

# *briefing notes road safety issues*

## *South Wairarapa District*

NZ Transport Agency has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2004–2008 period.

This report is the tenth road safety report for South Wairarapa District. Most of the information, unless otherwise stated in this report, applies to both local roads and state highways.

The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and assist in identifying possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in the district. More detailed information may be obtained from either South Wairarapa District Council (local roads) or NZ Transport Agency. Please refer to the last page for contact details.

The issues chosen for this report are drawn from the most common crash types, those that appear over-represented when South Wairarapa District is compared to similar authorities and those crashes with a high social cost (relating mainly to high numbers of fatal and serious crashes).

We have also included a brief overview of crashes in South Wairarapa District for 2008.

Major road safety issues		2008 road trauma	
<b>South Wairarapa District</b>		<b>Casualties</b>	<b>South Wairarapa District</b>
Loss of control		Deaths	2
Alcohol		Serious injuries	9
Speed		Minor injuries	26
		Total casualties	37
<b>National issues</b>		<b>Crashes</b>	<b>South Wairarapa District</b>
Speed		Fatal crashes	2
Alcohol		Serious injury crashes	6
Failure to give way		Minor injury crashes	23
Restraints		Non-injury crashes	65

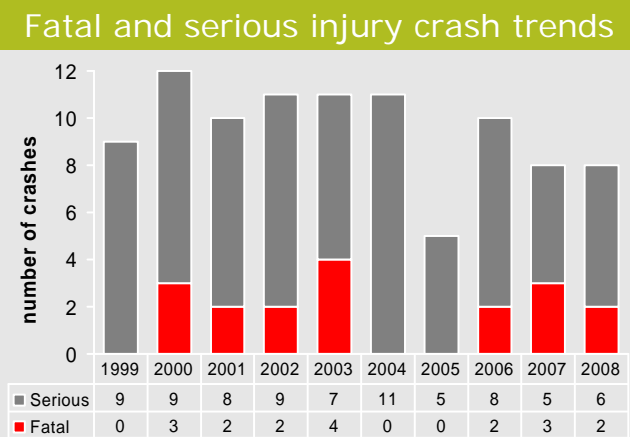
## Overview 2008

In 2008 in South Wairarapa District there were 31 injury crashes and 65 non-injury crashes reported by the New Zealand Police. Fifty-two percent of the total injury crashes in the district were on state highways. The table below shows the number of injuries resulting from these crashes.

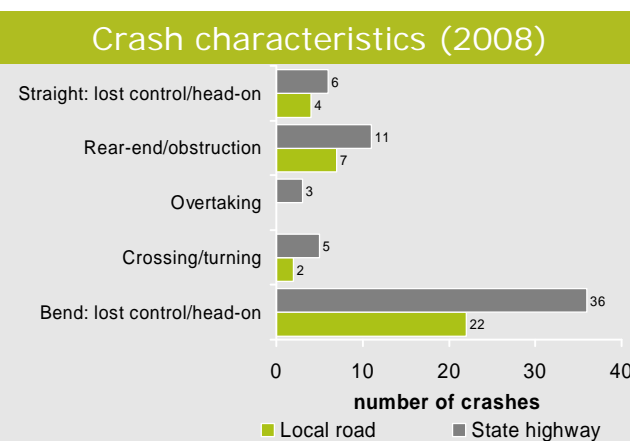
Casualties by injury type in 2008				
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>37</b>
Local roads vs state highways				
Local roads	2	5	12	19
State highways	0	4	14	18
Rural vs urban roads				
Rural <sup>1</sup>	2	9	20	31
Urban	0	0	6	6

Note: 1/ Rural - area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more

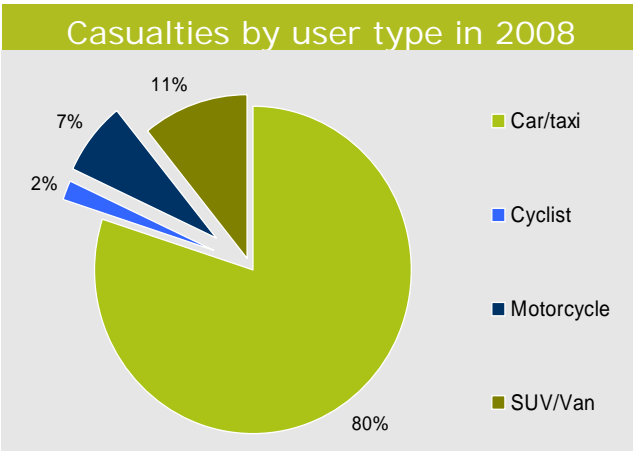
The latest trends show a decrease in the total number of fatal and serious injury crashes over the past 10 years. The latest five year trend shows an increase in fatal crashes and a decrease in serious injury crashes.



The main type of crash (of all crashes in the district, both injury and non-injury combined) in 2008 was *lost control/head-on at bend* followed by *rear-end/obstruction* crash movement type.



The majority of casualties in 2008 were car drivers and their passengers. Meanwhile, vulnerable road users (pedestrians/cyclists/motorcyclists) constituted 9% of all casualties.



Further information about all crashes in 2008 on:

#### Local roads

- Worst month: January (20 percent)
- Worst day of week: Saturday (26 percent)
- Wet road crashes: 14 percent
- Night time crashes: 43 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 47 percent
- Too fast for conditions (injury crashes): 40 percent
- Crashes at intersections: 26 percent
- Road factors: none
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): 53 percent
- At fault driver held full NZ licence (injury crashes): 59 percent

#### State highways

- Worst month: March (16 percent)
- Worst day of week: Saturday (29 percent)
- Wet road crashes: 54 percent
- Night time crashes: 30 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 6 percent
- Too fast for conditions (injury crashes): 6 percent
- Crashes at intersections: 13 percent
- Road factors: 28 percent
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): 76 percent
- At fault driver held full NZ licence (injury crashes): 65 percent

### Social cost of crashes

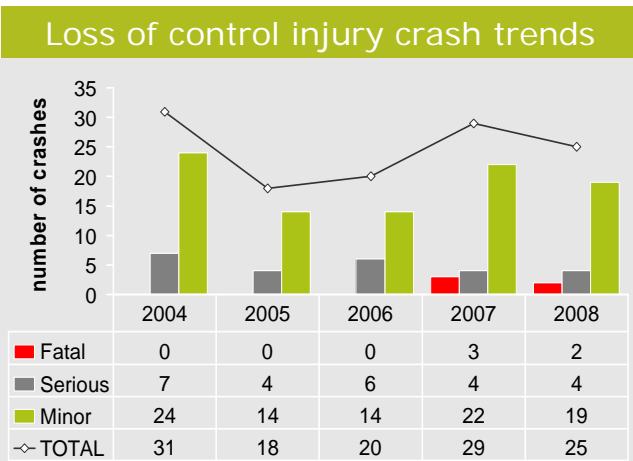
Local roads	\$ 6.14M
State highways	\$ 10.96M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 17.11M</b>

NOTE: The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality, loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage.

## Loss of control

During the most recent five year period (2004-2008) 75 percent of all injury crashes in South Wairarapa District were due to loss of control. These crashes resulted in 5 deaths, 33 serious injuries and 128 minor injuries. There were a further 162 non-injury crashes reported involving loss of control.

The latest five year trends show the total number of injury crashes to be gradually increasing after a significant fall in 2005. The combined total of fatal and serious crashes has remained steady through this period.



The table below shows a breakdown of the general environ of all loss of control crashes (285) in the district for the last five year period.

Loss of control crashes	Local Urban	Local Rural	SH urban	SH Rural
At bends	3%	27%	2%	48%
Straight	3%	7%	4%	6%

Forty percent of the loss of control crashes were on local roads, however their share in the total fatalities was more than 60 percent. Eighty percent of loss of control crashes occurred at bends. These involved a driver losing control of their vehicle, then commonly running off the road, hitting a roadside object (77 percent) or colliding with another vehicle (22 percent).

The three most common roadside hazards struck in loss of control type crashes were *fences* (29 percent), *banks* (21 percent) and *ditches* (14 percent) out of 310 total reported objects struck. Hitting these objects can result in more serious injuries than would otherwise be sustained.

The following table shows the main characteristics of these loss of control crashes. Alcohol was a factor in a fifth of these crashes, a third recorded too fast for conditions, a similar number recorded poor handling as a factor, two-fifths occurred in wet conditions and a similar number were during hours of darkness.

Loss of control crashes	
Crash characteristics	Percentage of crashes
Single vehicle	78%
Alcohol (injury crashes)	19%
Too fast for the conditions (injury crashes)	33%
Road factors	23%
Poor handling (injury crashes)	35%
Rural road	88%
Wet road	41%
Night time	38%

Further information about all loss of control crashes in the district 2004-2008 on:

### Local roads

- 3 deaths, 19 serious injuries and 61 minor injuries
- Worst month: November (14 crashes)
- Worst day of week: Sunday (33 crashes)
- Wet road crashes: 26 percent
- Night time crashes: 40 percent
- Road factors: 15 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 28 percent
- Most common injury crash factors: too fast (42 percent) followed by poor handling (38 percent)
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): 62 percent
- At fault driver held full NZ licence (injury crashes): 59 percent
- Most common at fault drivers' age group (injury crashes): 15 to 29 years old

### State highways

- 2 deaths, 14 serious injuries and 67 minor injuries
- Worst month: March (20 crashes)
- Worst day of week: Saturday (44 crashes)
- Wet road crashes: 52 percent
- Night time crashes: 33 percent
- Road factors: 28 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 10 percent
- Most common injury crash factors: poor handling (32 percent) followed by too fast (24 percent)
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): 77 percent
- At fault driver held full NZ licence (injury crashes): 60 percent
- Most common at fault drivers' age group (injury crashes): 15 to 19 years old followed by 30 to 49 years old

## Alcohol

Alcohol affects the way people drive. Studies show that the risk of being involved in a crash increases rapidly as a driver's blood alcohol level rises. A driver over the legal limit (80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood) is three times more likely to be involved in a crash than a sober driver.

People with high blood alcohol levels are more likely to be injured or killed in a crash than sober drivers in similar crashes.

During 2008, alcohol-affected drivers contributed to 34 percent of all fatal crashes and 15 percent of all injury crashes in New Zealand.

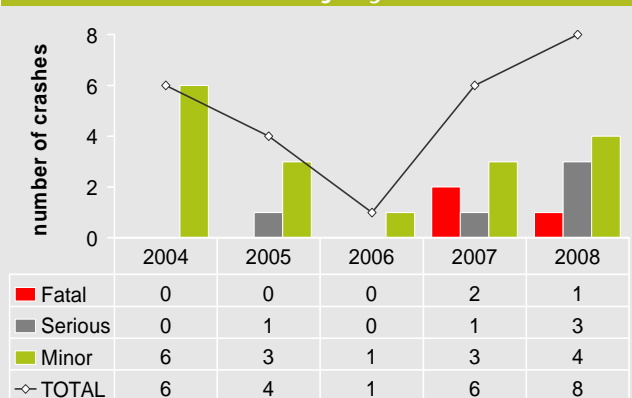
### South Wairarapa District

During the most recent five year period (2004-2008) 15 percent of all injury crashes in the district were alcohol-related. These crashes resulted in 3 deaths, 6 serious injuries and 28 minor injuries.

Alcohol was a factor in 26 percent of all injury crashes in 2008, which is significantly higher than both South Wairarapa District's five year average (15 percent) and the latest five year average for similar authorities (15 percent).

The latest five year trends show an increase in the total number of alcohol-related injury crashes and also an increase in the seriousness of injury, the increase in the combined total of fatal and serious injury crashes.

### Alcohol-related injury crash trends



A third of alcohol-related crashes occurred on state highways, mostly in rural areas (61 percent). These crashes account for two thirds (67 percent) of the alcohol-related fatalities.

Forty-two percent of at fault drivers involved in alcohol-related crashes held a full New Zealand drivers' licence. More than half of the at fault drivers were in the group 15-29 years age group (58 percent).

### Alcohol and speed

Of the 25 alcohol-related injury crashes in the district 2004-2008, a third (36 percent) recorded drivers driving too fast for the conditions. Three quarters (73 percent) of crashes where both alcohol and speed were contributing factors were on local rural roads and mostly during the hours of darkness (93 percent). Half (50 percent) the at fault drivers were male under the age of 24 years.

Further information about alcohol-related crashes in the district 2004-2008 on:

### Local roads

- 2 deaths, 4 serious injuries and 21 minor injuries
- Worst months: January and December (5 crashes each)
- Worst day of week: Saturday (11 crashes)
- Wet road crashes: 28 percent
- Night time crashes: 78 percent
- Crashes at intersection: 22 percent
- Too fast for conditions (injury crashes): 50 percent
- Most common injury crash factors: poor handling (28 percent) and poor observation (17 percent)
- Road factors: 9 percent
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): 58 percent
- At fault drivers held full NZ licence (injury crashes): 53 percent
- Most common at fault drivers' age group (injury crashes): 15 to 24 years old

### State highways

- 1 death, 2 serious injuries and 7 minor injuries
- Worst month: June (3 crashes)
- Worst days of week: Sunday (7 crashes)
- Wet road crashes: 28 percent
- Night time crashes: 83 percent
- Crashes at intersection: 33 percent
- Too fast for conditions (injury crashes): nil
- Most common injury crash factors: poor handling and fatigue (29 percent each)
- Road factors: nil
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): 86 percent
- At fault drivers held full NZ licence (injury crashes): 57 percent
- Most common at fault drivers' age group (injury crashes): 20 to 24 and to 30 to 39 years old

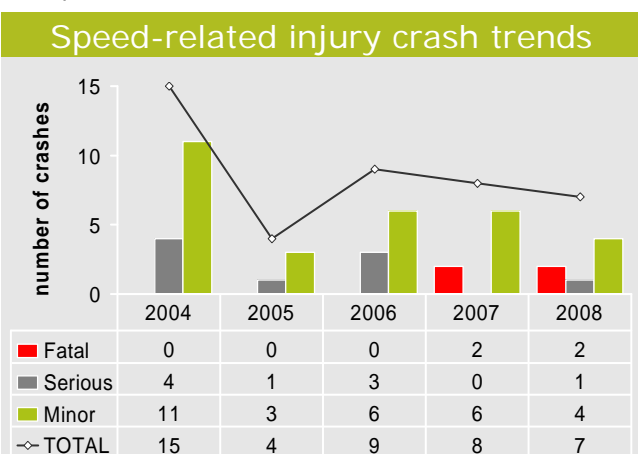
## Speed

Speed is one of the major contributing factors to road crashes. In 2008, excessive speed contributed to 34 percent of all fatal crashes (113 crashes) and 17 percent of all injury crashes (1935 crashes) in New Zealand.

In South Wairarapa District, excessive speed was a factor in a quarter (26 percent) of all injury crashes during the last five year period, which is higher than the average for similar authorities (23 percent).

There were 43 speed-related injury and 60 non-injury crashes reported in the last five years resulting in 4 deaths, 14 serious injuries and 49 minor injuries.

The latest five year trends show a decrease in the total number of speed-related injury crashes. However, there has been a little change in the combined total of fatal and serious injuries over this period.



Fifty-five percent of the speed-related crashes were on state highways. Of the 103 speed-related crashes, 54 percent occurred on rural state highways and 39 percent occurred on rural local roads.

Thirty-eight percent of the at fault drivers in the district were either learner or restricted licence holders.

The following table shows a breakdown of the speed limit environ of all speed-related crashes in South Wairarapa District 2004-2008. Rural roads are roads with a speed limit of 80km/h or more.

Speed-related crashes					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Urban	1	0	2	2	7
Rural	20	14	20	21	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>

Males represented 78 percent of at fault drivers in speed-related injury crashes and 45 percent of them were less than 24 years old as shown in the following table.

## Age and gender of at fault drivers

Age (years) injury crashes and numbers involved	Male	Female	Total
15 - 19	9	2	11
20 - 24	8	1	9
25 - 29	3	3	6
30 - 39	6	1	7
40 - 49	5	1	6
50 - 59	4	1	5
60 - 69	0	0	0
70+	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>45</b>

Further information about speed-related crashes in the district 2004-2008 on:

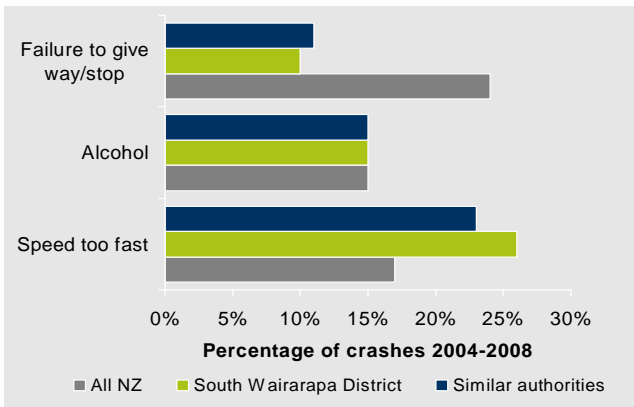
### Local roads

- 3 deaths, 9 serious injuries and 26 minor injuries
- Worst month: June (8 crashes)
- Worst day of week: Sunday (14 crashes)
- Wet road crashes: 33 percent
- Night time crashes 50 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 35 percent
- Most common injury crash factor: loss of control at bends (85 percent)
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): 78 percent
- At fault drivers held full NZ licence (injury crashes): 50 percent
- Most common at fault drivers' age group (injury crashes): 15 to 29 years old

### State highways

- 1 death, 5 serious injuries and 23 minor injuries
- Worst month: March (7 crashes)
- Worst days of week: Saturday and Sunday (12 crashes each)
- Wet road crashes: 65 percent
- Night time crashes: 30 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): nil
- Most common injury crash factor: loss of control at bends (86 percent)
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): 76 percent
- At fault drivers held full NZ licence (injury crashes): 41 percent
- Most common at fault drivers' age group (injury crashes): 15 to 24 years old

## National issues



### Speed

Speed too fast was recorded in 26 percent of injury crashes in South Wairarapa District in the last five years, resulting in 4 deaths and 63 injuries. Speed as a factor in crashes in the district is steady, however it is relatively high when compared with both national and similar authorities averages.

Eighty-eight percent of speed-related injury crashes were *bend-lost control/head-on* crash type. *Alcohol* and *poor handling* were the other driver factors most often associated with speed. Drivers aged under 25 years were involved in about half of these speed-related crashes.

### Alcohol

In South Wairarapa District, alcohol was recorded in 15 percent of injury crashes in the last five years resulting in 3 deaths and 34 injures. Alcohol as a factor in crashes is not reducing in the district. Eighty percent of alcohol-related crashes were in rural areas. Ninety-two percent of these involved *loss of control/head-on* crashes. Travelling *too fast*, *poor handling* and *fatigue* were the driver factors often associated with alcohol. Sixty-six percent of at fault drivers in these crashes were males.

### Failure to give way

In South Wairarapa District, *failure to give way or stop* was reported in 10 percent of all reported injury crashes for the last five years resulting in 28 injuries. Most (76 percent) of these were *crossing/turning* manoeuvres and were often associated with failure to look for other parties. Sixty-five percent of at fault drivers in these crashes were males.

### Restraints

The Ministry of Transport conducts surveys of restraint use. According to 2008 survey results restraint use rate in South Wairarapa District for front seat and rear seat are 93 and 96 percent respectively (while corresponding national rates are 95 and 87 percent). The results are obtainable from the Ministry of Transport website.

<http://www.transport.govt.nz/research/safetybeltstatistics/>

## Contacts

### NZ Transport Agency

Wellington Regional Office

PSIS House, L9  
20 Ballance Street  
PO Box 5084  
Wellington 6145

Tel 64 4 894 5200  
Fax 64 4 894 3305

<http://www.nzta.govt.nz>

Wellington Regional Director

Deborah Hume (04 894 6417)

Programmes & Funding Manager

Peter Hookham (04 894 5249)

Senior Programmes Advisor (Engineering)

Sam Wilkie (04 931 8914)

Senior Programmes Advisor (Education)

Roy Hitchcock (04 931 8910)

Highways & Network Operations (Safety Manager)

Fabian Marsh (04 894 5222)

Performance Measurement Manager

Balt Gregorius (04 894 6156)

Senior Engineer (Performance Information - CAS)

James King (04 931 8917)

### South Wairarapa District Council

Manager Works & Services

Ravi Mangar (06 306 9611)  
PO Box 27 477 Martinborough

### Wairarapa Road Safety Council

Road Safety Manger

Ruth Locker (06 377 1379)  
PO Box 444 Masterton

### New Zealand Police

Road Policing Manager

Wellington Central  
PO Box 693 Wellington  
Tel 04 381 2000