

# road safety issues

## South Wairarapa District

Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2000–2004 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 total number of injury crashes in the district in 2004 was 16 more than in 2003. The number of people fatally or seriously injured in road crashes decreased by one, to 15 in 2004.

Car drivers were the largest casualty group involved in road crashes, with learner and restricted licence holders noticeable within this group. Motorcyclists also feature prominently in the casualty numbers with 2004 being a particularly bad year.

The most frequent type of crash on rural roads involved a driver losing control of a 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.

The estimated social cost of crashes in the South Wairarapa District in 2004 was \$11.3 million, an overall decrease of \$8.3 million on the previous year.

The specific concerns for the South Wairarapa District are considered overleaf, while the performance in relation to national issues is considered on the back page.

### Major road safety issues

#### South Wairarapa District

Loss of control on bends

Novice drivers

Speed

#### Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



### 2004 road trauma for South Wairarapa District



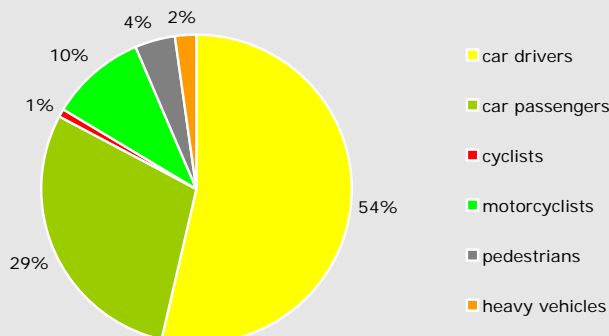
Deaths	0
Serious casualties	15
Minor casualties	43



Fatal crashes	0
Serious injury crashes	11
Minor injury crashes	30
Non-injury crashes	43

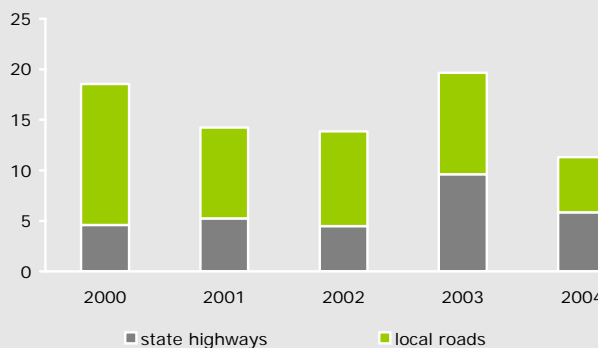
### Road casualties 2000–2004

User type 2000–2004



### Estimated social cost of crashes\*

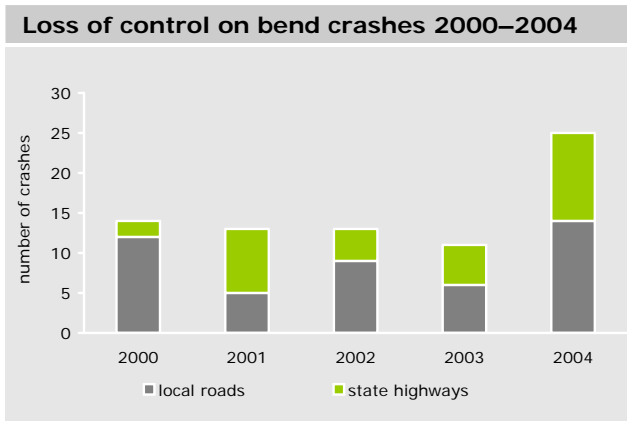
Social cost (\$ million)



\*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 2004 prices.

## Loss of control on bends

Loss of control on bends was the major crash type recorded in the South Wairarapa District between 2000 and 2004. Seventy percent of rural injury crashes and 15 percent of urban injury crashes during this period involved drivers losing control of their vehicles on bends. The majority (59 percent) of these happened on local roads. In 2004 there were 25 of these crashes, the highest number in the last five years.



Excessive speed was the major contributing factor in loss of control crashes with 53 percent involving a driver travelling too fast for the conditions. Other contributing factors included the road being slippery due to rain, oil or loose material and the driver being unable to handle the vehicle.

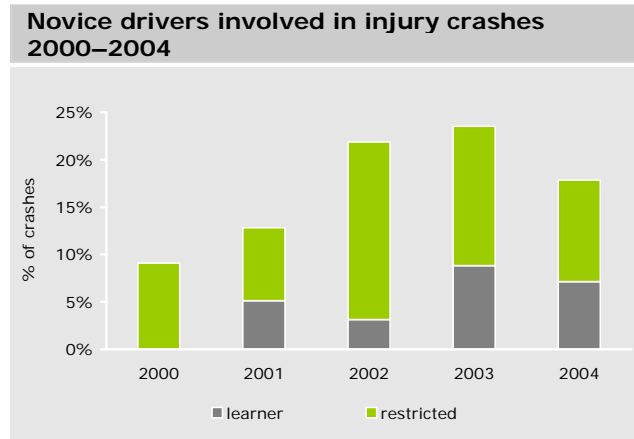
The drivers involved in these crashes were typically male (75 percent) and living locally in the South Wairarapa District (40 percent), with a further 19 percent living in the greater Wairarapa area. Seventeen percent of loss of control crashes involved a motorcycle. In 80 percent of cases only one vehicle was involved.

Striking an external object increases the severity of loss of control crashes. Apart from another vehicle, the most common objects struck were a cliff or bank (24 percent), a ditch (14 percent) or a fence (13 percent).

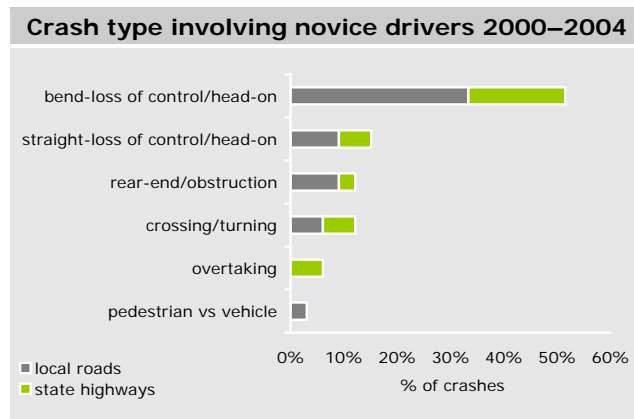
Over half of the crashes (55 percent) occurred between 6 pm Friday and 6 am Monday.

## Novice drivers

Between 2000 and 2004, 17 percent of the drivers involved in injury crashes held a learner or restricted licence. Over those five years there was a rising trend in the involvement of novice drivers in crashes.



Over half of the crashes involving a novice driver were caused by a driver losing control of a vehicle on a bend. Other common types of crashes involved losing control of a vehicle on a straight section of road, crossing or turning manoeuvres at intersections or driveways, and vehicles hitting the rear-end of stationary vehicles or other stationary objects.



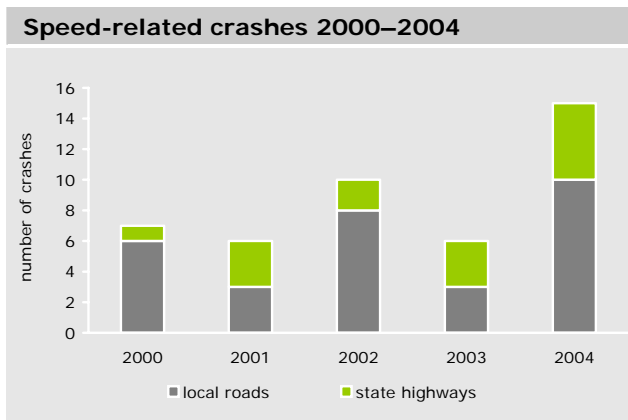
The novice drivers involved in crashes were predominantly male (79 percent), aged between 15 and 29 years and living in the South Wairarapa District (54 percent).

## Speed

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

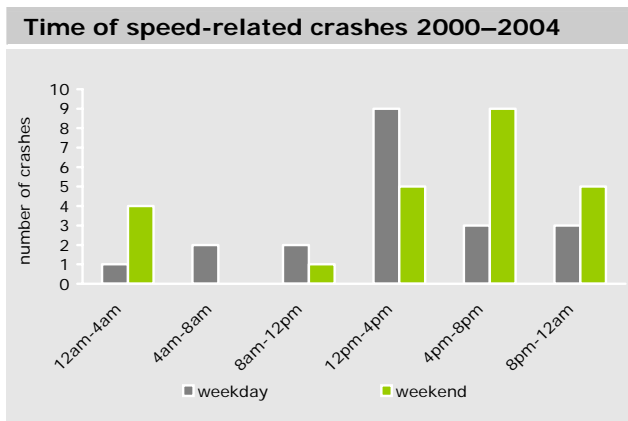
Excessive speed was a factor in 44 injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District between 2000 and 2004, resulting in 77 injuries, including five fatalities. Over this five-year period, speed was the main reported contributing factor for crashes. The percentage was significantly higher than for all of New Zealand and for similar authorities.

The number of speed-related crashes in 2004 was the highest in the last five years. The majority occurred on local roads (68 percent) rather than state highways. Most happened on rural roads (86 percent).



Speeding drivers were typically male (86 percent), under 30 years old (55 percent) and living in the Wairarapa area (61 percent). Thirty-four percent of the drivers were also under the influence of alcohol.

Over half of the speed-related crashes occurred during the weekend, between 6 pm Friday and 6 am Monday.



## Alcohol

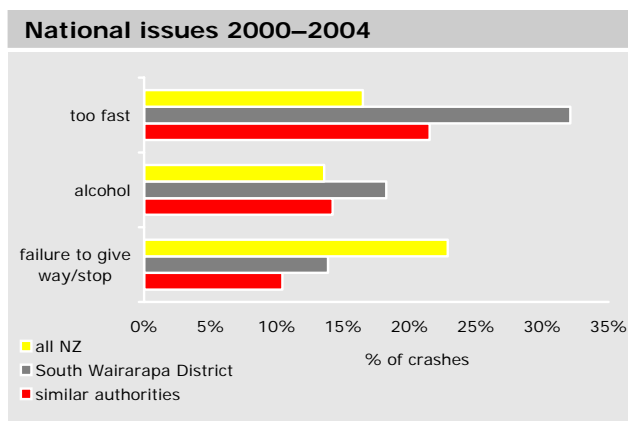
Drivers with a blood alcohol level over the legal limit (80 mg per 100 ml) are three times more likely to be involved in a crash than a sober driver.

Between 2000 and 2004, alcohol was a factor in 25 injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District. This comprised 18 percent of all injury crashes in the district, which was higher than for 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.

Nineteen injury crashes in the South Wairarapa District between 2000 and 2004 involved a vehicle failing to give way. This accounted for 14 percent of all crashes and was greater than for similar local authorities.



## Restraints

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

Between 2000 and 2004 there were 10 driver or passenger fatalities on South Wairarapa District roads. Of those who died, it is estimated that at least one would have been saved if they had been wearing a restraint.

In a 2004 survey, 89 percent of front seat adults were wearing safety belts in the South Wairarapa District. This was lower than the New Zealand average.

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