

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 key road safety issues in the Taranaki Region, which covers New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki local authorities.

In 2003, there were 10 deaths as a result of road crashes in the Taranaki Region. While there were three less fatalities compared with the previous year, the region experienced 21 more serious casualties. The total number of fatal and serious injury crashes increased from 58 in 2002 to 72 in 2003. Road users in the 15 to 19 age group made up 22 percent of all casualties during the 1999–2003 period.

Forty-one percent of injury crashes between 1999 and 2003 in the Taranaki Region occurred at intersections. In urban areas in 2003, there was a 20 percent increase in intersection crashes compared with the previous year. Speed-related injury crashes on rural roads increased by 80 percent in the past year, bringing the number of crashes in line with similar local authorities and the national average.

Alcohol was a factor in 15 percent of all injury crashes in the Taranaki Region over the 1999–2003 period.

The estimated social cost of crashes in the Taranaki Region for 2003 was \$111.71 million, compared with \$110 million in the previous year.

Both local and national road safety issues are identified below. The specific concerns for the Taranaki Region are considered in detail overleaf.

Major road safety issues

Taranaki Region

- Younger road users
- Intersections
- Speed
- Alcohol

Nationally

- Speed
- Alcohol
- Failure to give way
- Restraints

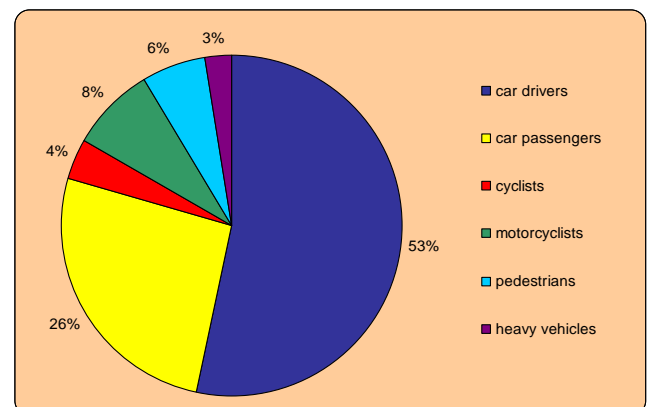


2003 road trauma for Taranaki Region

♀	Deaths	10
	Serious casualties	73
	Minor casualties	358
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🚗	Fatal crashes	10
	Serious injury crashes	62
	Minor injury crashes	241
	Non-injury crashes	469

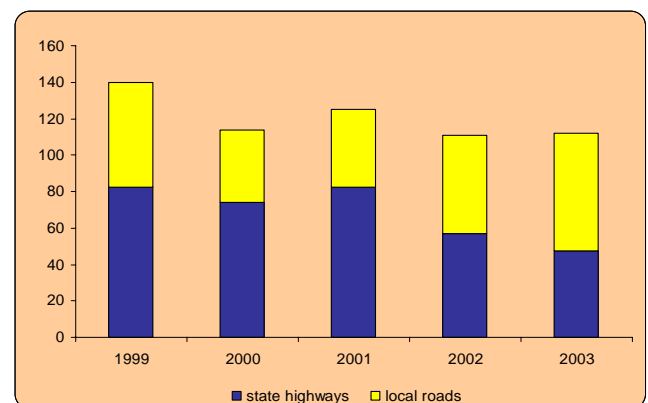
Road casualties 1999–2003

User type 1999–2003



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)

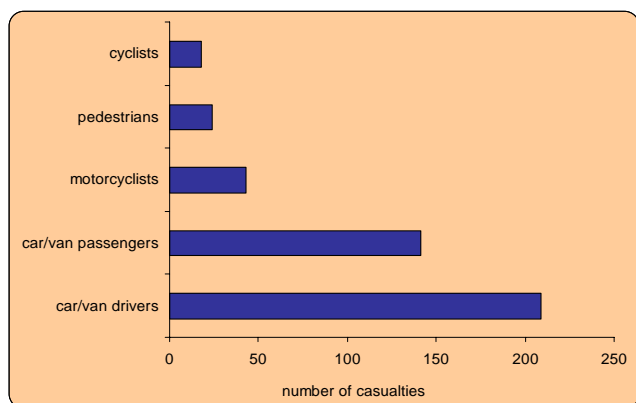


*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2002 prices.

Younger road users

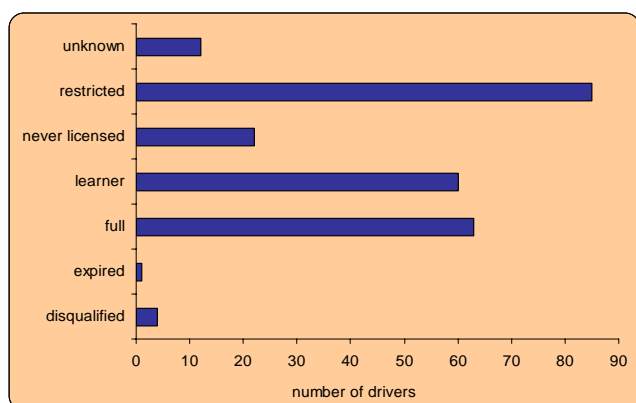
A large number (436) of younger road users, especially those in the 15 to 19 age group were killed or injured in road crashes in the region between 1999 and 2003. Males in this group made up 22 percent of all male casualties in the region. On average, this is around three percent higher than in similar local authorities and New Zealand as a whole.

Casualties aged 15–19 years by road user type 1999–2003



Between 1999 and 2003, 45 percent of road users in the 15 to 19 year age group lost control of their vehicles while driving on either a straight section or on a bend in the road. The main contributing factors to all younger driver injury crashes were poor observation (35 percent), failure to give way/stop (28 percent) and speed (22 percent).

Licence status of drivers aged 15 to 19 years involved in a crash 1999–2003

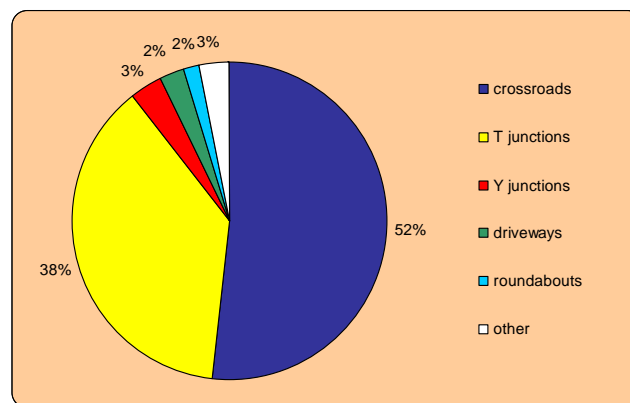


Intersections

Failure to give way has been highlighted as one of the four major factors contributing to road crashes in New Zealand. In the Taranaki Region, failure to give way is also a major road safety issue.

Injury crashes at intersections made up 61 percent of the reported urban road crashes in 2003. Intersection crashes on urban roads in the Taranaki Region increased by 20 percent from 2002. The percentage of injury crashes occurring at urban road intersections was higher than in similar authorities and the national average for the last six years. At rural road intersections, the percentage that these crashes contributed to all injury crashes recorded for the last four years has remained fairly constant and has shown a steady downward trend, but is still higher than in similar authorities and all of New Zealand.

Crashes by intersection type 1999–2003

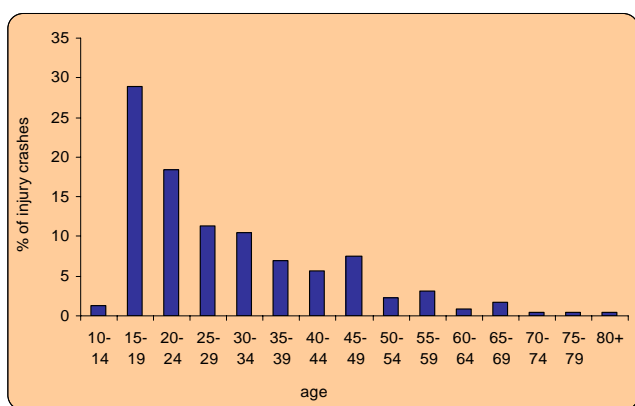


In 2003, 54 percent of injury crashes at intersections involved a collision between vehicles making a crossing or turning movement, while 15 percent were involved in a rear-end collision. Driver factors contributing to injury crashes at intersection involved poor observation (49 percent), failure to give way or stop (54 percent), travelling too fast for the conditions (12 percent) or a combination of all these factors.

Speed

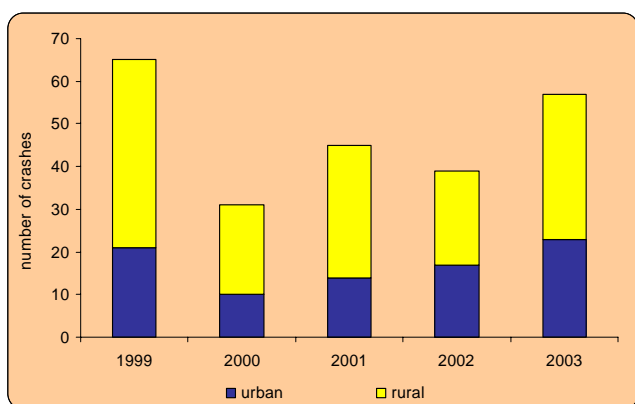
Travelling too fast for the conditions is one of the main contributing factors in road crashes. Injuries are more severe at higher speeds. Of the 1,414 injury crashes in the Taranaki Region during the 1999–2003 period, 237 were as a result of excessive speed. Twenty-two of the speed-related crashes resulted in a fatality, 70 involved serious injury and 145 resulted in minor injuries. Twenty-eight percent of the drivers involved in speed-related crashes were in the 15 to 19 age group and 18 percent were in the 20 to 24 age group.

Speed-related crashes by age group 1999–2003



Sixty-three percent of all speed-related crashes during the 1999–2003 period took place on a bend in the road. This was due to drivers losing control of their vehicles, typically as a result of poor handling (25 percent), alcohol (28 percent) or both. There has been a steady increase in the number of rural loss of control injury crashes over the last four years.

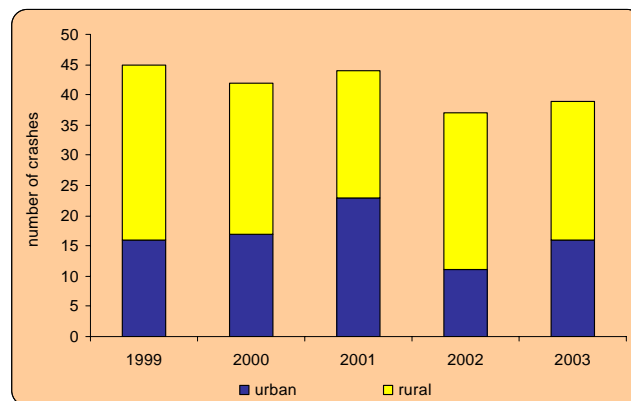
Speed-related crashes 1999–2003



Alcohol

Between 1999 and 2003, 15 percent of all injury crashes involved alcohol as a factor. Fifty-five percent of the alcohol-related crashes happened on bends and 20 percent on straight roads. All involved drivers losing control of their vehicles. Drivers showed poor handling skills in 23 percent of the injury crashes. Thirty-two percent of the intoxicated drivers were driving too fast.

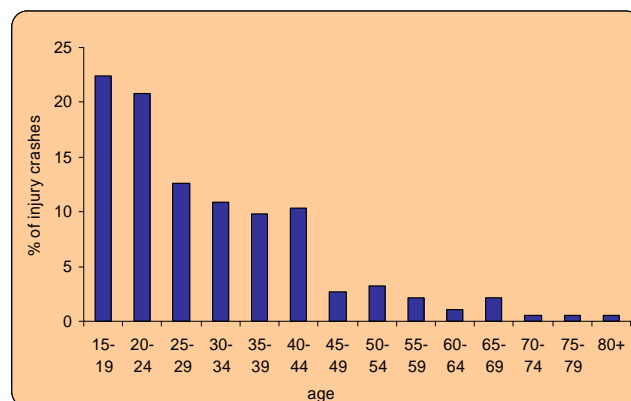
Alcohol-related crashes 1999–2003

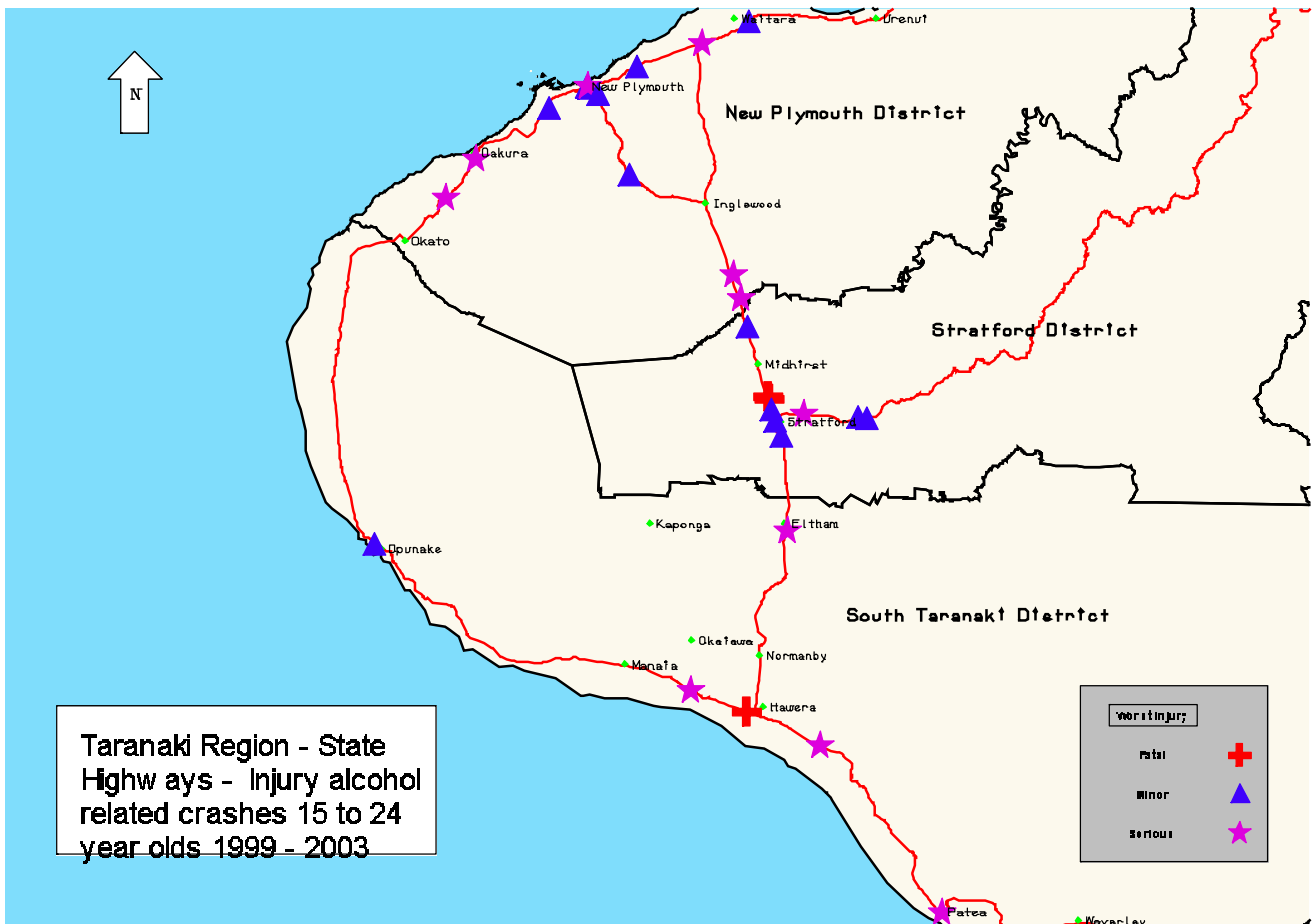


There was a slight increase in the number of alcohol-related crashes in the past year. However, the number of injury crashes over the last five years has remained constant and is at the same level as the comparative peer group and the New Zealand average.

Road users in the 15 to 24 year old age group were involved in 43 percent of all alcohol-related crashes in the Taranaki Region during the period 1999–2003.

Alcohol-related crashes by age group 1999–2003





Contacts

Land Transport Safety Authority

Regional Manager, Darryl Harwood
 Road Safety Engineer, Charl Alberts
 Regional Education Officer, Barbara Broederlow
 See LTSA contact details at the bottom of the page

Road Safety Co-ordinator

Bryan Kyle
 PO Box 5112
 Westtown
 New Plymouth
 Phone 06 759 7300

Transit New Zealand

Regional Manager
 Errol Christiansen
 PO Box 345
 Wanganui
 Phone 06 345 4173

Taranaki Regional Council

Private Bag 713
 Stratford
 Phone 06 765 7127

New Zealand Police

Inspector Neil Wynne
 Strategic Traffic Manager
 Central District Headquarters
 Private Bag 11 040
 Palmerston North
 Phone 06 351 3600

Palmerston North Regional Office
 Corner Ashley and Ferguson Streets
 PO Box 1947, Palmerston North
 Phone 06 953 6296, Fax 06 953 6203
www.ltsa.govt.nz