

briefing notes road safety issues

Tararua 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.

This report is the ninth road safety report for the Tararua 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 Tararua District Council (local roads) or Transit NZ (State highways). Please refer to the last page for contact details.

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

We have also included a brief overview of crashes in the district for 2007.

Major Road Safety Issues		2007 road trauma	
Tararua District		Casualties	Tararua District
Loss of control at bends		Deaths	6
Vulnerable road users		Serious casualties	16
Alcohol		Minor casualties	65
Speed			
Nationally		Crashes	Tararua District
Speed		Fatal crashes	6
Alcohol		Serious injury crashes	15
Failure to give way		Minor injury crashes	48
Restraints		Non injury crashes	120

Overview 2007

In 2007, in the Tararua district, there were 69 injury crashes and 120 non-injury crashes reported by the New Zealand Police. Fifty two percent of the total injury crashes in the district were on State highways.

Crashes by injury type in 2007

	State highways				Local roads			
	F	S	M	NI	F	S	M	NI
Rural ¹	2	9	18	52	3	5	22	20
Urban	1	1	5	28	0	0	3	20

Note: 1/ Rural - area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more
 F - Fatal crashes S - Serious injury crashes
 M - Minor injury crashes NI - Non-Injury crashes

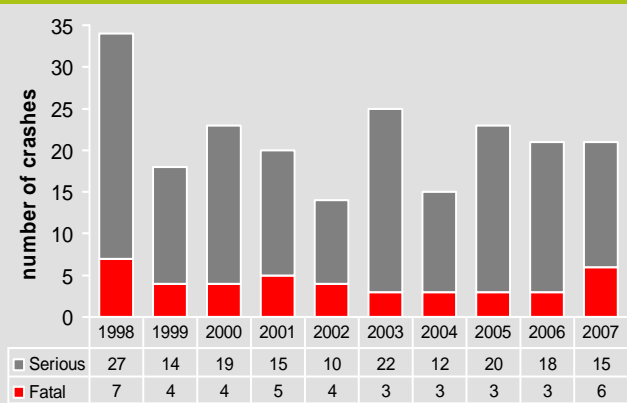
The table below shows the number of injuries resulting from these crashes in the district.

Casualties by injury type in 2007

	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Total	6	16	65	87

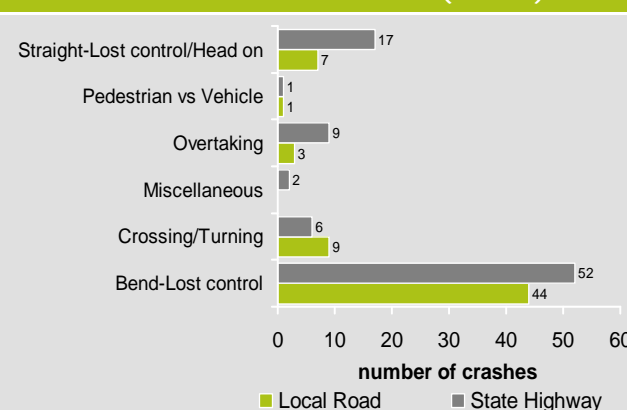
The total number of serious and fatal crashes has been decreasing since 2005. There were 6 fatal crashes in 2007 as compared to 3 in each of previous 4 years.

Fatal and Serious Crash Trends



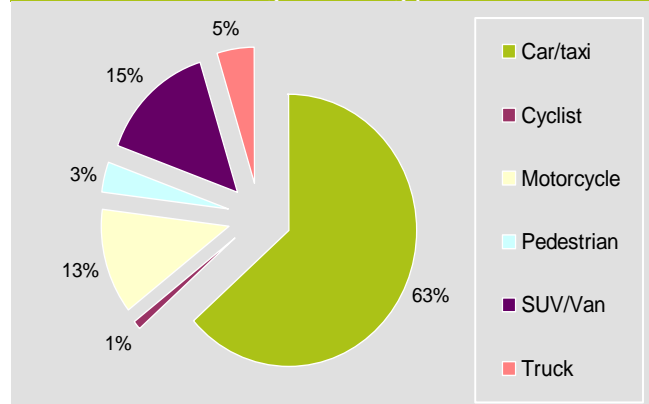
In 2007 *loss of control at bend* was the main type of crash in the district followed by *loss of control/head-on at straight* crash type.

Crash characteristics (2007)



The highest number of casualties in 2007 were car drivers and passengers followed by those of SUV/Vans and motorcycles.

Casualties by User type in 2007



Further information about all crashes in the district in 2007 on:

Local roads

- Worst day of week: *Sunday (21 percent)*
- Wet road crashes: *25 percent*
- Night time crashes: *41 percent*
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): *12 percent*
- Too fast for conditions (injury crashes): *33 percent*
- Crashes at intersection: *23 percent*
- Road factors: *19 percent*
- At fault male (injury crashes) driver: *83 percent*
- Full NZ licence held by at fault (injury crashes) drivers: *59 percent*

State highways

- Worst day of week: *Friday (20 percent)*
- Wet road crashes: *33 percent*
- Night time crashes: *33 percent*
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): *11 percent*
- Too fast for conditions (injury crashes): *14 percent*
- Crashes at intersection: *20 percent*
- Road factors: *16 percent*
- At fault (injury crashes) male driver: *61 percent*
- Full NZ licence held by at fault (injury crashes) drivers: *69 percent*

Social cost of crashes

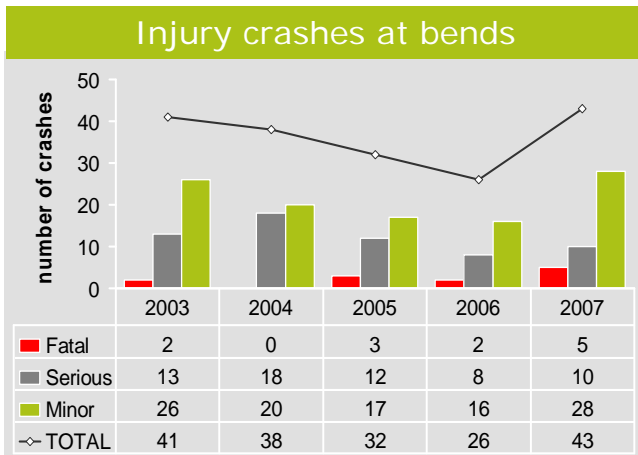
Local roads	\$ 19.78M
State highways	\$ 23.56M
Total	\$ 43.34M

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 at bends

Between 2003 and 2007, 44 percent of all injury crashes in the Tararua district were due to loss of control at bends. These crashes resulted in 15 deaths, 70 serious injuries and 164 minor injuries. There were also 250 non-injury crashes reported.

After gradual reduction of the injury crashes at bends between 2003 and 2006, there was a sharp increase in 2007. Both the number of injury crashes and the number of fatal crashes in 2007 were the highest in the last five year period.



In the last five years most (86 percent) of the loss of control crashes at bends occurred in rural areas.

	Local urban	Local rural	SH urban	SH Rural
Crash location	34	167	24	195

There was a fairly even split between the number of crashes that have occurred on local roads and state highways (SH). However the number of fatalities on the state highways were double those on the local roads.

Most crashes at bends involved a driver losing control of their vehicle running off the road or on occasions colliding 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 were *fences* (27 percent), *ditches* (16 percent) and *cliff banks* (14 percent) out of the total number of 446 objects struck.

Main characteristics of crashes at bends

Crash characteristic	Percentage of crashes
Single vehicle	79%
Alcohol (injury crashes)	18%
Too fast for the conditions (injury crashes)	31%
Road factors	30%
Poor handling (injury crashes)	39%
Rural road	86%
Wet road	37%
Night time	40%

Further information about all crashes at bends in the district in the period between 2003 and 2007 on:

Local roads

- 5 deaths, 37 serious injuries and 96 minor injuries
- Worst day of week: *Saturday* (38 crashes)
- Wet road crashes: 29 percent
- Night time crashes: 36 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 19 percent
- Most common injury crash factor: *poor handling*
- At fault (injury crashes) male driver: 74 percent
- 47 percent of drivers at fault (injury crashes) were either on restricted or learner licences or not licensed at all
- Most common fault (injury crashes) drivers' age group: 15 to 24 and 30 to 49 years old

State highways

- 10 deaths, 33 serious injuries and 68 minor injuries
- Worst day of week: *Saturday* (41 crashes)
- Wet road crashes: 43 percent
- Night time crashes: 43 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 17 percent
- Most common injury crash factor: *poor handling*
- At fault (injury crashes) male driver: 72 percent
- 36 percent of drivers at fault (injury crashes) were either on restricted or learner licences or not licensed at all
- Most common fault (injury crashes) drivers' age group: 15 to 49 years old

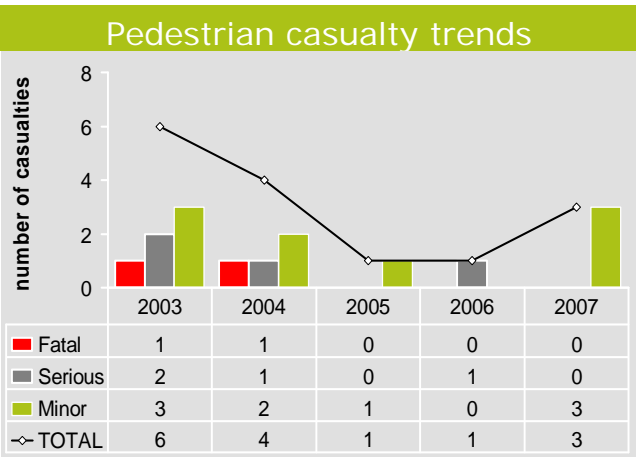
Vulnerable road users

Vulnerable road users are those who have very little physical protection in the event of a crash and are therefore more susceptible to severe injuries. These are described as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists. In the Tararua district, vulnerable road users account for 14 percent of total injuries and 10 percent of fatalities between 2003 and 2007.

Pedestrian

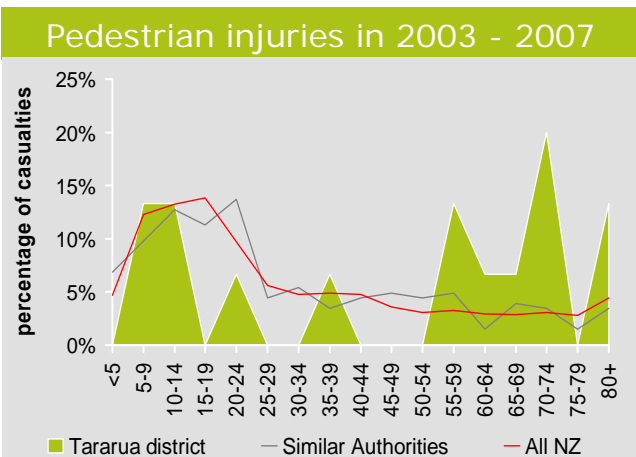
Although pedestrian injuries in the Tararua district account for only 4 percent of all injuries, they make up 10 percent of all fatalities in the last five year period.

Significant reduction in the number of pedestrians injured has been observed between 2003 and 2005. A sharp increase in the number of those injured occurred in 2007. However, there was no pedestrian fatality or serious injury reported in 2007.



Half of pedestrian accidents occurred on urban road intersections. Most of the accidents occurred during daylight hours. There is a strong bias (70 percent) toward the late afternoon to evening time, from 3 pm to 9 pm.

Younger and older pedestrians are the most prevalent age groups for injuries in the district.



The high pedestrian accident locations or routes in the district are mainly in the town centres, as listed below:

High pedestrian accident locations

- Woodville-Vogel Street and intersections along Pollen Street
- High Street route through the Dannevirke town centre
- Paihiatua-Main Street, Mangahao Road, Paterson Street

Further information about pedestrian injury crashes between 2003 and 2007 on:

Local roads

- 3 serious injuries and 2 minor injuries
- Worst day of week: Friday (2 crashes)
- Most common injury crash factor: pedestrian crossing the road being hit by a driver approaching from their right (20 percent)
- Wet road crashes: 20 percent
- Night time crashes: 40 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 20 percent
- Crashes at intersection: 20 percent
- Pedestrian factors: 40 percent

State highways

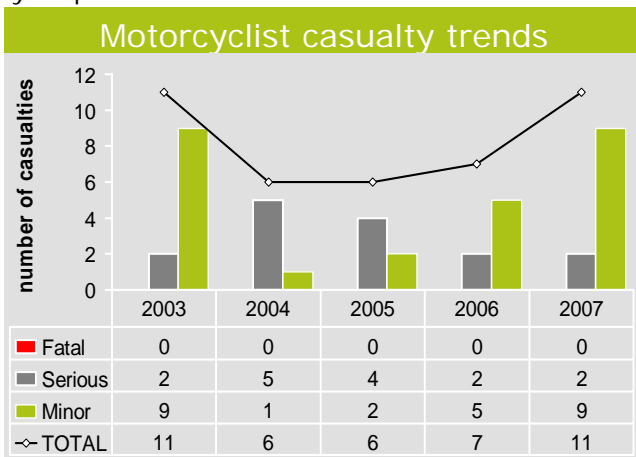
- 2 deaths, 1 serious injury and 8 minor injuries
- Worst day of week: Friday (3 crashes)
- Most common injury crash factor: pedestrian crossing the road being hit by a driver approaching from their right (55 percent).
- Wet road crashes: 18 percent
- Night time crashes: 22 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 10 percent
- Crashes at intersection: 64 percent
- Pedestrian factors: 70 percent

Motorcyclist

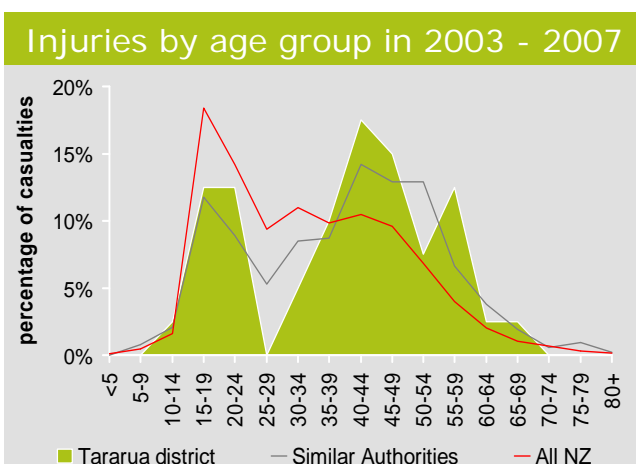
Nationally motorcyclist fatalities dropped from a high of 20 percent of all fatalities in 1988 to just 6 in 2003. Since then there has been a significant increase in motorcycle registrations and this has reversed the downward trend. In 2007 motorcyclists accounted for 9 percent of road fatalities in New Zealand.

For the period 2003 to 2007, motorcyclist casualties in the Tararua district accounted for 7 percent of all injuries, but make up 13 percent of all serious injuries.

The number of motorcyclist casualties has been increasing in the district since 2005. In 2007 motorcyclist casualties (11 injuries) accounted for 13 percent of the total road casualties in the district which was among the highest in the last five year period.



Three quarters (76 percent) of motorcyclist crashes took place on rural roads. Only approximately 20 percent of the motorcycling crashes happened at intersections. The most common crash type was *loss of control at bends* followed by *rear end/obstruction* and *crossing/turning*.



Almost half of the motorcyclist injured were of age between 35 and 60. Approximately quarter of the injured were of 15-24 age group. Most of the injured motorcyclists were male.

The high motorcycle accident locations or routes in the Tararua district are:

High motorcyclist crash locations
High Street route through the Dannevirke town centre
Woodville: Vogel Street and McLean Street
Pahiatua: route through Main Street and Tui Street

Further information about all crashes involving motorcyclists in the district between 2003 and 2007 on:

Local roads

- 11 serious injuries and 15 minor injuries
- Worst day of week: *Thursday* (7 crashes)
- Most common injury crash factors: *Too fast* (24 percent) and *poor handling* (24 percent)
- Wet road crashes: 13 percent
- Night time crashes: 21 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 14 percent
- Crashes at intersection: 21 percent

State highways

- 4 serious injuries and 11 minor injuries
- Worst day of week: *Sunday* (5 crashes)
- Most common injury crash factors: *Poor observation* (36 percent) followed by *failure to give way/stop* (29 percent)
- Wet road crashes: 11 percent
- Night time crashes: 17 percent
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): 7 percent
- Crashes at intersection: 22 percent

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.

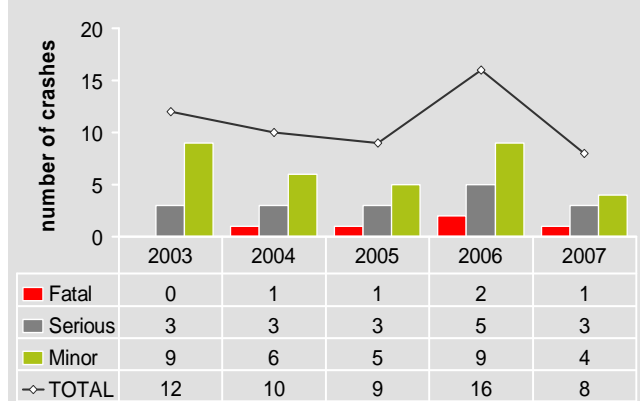
Nationally in 2007, alcohol-affected drivers contributed to 34 percent of all fatal crashes and 15 percent of all injury crashes.

In the Tararua district, alcohol was a factor in 12 percent of all injury crashes in 2007 which is slightly less than the national average.

There were 55 alcohol-related injury and 50 non-injury crashes reported in the last five years. These crashes have resulted in 6 deaths, 28 serious and 53 minor injuries.

There is a reducing trend in alcohol related injury crashes in the last five year period, with the exception of 2006 when there was significant increase in the number of these crashes.

Alcohol related injury crash trends



It is a concern that 21 percent of at fault drivers involved in alcohol related injury crashes on State highways were full NZ driver licence holders.

Further information about alcohol related crashes in the District between 2003 and 2007 on:

Local roads

- 1 death, 14 serious injuries and 28 minor injuries
- Worst day of week: *Sunday (16 crashes)*
- Night time crashes: *74 percent*
- Crashes at intersection: *32 percent*
- Excessive speed: *46 percent*
- Most common injury crash factors: *Poor handling (14 percent)* and *poor judgement (14 percent)*
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): *79 percent*
- 41 percent of drivers at fault (injury crashes) were either on restricted, learner or not licensed
- Most common age group (injury crashes): *15 to 24 and 30 to 49 years old*

State highways

- 5 deaths, 14 serious injuries and 23 minor injuries
- Worst days of week: *Saturday and Sunday(12 crashes each)*
- Night time crashes: *74 percent*
- Crashes at intersection: *22 percent*
- Excessive speed: *36 percent*
- Most common injury crash factors: *poor handling (32 percent)* followed by *failed to keep left (16 percent)*
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): *79 percent*
- 79 percent of drivers at fault (injury crashes) were either on restricted, learner or not licensed
- Most common age group (injury crashes): *15 to 49 years old age groups*

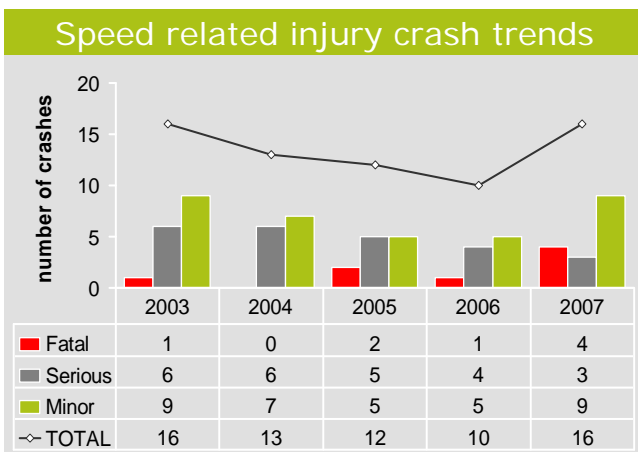
Speed

Nationally, speed is one of the major contributing factors to road crashes. In 2007, excessive speed contributed to 33 percent of fatal crashes and 18 percent (2,115 numbers) of injury crashes nationally.

In the Tararua district, excessive speed was a factor in 23 percent of all injury crashes in 2007.

There were 67 speed related injury crashes and 104 non-injury crashes reported in the last five years. These crashes resulted in 9 deaths, 37 serious injuries and 60 minor injuries.

After gradual reduction in the number of injury crashes from 2003 to 2006, it increased significantly in 2007. The number of fatal crashes in 2007 was the highest in the last five year period.



Most (81 percent) of the speed related crashes occurred in rural areas. Approximately 45 percent of the speed related crashes took place on State highways. Although the number of speed related crashes that occurred on State highways was less than half of the total of these crashes, more (5 out of 9) of the deaths were on state highways.

Speed related crashes					
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Urban	8	0	2	2	1
Rural	15	20	22	16	20

Approximately 60 percent of at fault drivers in speed related injury crashes were less than 25 years old. Males represented 80 percent of the at fault drivers.

Age and sex of at fault drivers

Drivers at fault in speed related injury crashes (2003- 2007)	Male	Female	Total
15 - 19 years	12	3	15
20 - 24	20	3	23
25 - 29	3	4	7
30 - 39	9	1	10
40 - 49	6	1	7
50 - 59	2	0	2
60 - 69	0	1	1
70+	0	0	0
Total	52	13	65

Half of the drivers at-fault drivers were holders of either learner or restricted licence, disqualified or never licensed which is a matter of concern. Most of the speed related crashes occurred at bend and one third of them included *alcohol* as a factor.

Further information about speed related crashes in the district between 2003 and 2007 on:

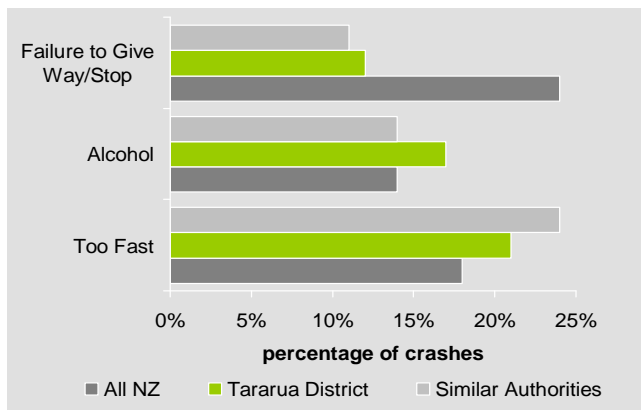
Local roads

- 4 deaths, 24 serious injuries and 41 minor injuries
- Worst day of week: *Saturday (16 crashes)*
- Wet road crashes: *24 percent*
- Night time crashes: *37 percent*
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): *30 percent*
- Most common injury crash factor: *Bend—loss of control (78 percent)*
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): *83 percent*
- Most common at fault drivers' age group (injury crashes): *15 to 24 and 30 to 49 years old*

State highways

- 5 deaths, 13 serious injuries and 19 minor injuries
- Worst days of week: *Friday and Saturday (15 crashes each)*
- Wet road crashes: *51 percent*
- Night time crashes: *47 percent*
- Alcohol over limit (injury crashes): *38 percent*
- Most common injury crash factor: *Bend—loss of control (83 percent)*
- At fault male driver (injury crashes): *74 percent*
- Most common at fault drivers' age group (injury crashes): *20 to 29 years old*

National issues



Speed

In Tararua district, *too fast* was recorded in 21 percent of injury crashes in the last five years, resulting in 9 deaths and 97 injuries. *Speed* as a factor in crashes is not reducing in the district.

Eighty-one percent of *speed* related crashes involved *loss of control / heads-on at bends*. *Alcohol* and *poor handling* were the driver factors most often associated with *speed* related crashes. Male drivers aged under 25 years old were most involved in these crashes.

Alcohol

In the Tararua district, *alcohol* was involved in 17 percent of injury crashes in the last five years, resulting in 6 deaths and 81 other injuries. The number of injury crashes involving *alcohol* was gradually reducing, in exception to a big spike in 2006.

Sixty one percent of *alcohol* related crashes were in rural areas. Eighty-two percent of these crashes were *loss of control/head-on* type. Travelling *too fast* and *poor handling* were the factors often associated with *alcohol* related crashes.

Failure to give way

In the Tararua district, *failure to give way or stop* was reported in 12 percent of all reported injury crashes for the last five years resulting in 3 deaths and 64 other injuries. Most (88 percent) of these are related to *crossing/turning* manoeuvres, often associated with *failure to look for other parties*. Seventy-three percent of at fault drivers in these crashes were males.

Restraints

The Ministry of Transport conducts surveys of restraint use. According to 2007 survey results restraint rate in Tararua District for front seat and rear seat are 94 and 91 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/belts-index/>

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