

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 2003–2007 period.

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

This report is the ninth road safety report for Southland District. All the material unless otherwise stated in this report applies to both local roads and to Transit New Zealand (Transit NZ) roads.

In each new report one year's data is added to a five year block and the oldest dropped so it is unlikely that the core issues 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 Southland District is compared to similar local bodies or those with high social cost (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes mainly). We have included a brief overview of crashes in the district.

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

Major road safety issues

Southland District

Loss of Control

Young drivers

Overseas drivers

2007 road trauma

Casualties

Southland District

Deaths 4

Serious casualties 65

Minor casualties 213

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints

Crashes

Southland District

Fatal crashes 4

Serious injury crashes 53

Minor injury crashes 115

Non-injury crashes 127

Overview

In 2007 on local roads in Southland District there were 66 injury crashes and 53 non-injury crashes. In addition there were 106 injury crashes and 75 non-injury crashes on Transit New Zealand (Transit NZ) roads, both as reported by the New Zealand Police.

The table below shows the number of injuries resulting from the 172 injury crashes, by rural or urban areas for all roads, (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

Casualties by environment 2007				
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	4	56	189	249
Urban	0	9	24	33
Total	4	65	213	282

The annual numbers of fatal and serious crashes increased from 23 in 1998 to a high of 69 in 2001. They have since decreased to 57 in 2007. The annual number of minor injury crashes increased notably. In 2007 the numbers of minor and non-injury crashes followed a similar pattern increasing from 1998 to 2001 and then decreasing to 243 in 2007.

Crash trends				
Year	Fatal crashes	Serious injury crashes	Minor injury crashes	Non-injury crashes
1998	3	20	61	118
1999	8	32	56	150
2000	10	31	48	166
2001	10	59	125	153
2002	10	57	112	147
2003	8	57	113	136
2004	4	49	78	163
2005	6	61	117	116
2006	6	56	115	147
2007	4	53	115	128

Injury crashes 2003 - 2007		
Crash type or contributory cause 2003 to 2007	Local Road Percent of injury crashes	Transit Road Percent of injury crashes
Alcohol	17%	13%
Too fast	24%	23%
Straight—lost control crash	27%	31%
Bend—lost control crash	47%	49%
Crossing / turning crash	10%	6%
Road factors	27%	31%
Vulnerable road users (Percent of casualties)	12%	3%
1, Pedestrians	2%	1%
2, Cyclists	1%	1%
3, Motorcyclists	8%	2%

Further information about 2003 to 2007 injury and non-injury crashes on local roads:

- Worst month February
- Worst day Sunday
- 29 percent on wet roads
- 40 percent at night
- 18 percent at intersections
- Social cost of crashes in 2007 was \$27.0m

Further information about 2003 to 2007 injury and non-injury crashes on Transit NZ roads

- Worst month July
- Worst day Friday
- 40 percent on wet roads
- 34 percent at night
- 14 percent at intersections
- Social cost of crashes in 2007 was \$33.5m

Loss of Control

Between 2003 and 2007 69 percent of all crashes in Southland District involved loss of control. These crashes resulted in 20 fatalities, 256 serious injuries and 754 minor injuries.

Annual crash numbers have been generally constant.

Loss of Control Crashes 2003 to 2007				
Crash year	Fatal crashes	Serious crashes	Minor crashes	Non-injury crashes
2003	5	49	90	85
2004	3	34	59	91
2005	5	46	85	69
2006	3	41	98	92
2007	2	43	88	77
Total	18	213	420	414

Most loss of control crashes occur when a driver loses control of their vehicle and either runs off the road or collides with another vehicle.

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

The three most common roadside hazards struck in injury crashes in Southland District were cliffs or banks (117), ditches (136) and fences (201) from a total of 769 objects struck.

Main characteristics of injury loss of control crashes	
Crash characteristic	Percentage of crashes
Bend	62%
Straight road	38%
Single vehicle	89%
Alcohol	17%
Excessive speed for the conditions	28%
Road factors	33%
Poor handling	46%
Rural road	91%
Wet road	37%
Night time	33%

Further information about injury loss of control crashes (2003 to 2007) on local roads in Southland District :

- 7 deaths, 123 serious injuries and 277 minor injuries
- 65 percent of at fault drivers were male
- Most common crash type "Lost control on bend"
- Most common age group 15-19 years
- 21 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 28 percent of crashes involved speed
- Worst month January, February, April, October, December
- Worst day of week Sunday
- Worst time period 3 pm - 6 pm

Further information about injury loss of control crashes (2003 to 2007) on Transit NZ roads in Southland District:

- 13 deaths, 133 serious injuries and 477 minor injuries
- 62 percent of at fault drivers were male
- Most common crash type "Lost control on bend"
- Most common age group 20-24 years
- 15 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 28 percent of crashes involved speed
- Worst month July
- Worst day of week Sunday
- Worst time period 3 pm - 6 pm

Young drivers

Young drivers are those aged less than 25 years.

This analysis is based on injury crashes only as driver age is not recorded in non-injury crashes.

In Southland District between 2003 and 2007 44 percent of injury crashes involved young drivers. These crashes resulted in 13 fatalities, 158 serious injuries and 450 minor injuries.

The annual number of injury crashes involving young drivers has fluctuated over the last five years. There is no obvious long term trend in the numbers, but they have decreased from a high of 87 in 2005 to 70 in 2007.

Injury crashes involving young drivers				
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total
2003	2	23	48	73
2004	3	26	37	66
2005	5	25	57	87
2006	3	25	43	71
2007	0	28	42	70
Total	13	127	227	367

40 percent of the 386 young drivers in these crashes had a learner or restricted licence. Nearly two thirds of them were males and 48 percent were 15-19 year olds. Ten were under 15 years old.

Nearly all the young drivers were from Southland or Invercargill.

Young drivers in injury crashes (2003 - 2007)			
Licence type	Female	Male	Total
Full	35	89	124
Learner	14	26	40
Restricted	53	64	117
Overseas	18	30	48
Never licensed	8	15	23
Disqualified	4	11	15
Other (unknown, wrong class)	4	15	19
Total	136	250	386

Injury crashes involving young drivers (2003 - 2007)		
Crash type or contributory cause	Urban roads % of injury crashes	Rural roads % of injury crashes
Alcohol	28	18
Speed	28	31
Failed to stop/Give way	28	8
Poor handling	28	45
Poor observation	39	25
Lost control - straight	28	28
Lost control - bend	26	50
Rear end / obstruction	9	7
Crossing / turning	28	7

Further information about the 54 injury crashes involving young drivers on urban roads in Southland District 2003 to 2007:

- 65 percent were on local roads and 35 percent were on Transit NZ roads
- 46 percent involved more than one party
- 39 percent at intersections
- 50 percent at night
- 28 percent in the wet
- Worst month July
- Worst day of week Sunday

Further information about the 313 injury crashes involving young drivers on rural roads in Southland District 2003 to 2007:

- 46 percent were on local roads and 54 percent were on Transit NZ roads
- 26 percent involved more than one party
- 11 percent at intersections
- 39 percent at night
- 34 percent in the wet
- Worst month March
- Worst day of week Sunday

Overseas drivers

In Southland District between 2003 and 2007 there were 167 injury crashes that involved overseas drivers. These crashes resulted in 1 fatalities, 64 serious injuries and 262 minor injuries.

These drivers include both tourists and New Zealand residents driving on an overseas licence.

In 2007 there was the highest number of injury crashes involving overseas drivers in the last five years.

Injuries in crashes involving overseas drivers

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Fatal	0	0	0	0	1
Serious	8	6	12	8	12
Minor	29	11	27	36	17
Total	37	17	39	44	30

In Southland District, Lost control accounted for 87 percent of all crashes involving overseas drivers. Almost three quarters of these were on bends. The crash factors most often reported in crashes with overseas drivers were Poor handling, speed and Poor observation.

Males drivers of all ages made up 68 percent of at fault drivers in these crashes.

The home locations of the drivers were

South America	1
Australia	17
Europe	27
North America	17
Asia	28
United kingdom	18

Further information about the 167 injury crashes involving overseas drivers in Southland District 2003 to 2007:

- The most common crash type was "Loss of control on a bend"
- 11 percent at intersections
- 8 percent at night
- 20 percent in wet or icy conditions
- Worst month February
- Worst day of week Thursday
- Worst times midday - 6 pm

National issues

This section contains some brief information on the key national road safety issues as measured in Southland District. They may have been covered elsewhere in this document or not be a specific issue.

Speed

In Southland District, "Too fast" was recorded in 190 fatal and injury crashes in the district in the last five years resulting in 4 deaths and 338 injuries. Speed as a factor in crashes is reducing in the district.

79 percent of all speed-related crashes were Lost control on bends. Poor handling was the other driver factors most often associated with speed in injury crashes.

68 percent of at fault drivers in these injury crashes were males. The most common ages of these drivers were between the ages of 15 to 24 years .

Alcohol

In Southland District, alcohol was involved in 121 fatal and injury crashes in the district in the last five years resulting in 8 deaths, and 176 other injuries. The number of injury crashes involving alcohol is not reducing.

74 percent of all alcohol crashes were in rural areas of the district. 91 percent were Lost control on a bend. Speed and Poor handling were the other factors often associated with alcohol in injury crashes.

82 percent of at fault drivers in these injury crashes were males. The most common ages of these drivers were between the ages of 15 to 24 years .

Failure to give way

In Southland District, failure to give way or stop was reported in 68 fatal and injury crashes during the last five years resulting in 2 deaths and 87 other injuries.

Poor observation was the driver factor most often associated with failure to give way.

66 percent of at fault drivers in these injury crashes were males. The most common ages of these drivers were between the ages of 15 to 19 years .

Restraints

The Ministry of Transport conducts surveys of restraint use. The results of these surveys are at a regional level, and may not be fully appropriate to a Territorial Authority. The results are obtainable from the Ministry of Transport website.

<http://www.transport.govt.nz/belts-index/>