

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 in Upper Hutt City.

The number of reported injury crashes and casualties in urban areas of Upper Hutt City continues to decline. However, since 2002 there has been a marked increase in the number of reported injury crashes and casualties in rural areas. Following two years with no fatal crashes, there were four in 2003. All the fatal crashes and two thirds of rural crashes occurred on the state highway. The social cost of crashes in 2003 was \$28 million.

In 2003, cyclist and motorcycle casualties reduced dramatically compared with 2002 and the proportion of crashes involving these transport modes was lower than national figures. Pedestrian casualties rose to a 10-year high with 10 to 14 year olds being a particular concern.

Car drivers made up 48 percent of all casualties between 1999 and 2003. The main types of crashes reported were rear-end/obstruction collisions in urban areas and loss of control/head-on crashes at bends in rural areas. Two thirds of rural loss of control/head-on crashes at bends occurred on state highways.

Both local and national road safety issues are identified below. The specific issues for Upper Hutt City are considered in detail overleaf, while national issues are outlined on the back page.

Major road safety issues




Upper Hutt City

- Pedestrians**
- Driver licence status**
- Loss of control**
- Collision with objects**

Nationally

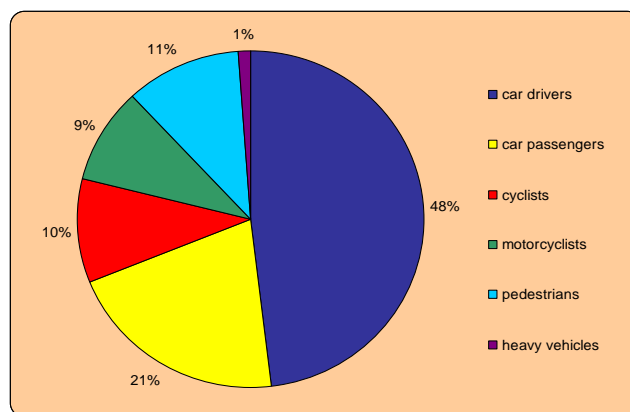
- Speed**
- Alcohol**
- Failure to give way**
- Restraints**

2003 road trauma for Upper Hutt City

	Deaths	4
	Serious casualties	15
	Minor casualties	70
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	Fatal crashes	4
	Serious injury crashes	11
	Minor injury crashes	45
	Non-injury crashes	160

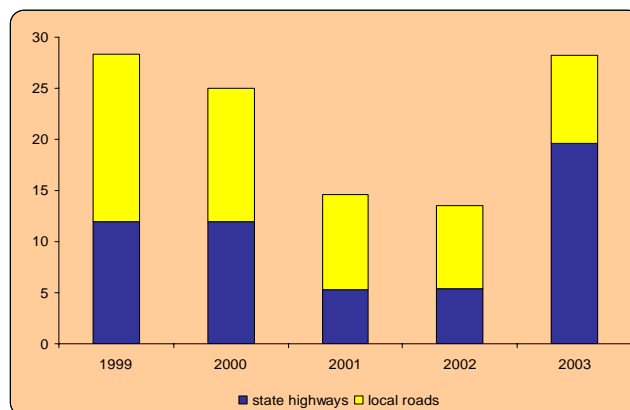
Road casualties 1999–2003

User type 1999–2003



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)

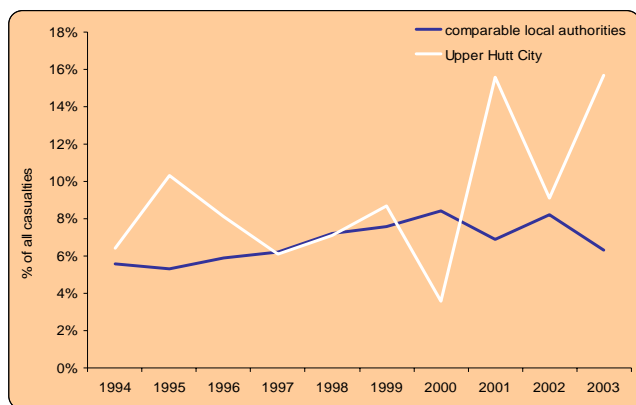


*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are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

Pedestrians

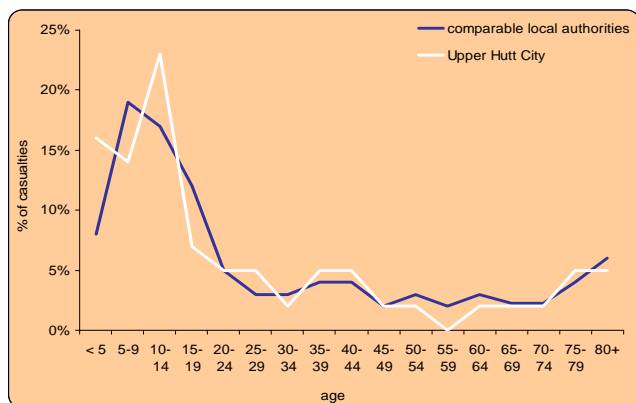
The number of pedestrians involved in road crashes in Upper Hutt City has varied over the last few years from three in 2000 to 12 in 2001. However, in 2003 pedestrian casualties reached a 10-year high of 14. Due to this variability, the data for one year should not be considered in isolation, as the number of pedestrian casualties for the last 10 years has shown an overall upward trend. Sixteen percent of all casualties were pedestrians compared with six percent in similar local authorities. The most common factor in these crashes was pedestrians trying to cross the road when it was not safe to do so.

Pedestrian casualties 1994–2003



In national terms, the 10 to 14 year age group were over-represented and education targeted at this group could help in addressing this problem.

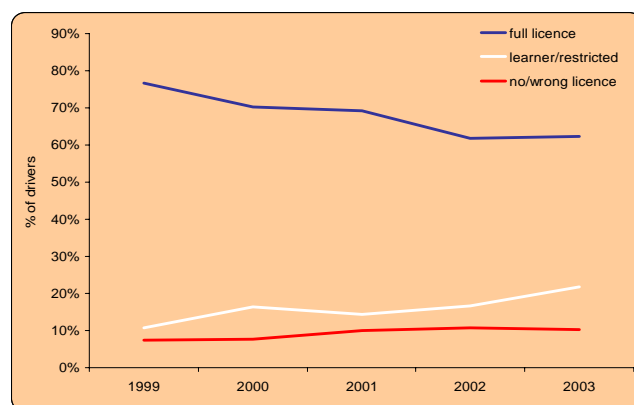
Pedestrian casualties by age 1999–2003



Driver licence status

The licence status of drivers involved in injury crashes appears to be changing. In 1999, 77 percent of crashes involved drivers on a full licence but by 2003, this figure had fallen to 62 percent. In the same period, the percentage of injury crashes involving drivers with learner or restricted licences rose from 14 to 22 percent and the percentage of drivers with no licence or the wrong licence rose from four to 10 percent.

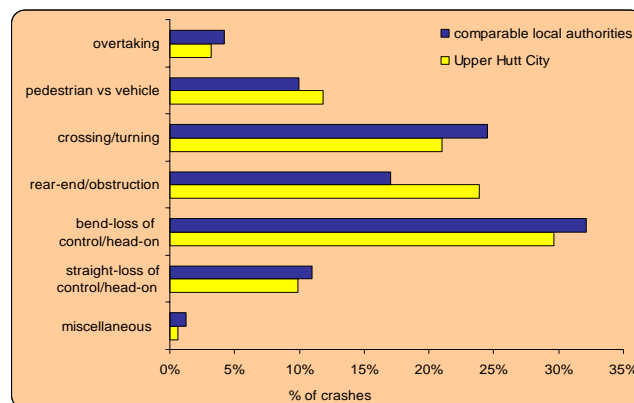
Licence status of drivers



This change was most pronounced in the urban environment where the proportion of drivers with full licences involved in injury crashes reduced to below 50 percent. In rural areas, drivers with full licences were still involved in 74 percent of crashes and drivers on learner or restricted licences were involved in 23 percent of injury crashes.

Regardless of licence type, crashes were mainly caused by drivers losing control of their vehicle or colliding with objects on the road.

Crash types 1999–2003

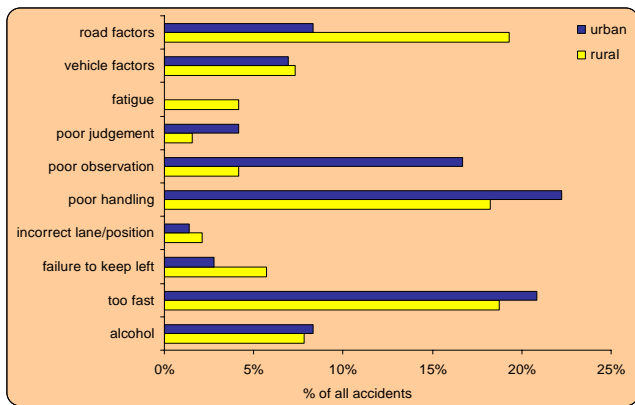




Loss of control

Drivers losing control of their vehicle on a straight road or on a bend was the most common crash type in 2003. In total there were 165 such crashes, 79 in urban areas and 86 in rural areas. Of those in rural areas, 57 occurred on the state highway. Overall, loss of control crashes represented a lower proportion of all crashes than in comparable local authorities. However, if urban and rural areas are considered separately, a slightly different picture emerges. As a percentage of all crashes in urban areas, loss of control on a straight section of road was a factor in more crashes than those in comparable local authorities. The same applies to loss of control on bends in rural areas.

Factors in loss of control crashes 1999–2003



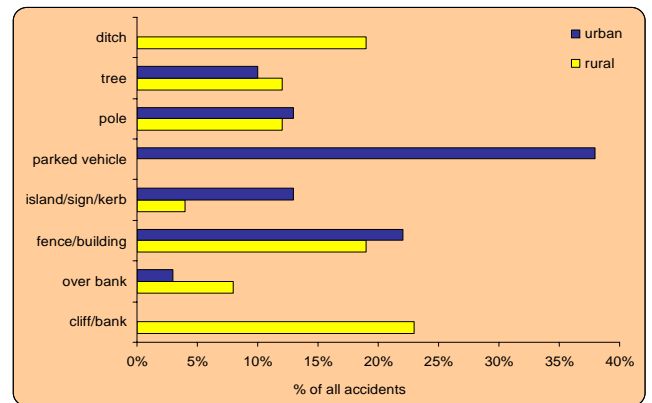
Poor handling of a vehicle and driving too fast for the conditions were among the top three factors in both urban and rural areas.



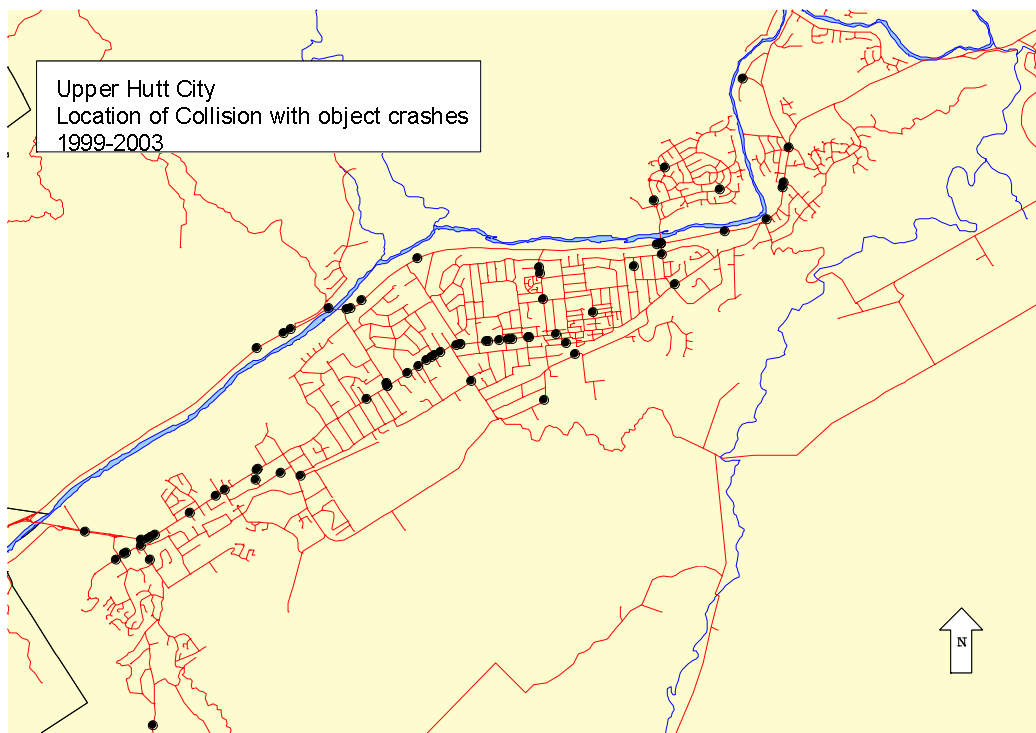
Collision with objects

Rear-end collisions or collisions with obstructions were the second most common type of crash in Upper Hutt City. The proportion of crashes involving rear-end collisions or collisions with obstructions, was 24 percent compared with 17 percent in similar local authorities. The major contributing factor to these crashes was poor observation. The majority of these crashes occurred on Ferguson Drive.

Objects struck 1999–2003



The most common object to be struck was parked cars in the urban environment, accounting for 38 percent of all objects struck. In rural areas, the most common objects struck were cliffs, ditches and fences.



Speed

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

In Upper Hutt City, the overall proportion of crashes involving excessive speed or driving too fast for the conditions was lower than national figures in urban areas but higher in rural areas. Data suggests there is an issue associated with speed on the state highway in rural areas.

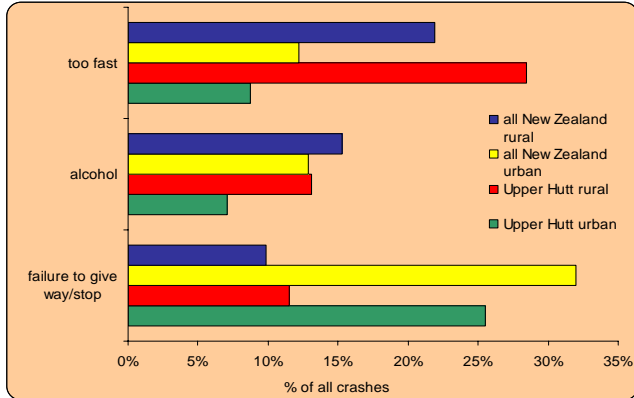


Alcohol

Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive.

The graph below shows that the percentage of crashes involving alcohol in Upper Hutt was below the national figure on all classes of road. The number of alcohol-related crashes in urban areas has fallen steadily since 1998 when there were nine crashes. There were no alcohol-related crashes in urban areas in 2003. In rural areas there were four crashes involving alcohol last year. This was higher than figures for the previous three years, but significantly below the 10-year high of nine in 1997.

National issues 1999–2003



Failure to give way

The proportion of crashes involving failure to give way in Upper Hutt was higher than the national figure for rural areas but lower for urban areas. Failure to give way was the second most common crash type in urban areas and the majority occurred on local roads. In rural areas, the majority of these crashes occurred at intersections with State Highway 2.



Restraints

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

Results from the 2003 national restraint wearing survey showed that the front seat safety belt wearing rate in 2003 in Upper Hutt City was 89 percent compared with the national average of 92 percent. A local survey carried out in 2004 indicated a wearing rate of 91 percent.

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