



briefing notes - road safety issues

Southland District

Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this road safety issues report, it is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2002–2006 period.

The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and be a resource to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in the Southland District.

All the material, unless otherwise stated, in this report applies to both local roads and to State Highways (Transit roads).

In each year's report, one year's data is added to a five year block and the oldest dropped, so it is unlikely that the core issues for any local body would change radically from report to report.

The issues chosen for this report are drawn from either the most common crash types, those that appear over-represented when the Southland District is compared to similar local bodies, or those with a high social cost (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes mainly). We have included a brief overview of crashes in the district for 2006.

We encourage local bodies to use their free access to the Ministry of Transport Crash Analysis System to delve deeper into the highlighted issues.

| Major road safety issues | | 2006 road trauma | |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------|-----|
| Southland District | | Casualties | |
| Loss of control on rural roads | | Deaths | 6 |
| Speed | | Serious casualties | 61 |
| Alcohol | | Minor casualties | 213 |
| Nationally | | Crashes | |
| Speed | | Fatal crashes | 6 |
| Alcohol | | Serious injury crashes | 53 |
| Failure to give way | | Minor injury crashes | 113 |
| Restraint use | | Non-injury crashes | 143 |

Overview

In 2006 on local roads in the Southland District there were 79 injury crashes and 56 non-injury crashes, in addition there were 92 injury crashes and 87 non-injury crashes on State Highways, as reported by the New Zealand Police.

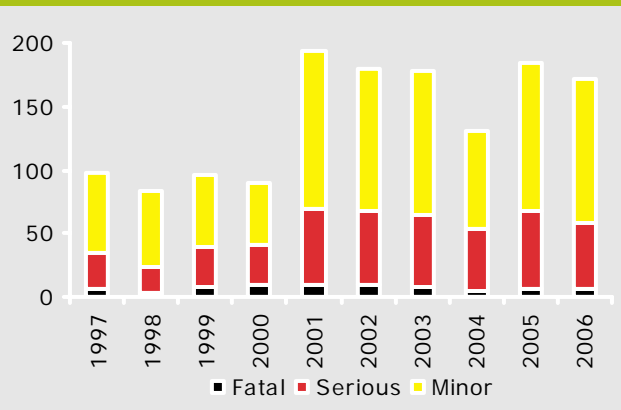
The table below shows the number of injuries resulting from 2006 crashes by rural or urban areas for both local and Transit roads (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

Casualties by injury type 2006

| | Fatalities | Serious injuries | Minor injuries | Total |
|-------|------------|------------------|----------------|-------|
| Rural | 6 | 49 | 190 | 245 |
| Urban | 0 | 12 | 23 | 35 |
| Total | 6 | 61 | 213 | 280 |

Fatalities in the district have fluctuated over the last ten years from a high of 13 in 2002 to a low of four in 2004. Serious injuries continue the steady fall from the ten-year high of 81 in 2001. As shown in the table above, nearly nine out of ten injuries occur on higher speed rural roads.

Injury crashes 1997 to 2006



| Crash movement 2006 | Percentage of all crashes of this type |
|--------------------------|--|
| Lost control at bend | 44% |
| Lost control on straight | 28% |
| Crossing/turning | 5% |
| Rear end/obstruction | 15% |
| Overtaking | 3% |
| Pedestrian vs vehicle | 1% |
| Miscellaneous | 3% |

Further information about 2006 injury and non-injury crashes on local roads:

- Worst month October (15), best June (7)
- Wet road 26 percent
- Night time 47 percent
- Intersection 19 percent
- 69 percent of at fault drivers male (injury crashes)
- 58 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes held a full NZ licence

Further information about 2006 injury and non-injury crashes on Transit roads

- Worst month February (19), best September (6)
- Wet/icy road 47 percent
- Night time 31 percent
- 64 percent of at fault drivers male (injury crashes)
- 36 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes held a full NZ licence

It has been observed nationally that there is a growing group of drivers who have not been exiting the graduated licence system and who are choosing to stay on restricted licences. This is making it increasingly difficult to distinguish drivers who are truly inexperienced from those that should have moved to a full licence. As a consequence it is more difficult to target educational material.

In the Southland District 20 percent of at fault drivers in injury crashes held a learner or restricted licence. This is below the level found nationally, primarily because of the number of overseas drivers who crash on Southland roads, over 25 percent last year.

| Driver licence status 2006 | Percentage of total 'at fault' drivers (NZ value in brackets) |
|----------------------------|---|
| Full | 45.7 (58.4) % |
| Learner | 5.2 (9.5) % |
| Restricted | 15.0 (17.6) % |
| Never licenced | 2.6 (2.2) % |
| Disqualified | 1.3 (1.7) % |
| Overseas | 25.4 (4.2) % |
| Expired | 0 (0.5) % |
| Other / unknown | 4.5 (5.6) % |

Rural crashes

In 2006 83 percent of reported crashes in the Southland District occurred on rural roads, that is roads with a speed limit greater than 70km/h. These crashes resulted in six fatalities, 49 serious injuries and 190 minor injuries. There were a further 111 non injury crashes reported during the year.

Over three quarters of rural crashes involved a vehicle losing control and either leaving the road or colliding with an oncoming vehicle.

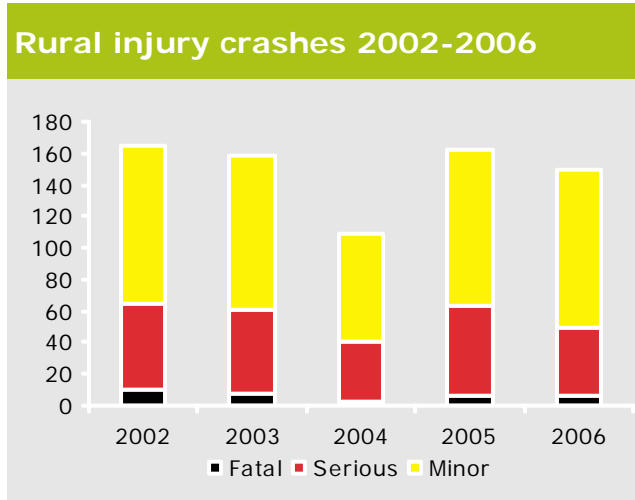
After drivers lose control of their vehicles they often crash into roadside hazards such as ditches, banks, poles or trees. It is hitting these objects that can result in a relatively minor off-road event turning into something far more serious.

The following table shows the number of various road side hazards that were hit in rural crashes in the Southland District during the period 2002-2006. Note that the same hazard can be struck more than once in the same crash and that each crash could have a number of objects of different types hit.

| Type of roadside hazard | Local road | State Highway |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Animals | 1 | 0 |
| Bridge ends | 21 | 25 |
| Cliff or bank | 47 | 114 |
| Ditch | 63 | 161 |
| Fence | 139 | 218 |
| House or building | 1 | 1 |
| Guard rail | 3 | 13 |
| Over bank | 30 | 46 |
| Parked vehicle | 3 | 2 |
| Post or pole | 38 | 39 |
| Slip or flood | 0 | 1 |
| Stray animal | 40 | 53 |
| Traffic sign | 21 | 54 |
| Train | 2 | 0 |
| Tree | 38 | 57 |
| Water/River | 5 | 6 |

The 261 reported crashes on rural roads in 2006 was an increase on the previous two years but slightly below the ten year high of 282 recorded in 2001.

The following graph shows the number of reported injury crashes on rural roads over the last five years.



Further information about rural crashes in the Southland District in 2006:

Local roads

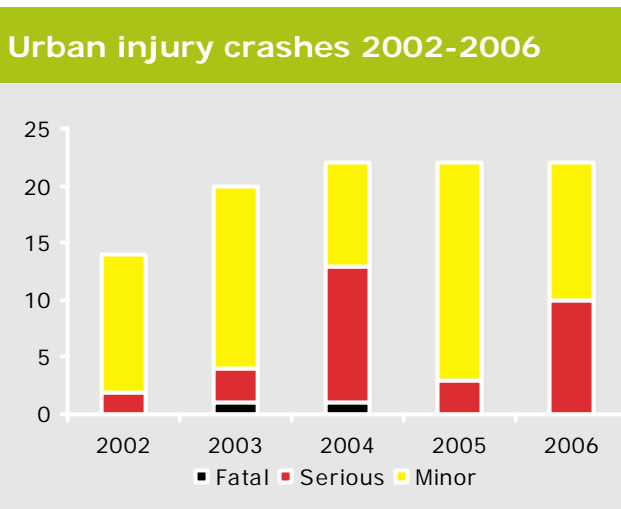
- Four deaths, 22 serious injuries and 74 minor injuries
- At fault drivers 69 percent male
- Most common crash type - losing control on a bend
- Ten percent of injury crashes involved alcohol over limit
- 30 percent of injury crashes involved a vehicle travelling too fast for the conditions
- 24 percent of crashes were on a wet surface
- 43 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 77 percent of crashes involved a single vehicle

Transit roads

- Two deaths, 28 serious injuries and 116 minor injuries
- At fault drivers 64 percent male
- Most common crash type - loss of control on a bend
- Nine percent of injury crashes involved alcohol over limit
- 21 percent of injury crashes involved a vehicle travelling too fast for the conditions
- 30 percent of all crashes were on a wet surface
- 17 percent of all crashes were on an icy surface
- 33 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 74 percent of crashes involved a single vehicle
- 37 percent of at fault drivers held an overseas licence

Urban crashes

In the Southland District in 2006 17 percent of crashes occurred on urban roads. 12 people were seriously injured and 23 received minor injuries in urban crashes and there were a further 33 crashes reported that resulted in no injury. The 22 injury crashes recorded was the same number as in the previous two years.



Over half of all urban crashes in the district involved a vehicle losing control. 24 percent of urban crashes were a rear end type collision or hitting a parked vehicle. 36 percent of all urban crashes took place at intersections.

The most common factor in urban crashes was 'Poor Observation' which means that one driver failed to look and make sure that the road was clear before making a manoeuvre.

Further information about urban crashes in the Southland District in 2006:

Local roads

- 11 serious injuries, 20 minor injuries and 25 non injury crashes
- At fault drivers 74 percent male
- 26 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 37 percent of crashes involved travelling too fast for the conditions
- 32 percent of crashes were on a wet surface
- 57 percent of crashes occurred at night
- 59 percent of crashes involved a single vehicle
- 32 percent of crashes occurred at intersections

Transit roads

- One serious injury, three minor injuries and eight non injury crashes
- All at fault drivers in injury crashes were male
- 33 percent of crashes involved travelling too fast for the conditions
- 36 percent of crashes were on a wet surface
- 91 percent of crashes occurred during daylight hours
- 54 percent of crashes occurred at intersections
- 73 percent of crashes involved more than one vehicle

Speed

'Too fast for the conditions' was recorded in 26 percent of injury crashes in the district in the last five years resulting in ten deaths, 96 serious injuries and 284 minor injuries. There were also 114 non-injury speed-related crashes reported. The number of speed related crashes was 30 percent higher in 2006 than in 2005.

91 percent of speed-related crashes over the last five years were loss of control type crashes, 55 percent of which took place on the state highway network. Road conditions do play a factor with 37 percent of crashes taking place on a wet road while nine percent occurred on ice. One in five speed related crashes also involved excess alcohol.

70 percent of at fault drivers in speed related crashes over the last five years were male, with drivers under 20 years old accounting for 20 percent of them.

Alcohol

Alcohol was a factor in 14 percent of injury crashes in the district over the last five years resulting in 12 deaths, 56 serious injuries and 112 minor injuries. There were also 75 non-injury alcohol-related crashes reported. The 19 alcohol related crashes in 2006 was the lowest number in the last five years.

Over the last five years 83 percent of at fault drivers in alcohol related crashes were male.

As is to be expected, a large number of alcohol related crashes occurred at night, 78 percent. 86 percent of crashes involved a single vehicle with loss of control either on a straight or bend being the most common type of crash. Alcohol was combined with travelling too fast for the conditions in 36 percent of injury crashes. Fatigue also contributed in 12 percent of alcohol related crashes over the last five years.