

road safety issues

The Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 1999–2003 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues in the South Wairarapa District.

The total number of injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District in 2003 was 22. The number of people injured as a result of crashes increased by nine from 2002 to 43 in 2003. Four people were killed.

Car drivers were the largest casualty group to be involved in road crashes, with learner and restricted licence holders particularly prominent within this group.

The most frequent type of crash on rural roads involved a driver losing control of their vehicle on a bend. There was a higher proportion of these crashes on rural roads in the South Wairarapa District than in similar local authorities. In addition, the proportion of speed-related crashes in rural South Wairarapa was significantly higher than in New Zealand as a whole.

The estimated social cost of crashes in the South Wairarapa District in 2003 was \$18.9 million, an overall increase of \$3.9 million on 2002. This increase is due to an increase in the severity of crashes recorded on the state highway network.

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

Major road safety issues

South Wairarapa District

Loss of control on bends

Novice drivers

Speed

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints

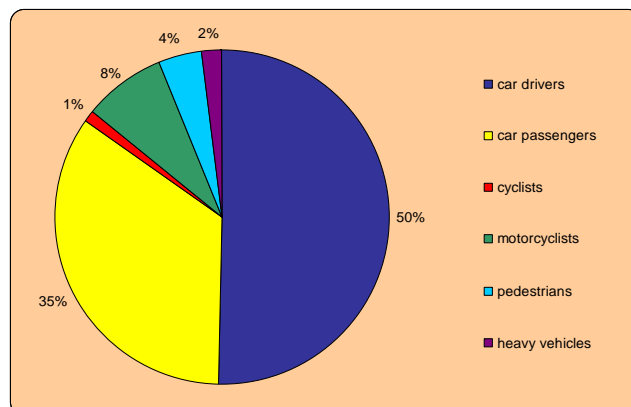
2003 road trauma for South Wairarapa District

Deaths	4
Serious casualties	11
Minor casualties	28

Fatal crashes	4
Serious injury crashes	6
Minor injury crashes	12
Non-injury crashes	41

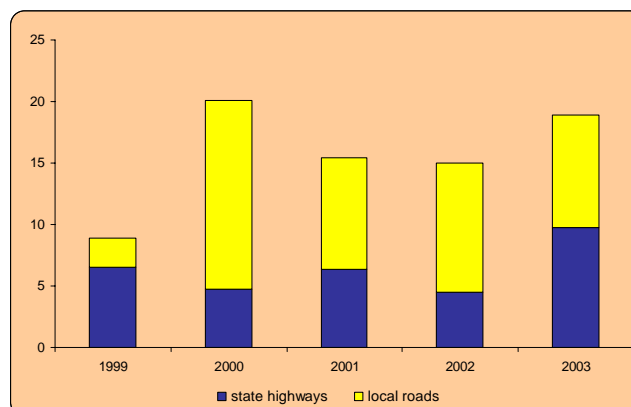
Road casualties 1999–2003

User Type 1999–2003



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)



*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.

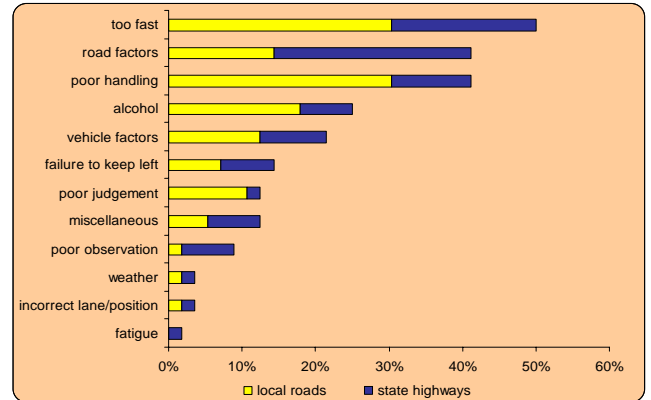


Loss of control on bends

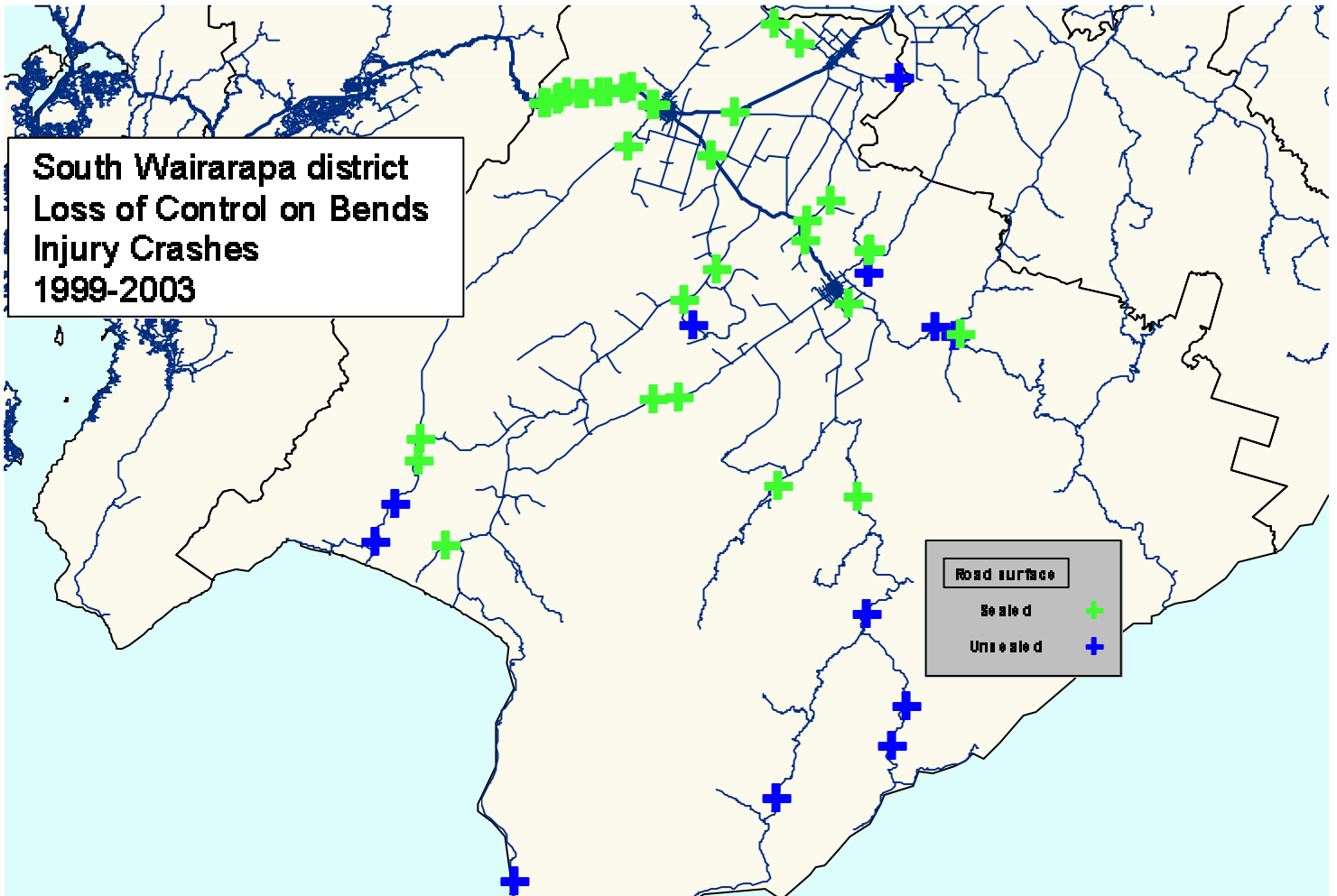
Loss of control was the major crash movement type recorded on rural roads in the South Wairarapa District between 1999 and 2003. Sixty-seven percent of rural injury crashes during this period involved drivers losing control of their vehicles on bends. The majority (57 percent) of these happened on local roads.

Speed was the major contributing factor in these crashes, with 50 percent of loss of control crashes involving a driver travelling too fast for the conditions. Other contributing factors included the road being slippery due to rain or loose material and the driver being unable to handle the vehicle. Twenty-three percent of the crashes occurred on unsealed roads.

Contributing factors in rural loss of control crashes 1999–2003



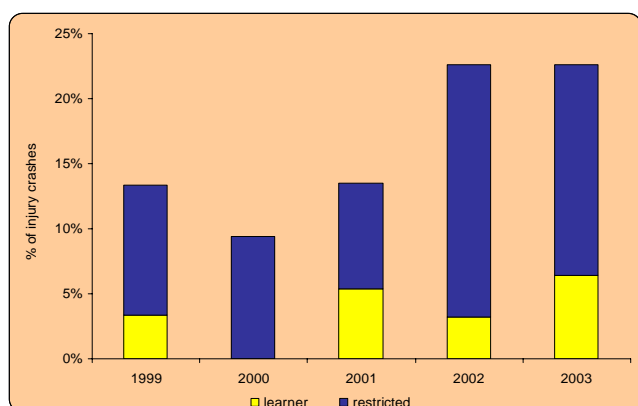
The drivers involved in these crashes were typically male (76 percent) and living locally in the South Wairarapa District (54 percent). Sixteen percent of loss of control crashes involved a motorcycle.



Novice drivers

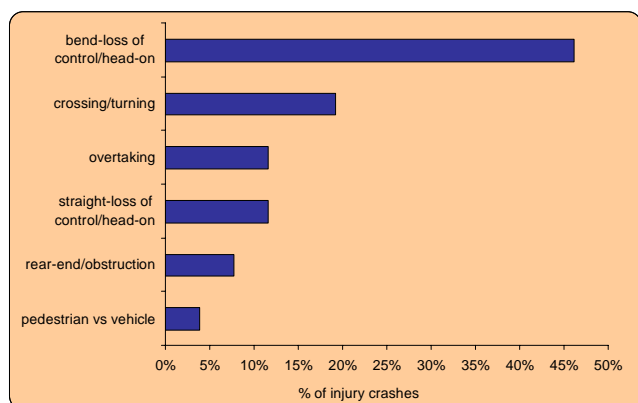
Between 1999 and 2003, 16 percent of the drivers involved in injury crashes were novice drivers, driving on a learner or restricted licence. However, over the past five years there has been an upward trend in the involvement of novice drivers in crashes. The percentage of novice drivers involved in injury crashes in both 2002 and 2003 was 23 percent.

Novice drivers involved in injury crashes 1999–2003



The most common type of crash involving a novice driver was caused by the driver losing control of a vehicle on a bend. Other common types of crashes involved crossing or turning movements at intersections or driveways, and overtaking manoeuvres.

Crash movement types involving novice drivers 1999–2003



The novice drivers involved in crashes were predominantly male (77 percent) and were aged from 15 to 29 years of age. Sixty-five percent lived locally in the Wairarapa area.

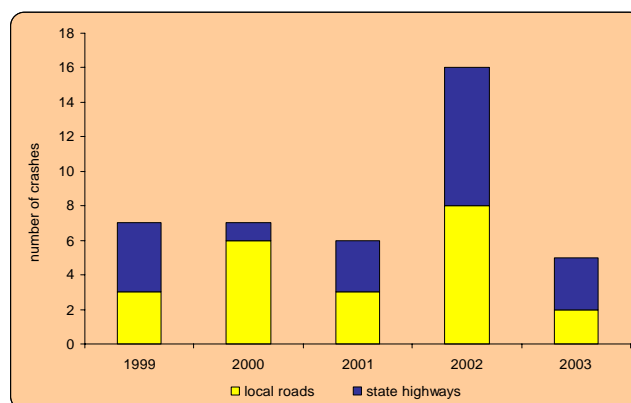
80 Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash and the greater the risk of serious injury or death.

Speed was a factor in 35 injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District between 1999 and 2003, resulting in 68 casualties, including five fatalities. Speed contributed to 32 percent of all injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District. Over this five-year period, it was the biggest reported contributing factor for crashes. The percentage was significantly higher than for all of New Zealand and in similar local authorities.

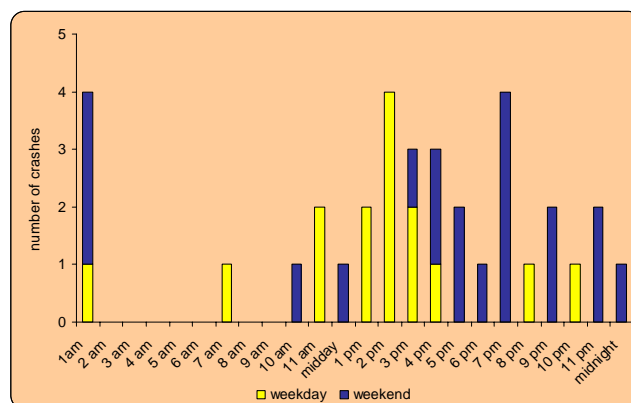
The majority of speed-related injury crashes between 1999 and 2003 occurred on rural roads (89 percent). Thirty-seven percent of the crashes occurred on the state highway network.

Speed-related crashes 1999–2003



Speeding drivers were typically male (92 percent), under 30 years old (58 percent), and living in the Wairarapa area (61 percent). Thirty-six percent were also under the influence of alcohol.

Speed-related crashes by time of day 1999–2003



Over half (57 percent) of the speed-related injury crashes occurred between 6 pm Friday and 6 am Monday.



Alcohol

Drivers with a blood alcohol level over the legal limit (80 mg per 100 ml) are three times more likely to be involved in a crash than a sober driver.

Between 1999 and 2003, alcohol was a factor in 20 injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District. This comprised 18 percent of all injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District. This is greater than in similar authorities and New Zealand as a whole.

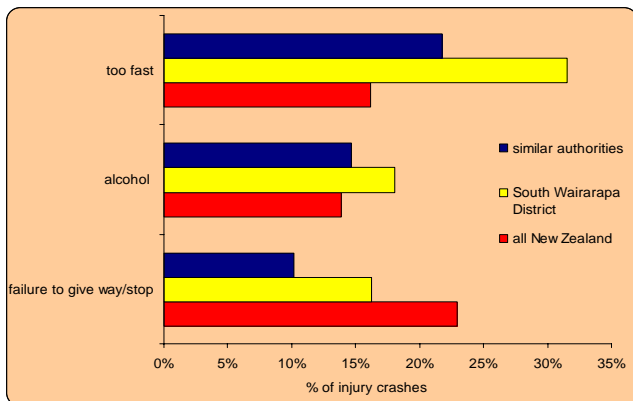


Failure to give way

Failure to give way at intersections is the third largest cause of death and injury crashes on New Zealand roads.

Eighteen injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District between 1999 and 2003 involved a vehicle failing to give way. This amounts to 16 percent of all crashes and is greater than for similar local authorities.

National issues 1999–2003



Restraints

Wearing a safety belt reduces the chance of being killed in a crash or suffering serious injury by 40 percent.

Between 1999 and 2003 there were 17 fatalities on South Wairarapa District roads. Of those who died, it is estimated that at least three would have been saved if they had been wearing a restraint.

In a 2003 survey, 84 percent of front seat adults were wearing safety belts in the South Wairarapa District. This is considerably lower than the New Zealand average.

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