

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 the key road safety issues on Tasman/Nelson state highways.

The total number of injury crashes on state highways in the Tasman and Nelson area increased slightly in 2003 compared with the previous year. Twenty-one people died and 144 were seriously injured on state highway roads between 1999 and 2003. Over this period, around three quarters of injury crashes on state highways occurred on the open road.

Vulnerable road users such as motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians made up 16 percent of all casualties. Both pedestrian and cycle crash numbers on state highways have shown an increasing trend over the past 10 years.

Between 1999 and 2003, a high proportion of crashes involved drivers losing control of their vehicle on a bend, while crashes at intersections were also common. Drivers exhibiting poor observation skills, ie not concentrating on the task of driving was the main contributory factor in many injury crashes. The estimated social cost of crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways in 2003 was \$57 million.

Both state highway and national issues for the Tasman and Nelson area are identified below. Specific state highway issues are considered in detail overleaf, with national issues considered on the back page.

Major road safety issues

Tasman/Nelson state highways

Loss of control on bends

Intersections

Pedestrians

Cyclists

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints

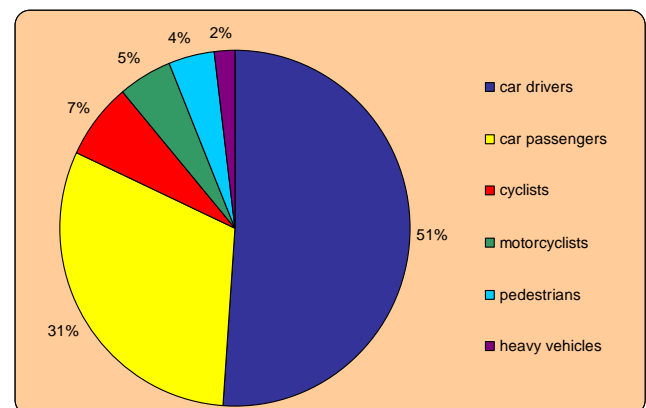
2003 road trauma for Tasman/Nelson state highways

Deaths	6
Serious casualties	43
Minor casualties	1,209

Fatal crashes	6
Serious injury crashes	29
Minor injury crashes	81
Non-injury crashes	208

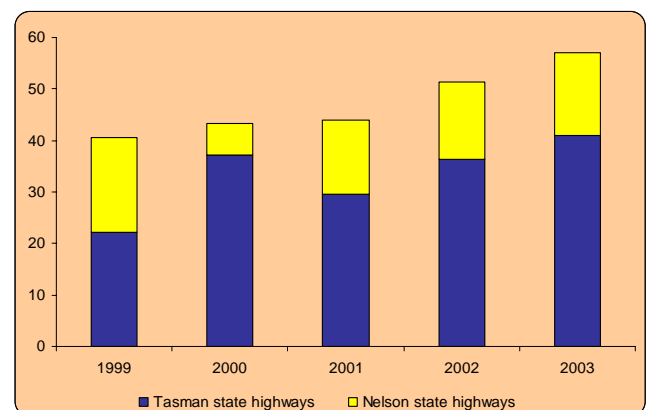
Road casualties 1999–2003

User type 1999–2003



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)



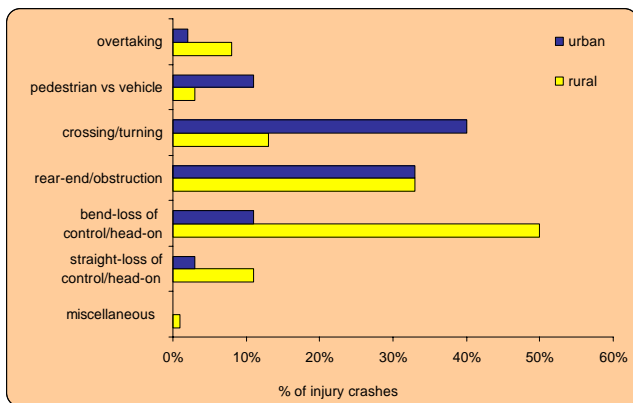
*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are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



Loss of control on bends

Between 1999 and 2003, three quarters of injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways were on rural roads. Half of all injury crashes on rural state highway roads in this area involved a driver losing control of their vehicle on a bend. Such crashes can result in either a head-on collision with another vehicle or the vehicle leaving the road, potentially resulting in a collision with a roadside object, which may increase the severity of the crash. Vehicles most commonly hit cliffs, went over banks, into ditches or hit trees and fences when leaving the road.

State highway crash types 1999–2003



Speed was a contributory factor in a third of loss of control injury crashes on bends that occurred on state highways in rural areas between 1999 and 2003. Other significant contributory factors included poor handling of the vehicle, fatigue and alcohol.

Drivers losing control of their vehicle on a bend on a rural state highway were involved in a higher than average proportion of crashes at night (38 percent) or on a wet road (over 40 percent).

Almost a third of casualties on rural Tasman/Nelson state highways either died or received serious injuries.



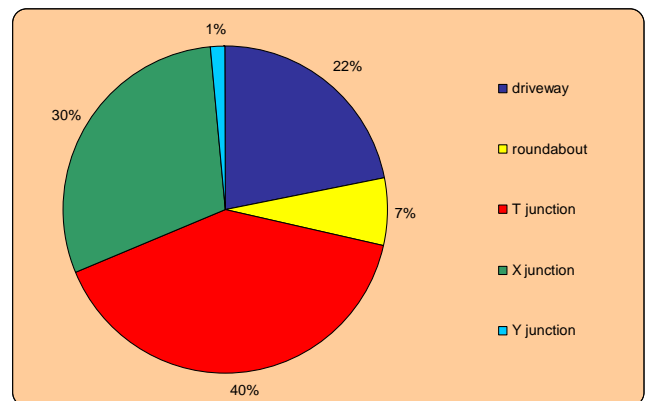
Intersections

A quarter of injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways between 1999 and 2003 occurred at intersections and a further seven percent occurred at driveways. Fifty-five percent of intersection and driveway crashes occurred on state highways in rural areas.

A third of injury crashes at intersections or driveways on Tasman/Nelson state highways in rural areas between 1999 and 2003 resulted in a road user being killed or seriously injured. All fatalities occurred on state highways in rural areas.

Between 1999 and 2003, 22 percent of intersection and driveway injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways occurred at driveways, 40 percent occurred at T junctions, and 30 percent occurred at crossroads. Almost all crossroad crashes occurred where there were formal traffic controls such as Stop and Give Way signs and markings. A quarter of the intersections were controlled by traffic signals.

Intersection crashes by type 1999–2003



Two thirds of intersection and driveway injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways involved a collision between vehicles making a crossing or turning movement. Eighty-eight percent of these involved a vehicle failing to give way or stop, and a third involved a driver exhibiting poor observation skills who may not have been concentrating on the task of driving.

While three quarters of Tasman/Nelson state highway intersection and driveway casualties were car occupants, the next highest casualty group was cyclists at 14 percent.

Fifteen percent of injury crashes at intersections or driveways on Tasman/Nelson state highways occurred during the hours of darkness, compared with 29 percent for all injury crashes.

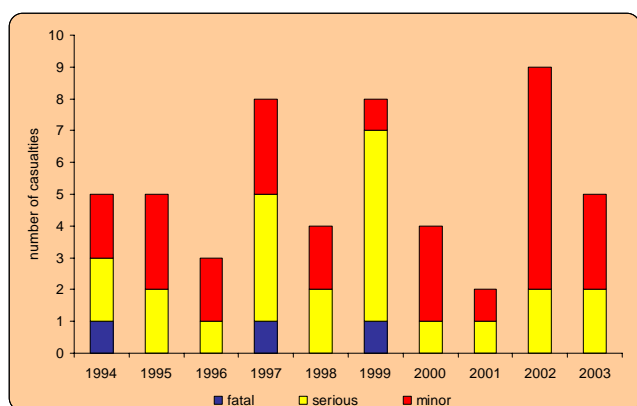


Pedestrians

Pedestrians were involved in six percent of all injury crashes on state highways in the Tasman and Nelson area. Fifty-three percent of pedestrians involved in injury crashes were in urban areas.

Forty-six percent of pedestrians involved in injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways between 1999 and 2003 were either killed or seriously injured (this severity ratio was the same for both urban and rural areas), compared with 29 percent for all casualties on these roads.

Pedestrian casualties 1999–2003



Between 1999 and 2003, the number of pedestrian casualties averaged six per year but this reflects an increase since 1993, and is higher than the trend for all state highways nationally. This should be viewed in the context of the *New Zealand Transport Strategy*, which promotes the use of such sustainable modes of transport.

Forty percent of pedestrian crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways occurred during the hours of darkness. Over three quarters of pedestrian casualties were injured away from an intersection or driveway.

Fourteen percent of pedestrian injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways occurred on a formal pedestrian crossing, and all of these were in urban areas.



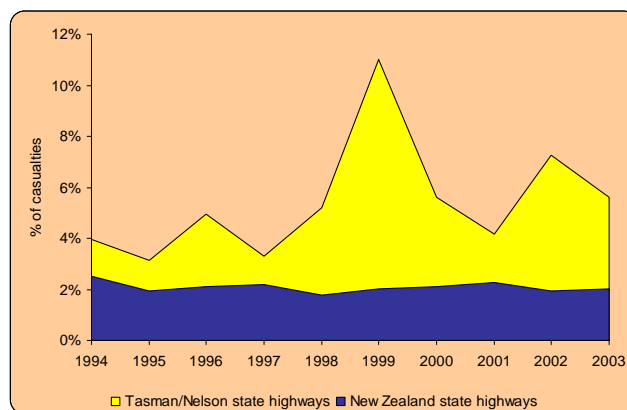
Cyclists

Cyclists were involved in 10 percent of all injury crashes on state highways in Tasman and Nelson between 1999 and 2003. Three quarters of cyclist crashes occurred in urban areas.

Of the cyclist crashes that occurred in urban areas, two thirds took place at an intersection or driveway.

Between 1999 and 2003, the number of cyclist casualties on Tasman/Nelson state highways averaged 10 per year. However, this reflects an increase since 1993. This should be viewed in the context of the *New Zealand Transport Strategy*, which promotes the use of such sustainable modes of transport.

Cyclist casualties 1999–2003



Eighteen percent of cyclists involved in injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways between 1999 and 2003 were either killed or seriously injured, compared with 29 percent for all casualties.

Forty percent of cyclist casualties were in the 10 to 24 year age group, and almost 60 percent of all cyclist casualties were male.

Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash, and the greater the risk of serious injury and death.

Speed was a factor in 83 injury crashes on state highways in the Tasman and Nelson area between 1999 and 2003. This comprised 17 percent of all injury crashes in the Tasman/Nelson and is higher than for all of New Zealand and in line with state highways nationally.



Alcohol

Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive.

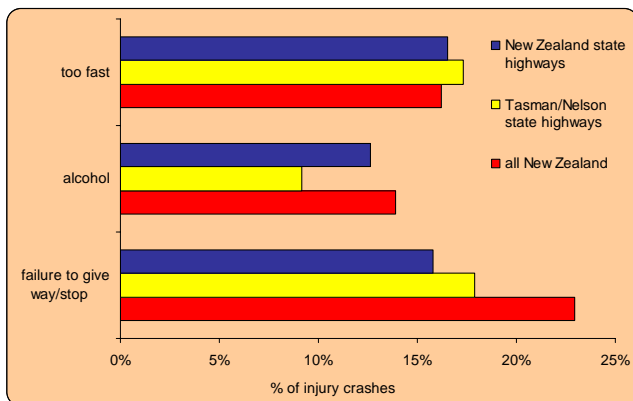
Overall, alcohol was a contributory factor in nine percent of crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways between 1999 and 2003, which was lower than for all of New Zealand and New Zealand state highways.



Failure to give way

Between 1999 and 2003, 18 percent of all crashes on the Tasman/Nelson state highways involved a vehicle failing to give way. The proportions are higher than for state highways nationally.

National issues 1999–2003



Restrictions

Wearing a safety belt reduces the chance of death or serious injury in a crash by 40 percent.

New Zealand's safety belt wearing rate is currently 92 percent for front seat adult passengers.

As found in previous years, travellers on rural roads had a slightly higher wearing rate than in urban areas (93 percent on rural roads and 91 percent on urban roads).

Over the last few years, more than 30 lives could have been saved each year if people had worn their safety belts.

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