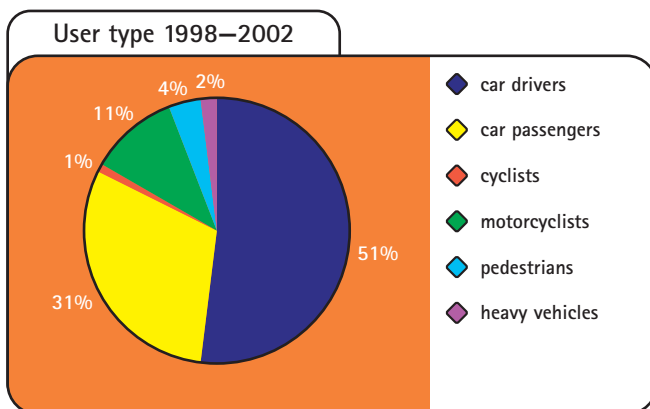
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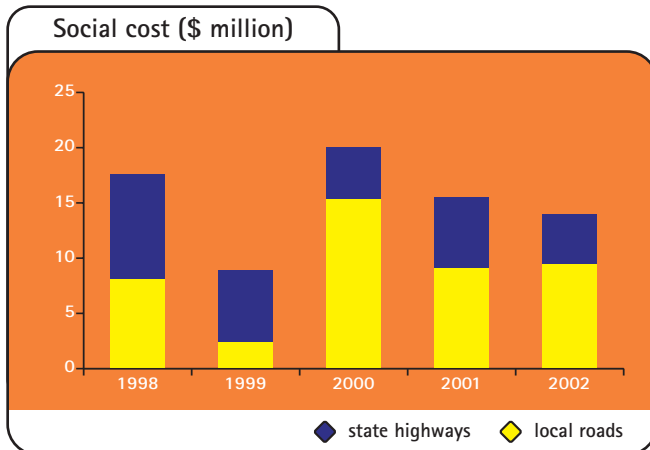
2002 road trauma for South Wairarapa District

♀	Deaths	2
♀	Serious casualties	9
♀	Minor casualties	21
🚗	Fatal crashes	2
🚗	Serious injury crashes	8
🚗	Minor-injury crashes	9
🚗	Non-injury crashes	43

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.

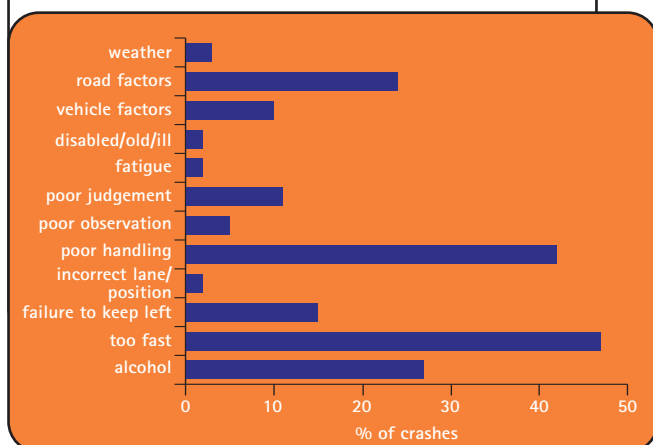


Loss of control on bends

Over half of all injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District between 1998 and 2002 involved a driver losing control of a vehicle on a bend. The majority (90 percent) occurred on rural roads.

Speed, alcohol, slippery road surfaces and poor handling were all common contributing factors in loss of control injury crashes on bends in the district between 1998 and 2002. Over 40 percent occurred on the state highway network. Road factors, such as slippery roads, were reported in over 35 percent of state highway loss of control injury crashes between 1998 and 2002.

Contributing factors in loss of control crashes 1998–2002



Over three quarters of the drivers in loss of control injury crashes between 1998 and 2002 were male and half of the drivers were men under the age of 40 years. A quarter of the crashes occurred on unsealed roads.

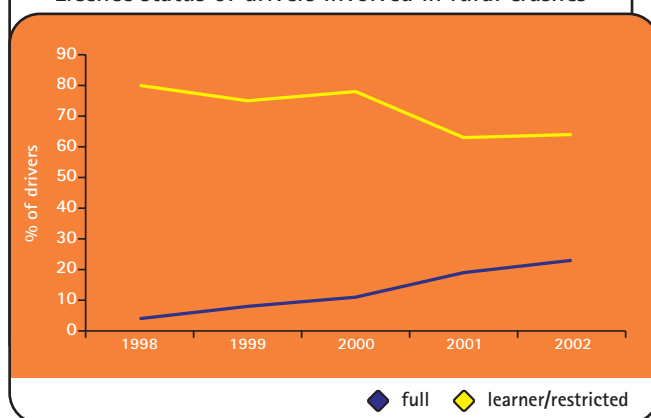
Recommended actions

- Support drink-driving education campaigns.
- Support campaigns on adjusting drivers' speed for different driving conditions.
- Support enforcement campaigns targeting driving too fast for the conditions, and alcohol.
- Conduct a safety audit/safety survey of curve delineation, signposting, shoulder width, surface friction, curve delineation and street lighting of curves.
- Install consistent advisory speed signs where required.

Learner/restricted licence holders

The number of learner or restricted driver licence holders involved in injury crashes in rural areas is of growing concern in the Wairarapa. The percentage of drivers on such a licence has grown from four percent in 1998 to 23 percent in 2002. At the same time, the number of crashes involving drivers on a full licence has declined.

Licence status of drivers involved in rural crashes



The age of drivers on learner or restricted licences ranges from 15 to 26 years. The average age is about 20 years.

A number of the drivers seem to be in breach of the conditions of the learner or restricted licence, travelling outside the hours allowed or carrying passengers who would not qualify as supervisors. Contributing factors attached to the restricted drivers include alcohol and drugs, losing control, and travelling too fast for the conditions.

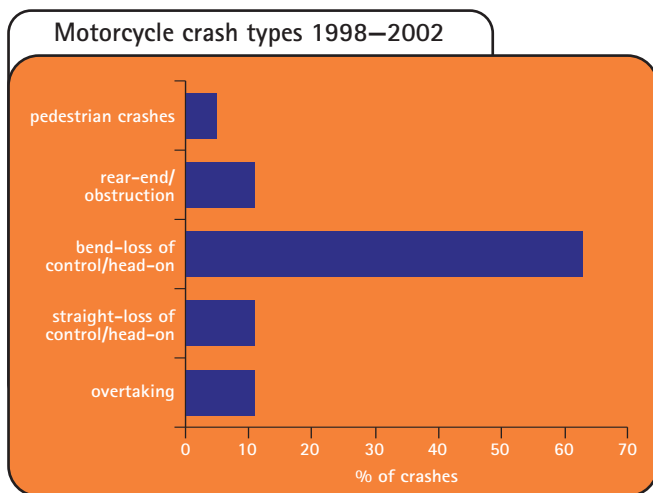
Recommended actions

- Encourage drivers to move on to a full licence.
- Enforce the conditions of restricted licences.
- Support enforcement campaigns targeting alcohol and driving too fast for the conditions.



Motorcyclists

Motorcyclists made up 11 percent of all road-user casualties in the South Wairarapa District between 1998 and 2002 and were the third largest road-user casualty group after car/van drivers and passengers. Of the 20 motorcyclist casualties, there was one fatality and 14 serious injuries. All of the motorcycle crashes occurred on the open road and only one occurred at an intersection. Three quarters occurred during the weekend (between Friday 6 pm and Monday 6 am). About two thirds of the crashes were single vehicle crashes with the majority occurring on a curve.



Alcohol, travelling too fast for the conditions, failure to keep left and poor handling were the main contributing factors in injury crashes involving motorcycles between 1998 and 2002. Motorcyclists involved in crashes were mainly males in the 25 to 44 year age group, and only one quarter were locals.

Recommended actions

- Encourage motorcyclists to be more aware of the dangers that they face.
- Ensure that motorcyclists, as a key road-user group, are featured in other road safety campaigns.
- Target enforcement of motorcycle speed and riding behaviour on the open road.
- Integrate motorcycle safety into the actions for addressing the loss of control on curves issue in the district.

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) 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

NZRSP funding of road safety initiatives aims to encourage local involvement and ownership of issues, and target local resources and effort to local risks. This year's review of the programme initiates a re-focus of effort and funding into community development. This involves working with and within different communities of people to assist them in becoming aware of their own local road safety issues and developing solutions to achieve better road safety outcomes.

Funding for community projects in the Wairarapa District from the NZRSP for the 2003/2004 year has been confirmed as follows:

Project	Funding
Road safety co-ordinator	\$35,000
Cycling	\$3,400
Driver education	\$4,800
Pedestrian safety	\$2,000
Alcohol	\$5,000
Community network	\$3,000

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 projects will need to be negotiated by the road safety co-ordinator.

In the Wairarapa Region (which includes the South Wairarapa District) during 2003/2004, the 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	2,950
School road safety education	720
Police community services and projects	70

The LTSA will liaise with the South Wairarapa District Council, Transit New Zealand and the New Zealand Police to ensure both the risk targeted patrol plans and the road safety action plans are undertaken.

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes in the South Wairarapa District, please refer to the 1998 to 2002 Road Safety Data Report or the LTSA Crash Analysis System, or contact the people or organisations listed below:

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