ISSN 1176-841X July 2005

Land Transport NZ
Ikiiki Whenua Aotearoa

road safety issues

Tasman/Nelson state highways

Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2000–2004 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues on Tasman/Nelson state highways.

The 2004 road safety data report shows injury crashes on the Tasman/Nelson state highways decreased from 117 in 2003 to 98 in 2004. Fatal and serious casualties reduced from 49 in 2003 to 28 in 2004. During the period 2000–2004, three quarters of injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways occurred on the open road.

Vulnerable road users, such as motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians, accounted for 15 percent of all casualties between 2000 and 2004 on Tasman/Nelson state highways. Both pedestrian and cycle crash numbers have shown an increasing trend over the last 10 years.

A high proportion of crashes involved drivers losing control of their vehicles on bends, while crashes at intersections were also common. Drivers exhibiting poor observation skills, ie not concentrating on the task of driving, were the main contributory factor in many injury crashes. The estimated social cost of crashes on the Tasman/Nelson state highways in 2004 was $37 million.

Both national and local road safety issues are identified below. Specific issues relating to the Tasman/Nelson area are considered overleaf. National issues are discussed on the back page.

Major road safety issues

Tasman/Nelson state highways

- Vulnerable road users
- Intersections
- Loss of control on bends

Nationally

- Speed
- Alcohol
- Failure to give way
- Restraints

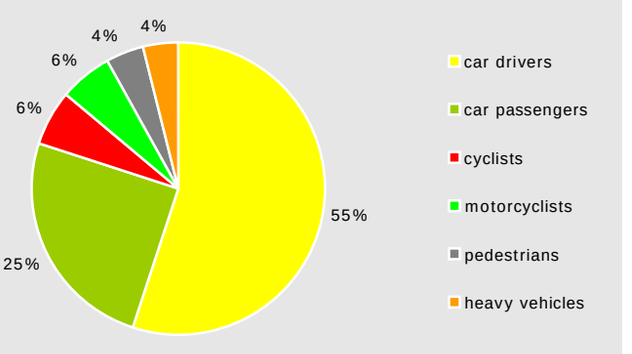
2004 road trauma for Tasman/Nelson state highways

Deaths	4
Serious casualties	24
Minor casualties	112

Fatal crashes	4
Serious injury crashes	21
Minor injury crashes	73
Non-injury crashes	180

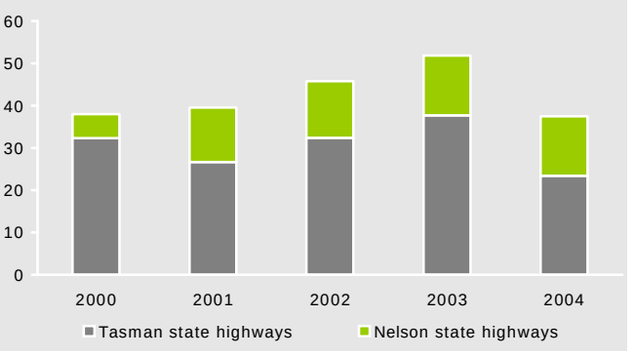
Road casualties 2000–2004

User type 2000–2004



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost ($ million)



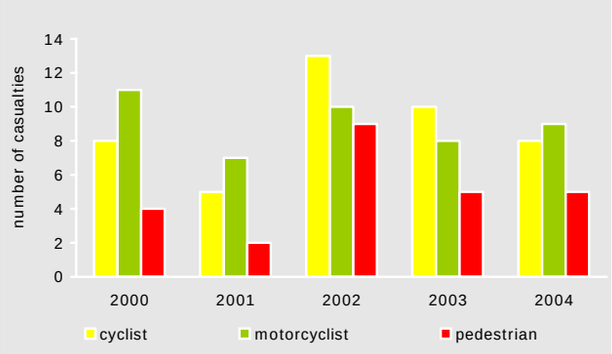
*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2004 prices.

Vulnerable road users

For this report, vulnerable road users have been defined as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists. In the 2000–2004 period, there were a total of 137 crashes (10 percent) which involved a vulnerable road user on the Tasman/Nelson state highways. This should be viewed in the context of the *New Zealand Transport Strategy* which promotes the use of sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling.

During this period, vulnerable road users made up 15 percent of all casualties on Tasman/Nelson state highways. Motorcyclists made up 43 percent of these casualties, 37 percent were cyclists and 20 percent were pedestrians. Thirty-one percent of vulnerable road users were killed or seriously injured.

Vulnerable road user casualties 2000–2004



Motorcyclists made up over 60 percent of all rural state highway casualties in the Tasman and Nelson area during 2000–2004. Of these crashes, 56 percent occurred at a mid-block location away from an intersection or driveway. A third of motorcyclist casualties were aged between 40 and 49 years. Fifty-six percent of motorcyclists involved in crashes were killed or seriously injured. The main contributory factors in motorcycle crashes in both urban and rural areas were poor handling and poor observation, with excessive speed and alcohol also featuring in rural crashes.

Sixty percent of pedestrian casualties occurred on urban state highways in the Tasman and Nelson area, and 70 percent occurred at an intersection or driveway. Most of the pedestrian casualties were injured away from a formal pedestrian crossing or raised island. Half of the pedestrian casualties were either young people (aged less than 19 years) or elderly (aged over 65 years).

Seventy-three percent of cyclists were injured on state highways in the urban area, and of these, 72 percent occurred at a driveway or intersection. Factors most commonly implicated in cyclist crashes in urban areas were the use of an incorrect lane/position and poor observation, with poor observation the main cause in rural areas. Thirty-six percent of cyclist casualties on Tasman/Nelson state highways were aged between five and 19 years.

Intersections

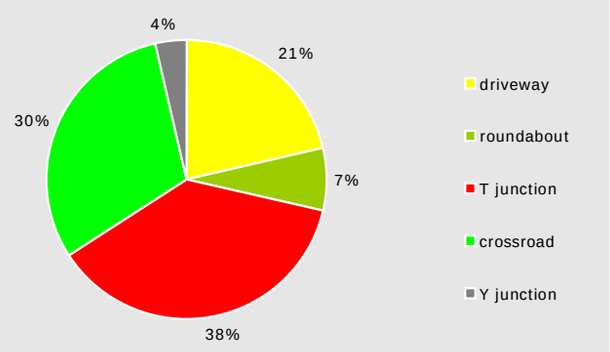
A quarter of injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways between 2000 and 2004 occurred at intersections and a further seven percent occurred at driveways. Fifty-four percent of intersection and driveway crashes occurred on state highways in rural areas.

During this period, almost 40 percent of injury crashes at intersections or driveways on rural state highways in the area resulted in a road user being killed or seriously injured. Six people were killed at intersections on Tasman/Nelson state highways between 2000 and 2004 and all these were on roads in the rural area.

Intersection casualties 2000–2004

From 2000 to 2004, 21 percent of intersection/driveway injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways occurred at a driveway, 38 percent at a T junction and 30 percent at crossroads.

Intersection type 2000–2004



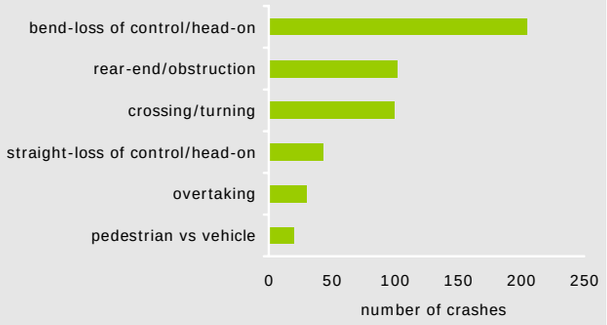
Sixty percent of intersection and driveway injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways involved vehicles making a crossing or turning movement and 17 percent involved a rear-end shunt. The main contributory factors recorded in intersection/driveway crashes included poor observation skills (30 percent) and failure to give way/stop (25 percent).

While three quarters of Tasman/Nelson state highway intersection/driveway casualties were car occupants, cyclists were the next highest group at 13 percent.

Loss of control on bends

The most common type of crash on Tasman/Nelson state highways between 2000 and 2004 involved a driver losing control of their vehicle on a bend. During this period, there were a total of 204 crashes (or 40 percent of all crashes) resulting in 70 deaths or serious injuries and 134 minor injuries. A further 43 crashes involved a driver losing control on a straight road.

Loss of control crash type 2000–2004

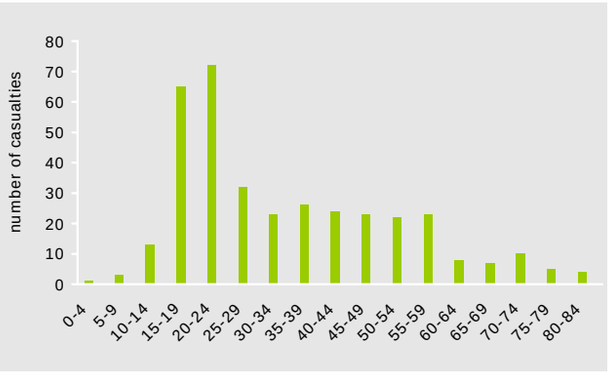


Loss of control on bend crashes can result in either a head-on collision with another vehicle or a vehicle leaving the road and colliding with a roadside object. This can increase the severity of a crash. The most commonly hit objects in these crashes on Tasman/ Nelson state highways included cliffs or banks, ditches, fences and trees.

Of the loss of control on bend crashes on Tasman/ Nelson state highways, 92 percent occurred on rural state highways, with eight percent in urban areas.

Road users involved in loss of control on bend injury crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways were typically male (58 percent) and most, both male and female, were under 25 years of age (43 percent). Twenty-two percent of drivers held learner or restricted licences, and over eight percent held an overseas licence.

Age of loss of control casualties 2000–2004



A higher percentage of loss of control on bend crashes occurred in the dark or on wet and icy road surfaces compared with all Tasman/Nelson state highway crashes.

Excessive speed was a contributing factor in 17 percent of loss of control on bend injury crashes between 2000 and 2004. Other significant factors included poor handling skills, fatigue, alcohol, poor observation and failure to keep left.

Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash and the greater the risk of serious injury or death. Between 2000 and 2004, travelling too fast for the conditions was a factor in 18 percent of injury crashes on state highways in the Tasman/Nelson area. This percentage involvement was higher than for all roads in New Zealand and for New Zealand state highways.

Alcohol

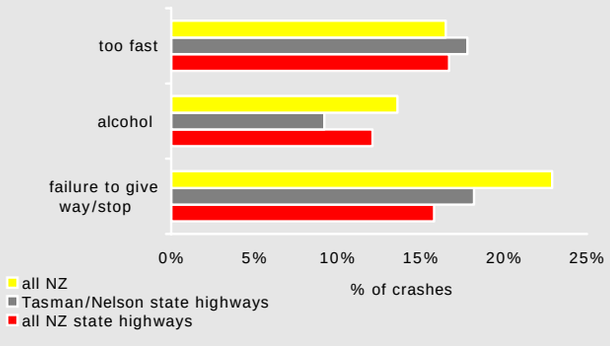
Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive. People who drink and drive (with a blood alcohol level over 80 mg per 100 ml) are three times more likely to be involved in a crash than a sober driver.

Between 2000 and 2004, alcohol was identified as a factor in nine percent of crashes on Tasman/Nelson state highways, which was lower than for all roads in New Zealand and for New Zealand state highways.

Failure to give way

While most failure to give way crashes result in non-injury or minor injury crashes, failing to give way can have severe consequences. Eighteen percent of crashes on state highways in the Tasman/Nelson region between 2000 and 2004 involved drivers failing to give way, and of these over 30 percent resulted in a fatal or serious crash.

National issues 2000–2004



Restraints

Wearing a safety belt reduces the chance of death or serious injury in a crash by 40 percent. Whether in the front or the back seat, the risk of serious or fatal injury if not wearing a safety belt is virtually the same.

Results from the 2004 national restraint wearing survey showed that the national average of front seat safety belt wearing was 94 percent, compared with 97 percent for the Nelson Bays Police Area.

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