

# road safety issues

## Transit New Zealand Wellington Region

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 this report is to highlight road safety issues on the state highway network in the Transit New Zealand (TNZ) Wellington Region. This TNZ region covers the same area as that of the Greater Wellington Region.

Injury crash numbers on the state highway network in the region have shown an upward trend over the past four years.

A reduction in the number of fatal and serious crashes in 2004, compared with 2003, has resulted in the estimated social cost of crashes on the state highways decreasing to \$97 million. Between 2000 and 2004, 40 percent of the total social cost of crashes in the Greater Wellington Region could be attributed to incidents on the state highways.

Intersection crashes, along with rear-end collisions or collisions with an obstruction, were the major crash types in the region. While vehicle occupants were the largest casualty group, vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists made up 15 percent of regional state highway casualties.

Regional and national road safety issues are identified below. The specific issues for the region are considered in detail overleaf, while national issues are considered on the back page.

### Major road safety issues

#### TNZ Wellington Region

Rear-end/obstruction

Intersections

Vulnerable road users

#### Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



### 2004 road trauma for TNZ Wellington Region



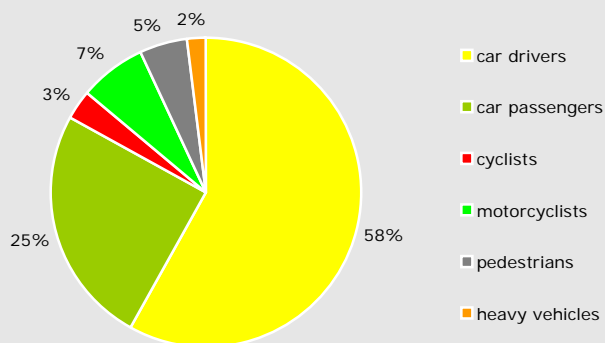
Deaths	18
Serious casualties	60
Minor casualties	300



Fatal crashes	11
Serious injury crashes	47
Minor injury crashes	199
Non-injury crashes	733

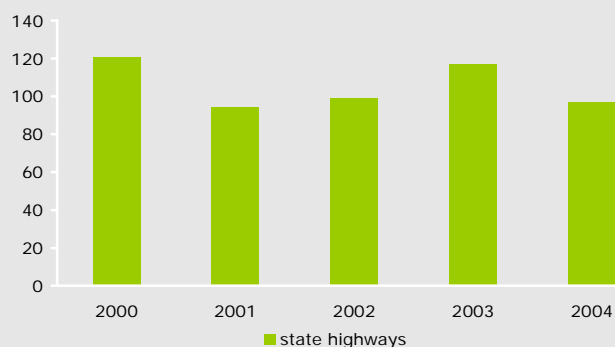
### Road casualties 2000–2004

#### User type 2000–2004



### Estimated social cost of crashes\*

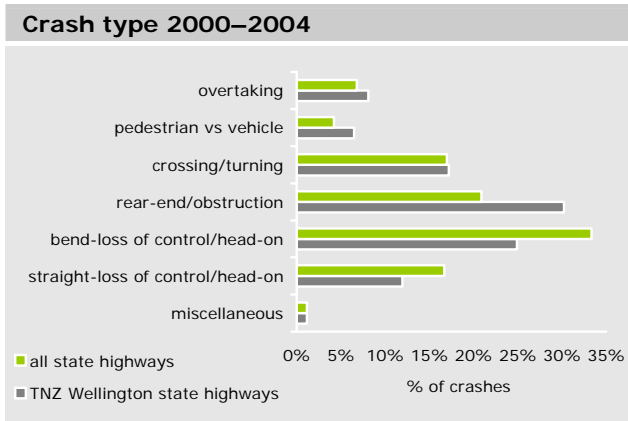
#### Social cost (\$ million)



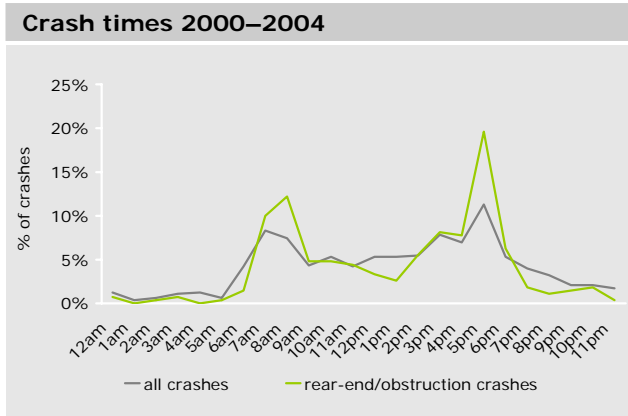
\*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are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

## Rear-end/obstruction

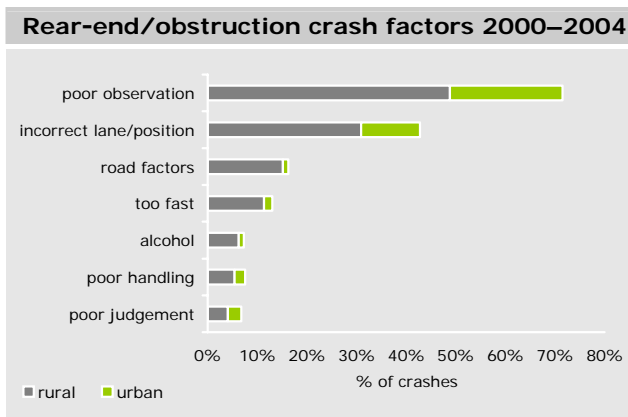
Rear-end collisions with an object in the roadway or with a parked or manoeuvring vehicle were the most frequent (30 percent) crash type recorded on the state highways in the TNZ Wellington Region for 2000–2004. The number of rear-end/obstruction crashes has varied over the period, from a high of 87 reported in 2003 to a low of 61 in 2001. Eighty percent of these crashes involved a rear-end vehicle collision.



Seventy percent of the crashes occurred in open road situations and principally on the heavily used highways between Wellington City and Porirua City or Hutt City. A high proportion of these crashes occurred during the morning and evening peak travel periods.



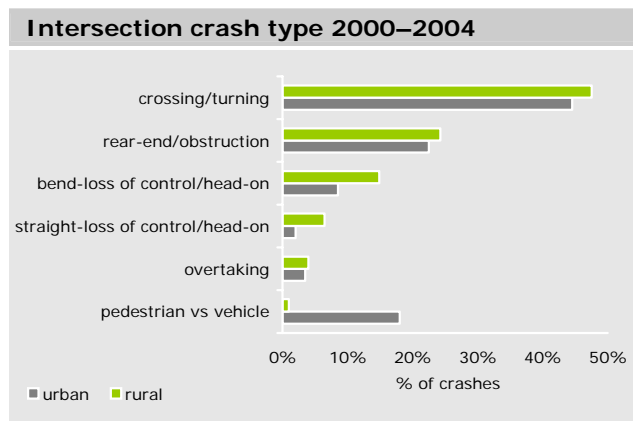
Factors associated with rear-end/obstruction crashes typically included poor observation of the vehicle in front and incorrect lane positioning.



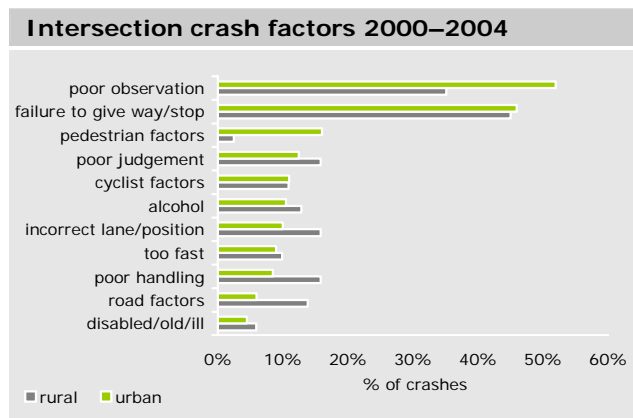
## Intersections

Between 2000 and 2004, a third of all injury crashes on the state highways in the region occurred at an intersection. The number of intersection crashes has varied over the period, from a high of 96 reported in 2002 to a low of 70 in 2001. During this period, crash numbers were evenly divided between urban and rural locations.

The majority of these crashes involved vehicles making crossing and turning movements at intersections (48 percent in rural areas, 45 percent in urban areas) or not anticipating the intention of a vehicle ahead to turn at an intersection (24 percent rural, 23 percent urban).



The major factors associated with urban intersection crashes included poor driver observation, failure to give way and pedestrian factors. Failure to give way was the main issue at rural intersections.



Of the 202 rural intersection crashes in this period, 74 (37 percent) occurred at Give Way controlled intersections, typically T junctions. A further 72 (36 percent) occurred at sites controlled by traffic signals, with the remainder at on or off ramps, at slip roads or at Stop controlled intersections. In urban areas, the majority of crashes occurred at T junctions with a Give Way control and at traffic signal controlled crossroads.

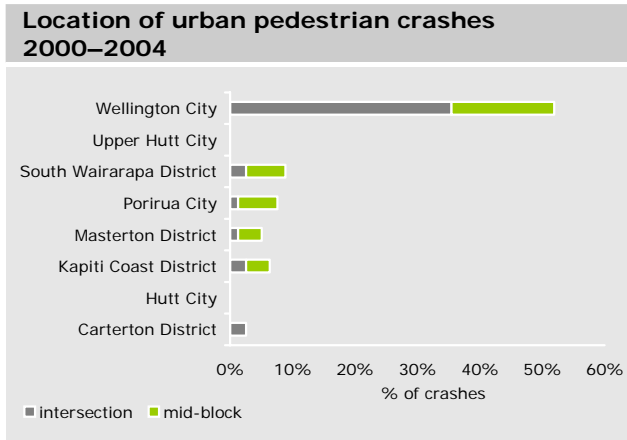
## Vulnerable road users

Pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists are all potentially vulnerable to injury when in a collision with other vehicles, as there is little physical protection from the impact. Vulnerable road users were involved in 15 percent of all injury crashes on the state highways in the region between 2000 and 2004. While cyclists made up the smallest proportion of casualties in this group, cyclist casualty numbers over the past 10 years have shown an upward trend.

### Pedestrians

In the TNZ Wellington Region, pedestrians were involved in 18 percent of urban crashes. This compares unfavourably with 12 percent for urban pedestrian crashes for all state highways in New Zealand.

Over 50 percent of the urban pedestrian crashes were on the state highway network in Wellington City and two thirds of these were at or near intersections. Collisions with pedestrians on the state highway network in the region typically occurred at intersections with Ghuznee Street, Taranaki Street and Vivian Street.



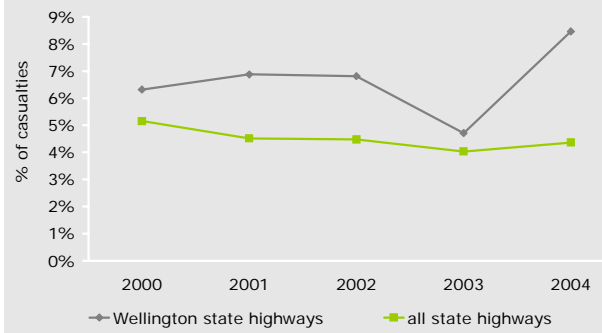
Factors associated with pedestrian crashes on the urban state highway route included:

- pedestrians crossing, heedless of traffic
- pedestrians running, heedless of traffic
- visibly intoxicated pedestrians
- drivers not giving way at pedestrian crossings
- pedestrians not complying with traffic signals or school patrols
- driver attention diverted by other traffic
- drivers not seeing or looking for other parties until too late.

### Motorcyclists

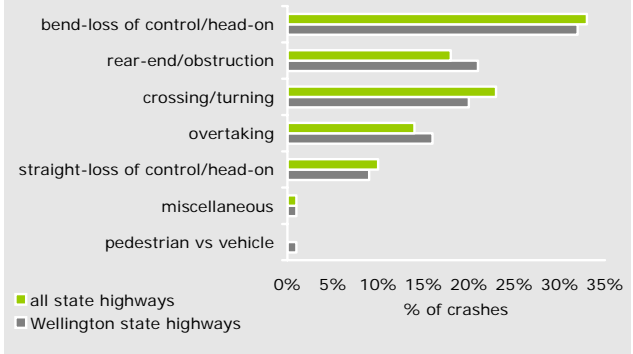
While motorcyclists were only seven percent of the total road user casualties reported on the state highways in the region, they accounted for 13 percent of the serious injuries. In 2004, there was a notable increase in the number of motorcyclists injured.

### Motorcyclist casualties 2000–2004



Loss of control, either on a bend or on a straight section of road, was the main type of crash involving motorcyclists. Contributory factors included poor observation, either on the part of the rider or other road user, poor handling, failure to give way or stop at an intersection and travelling too fast for the conditions.

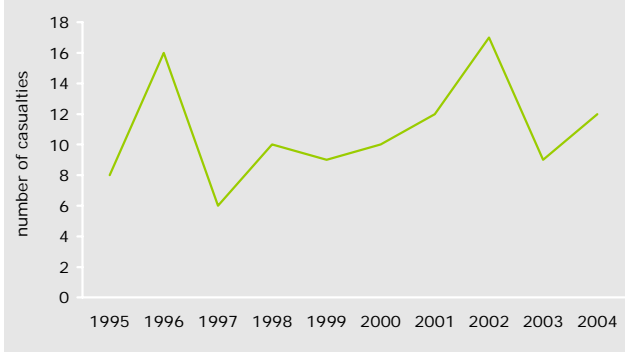
### Motorcycle crash type 2000–2004



### Cyclists

Over the past 10 years, there was a slight upward trend in the number of cyclist casualties on the state highways in the region. Compared with all crashes in the region, a high proportion of cycle crashes occurred at intersections or involved an overtaking manoeuvre by one of the road users.

### Cyclist casualties 1995–2004



## Speed

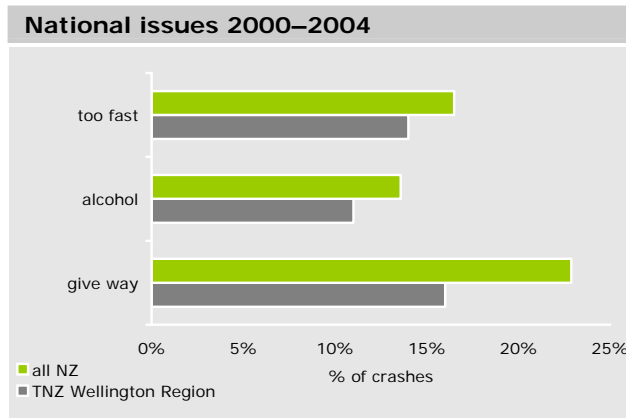
The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash, and the greater the risk of serious injury and death. Excessive speed was a factor in 17 percent of all injury crashes reported in New Zealand. This figure increased to 32 percent for fatal crashes and 21 percent for serious injury crashes. Excessive speed was a reported factor in 14 percent of injury crashes in the TNZ Wellington Region between 2000 and 2004, increasing to 17 percent in fatal crashes and 19 percent in serious crashes.

## Alcohol

Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive. Overall, 11 percent of injury crashes in the TNZ Wellington Region between 2000 and 2004 involved alcohol as a contributory factor compared with 15 percent of injury crashes for all of New Zealand. It was notable that alcohol-related crashes happened generally during the hours of darkness and on weekends.

## Failure to give way

Overall, between 2000 and 2004, 16 percent of all crashes in the TNZ Wellington Region involved a vehicle failing to give way, which was below the national figure of 24 percent. However, failure to give way at intersections was identified as a problem in 46 percent of those crashes in the region.



## Restraints

Wearing a safety belt reduces the chance of death or serious injury in a crash by 40 percent. Seatbelt surveys in 2004 indicated that 94 percent of drivers in the TNZ Wellington Region wore a restraint. This compares well with the 94 percent for New Zealand as a whole.

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