

# road safety issues

## Eastern Waikato Area

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 and provide partners with an indication of their road safety performance.

'The data relative to your area in this report will assist you in measuring how effective your road safety strategy has been. It will also help you in your planning to ensure you apply the most appropriate intervention or mix of interventions from enforcement, education and engineering efforts to the high risk stretches of road in each area.

Land Transport New Zealand is committed to ensuring that safety will be considered as an integral part of its business.

I hope this copy of *Road Safety Issues 2005* assists you in identifying ways of achieving improved safety outcomes in your area.'

Rosalie Orr  
Partnership Manager Midlands

### Major road safety issues

#### Eastern Waikato Area

Poor observation

Speed

Drink-driving

Restraints and helmets

#### Nationally

Speed

Drink-driving

Failure to give way

Restraints



### 2004 road trauma for Eastern Waikato Area



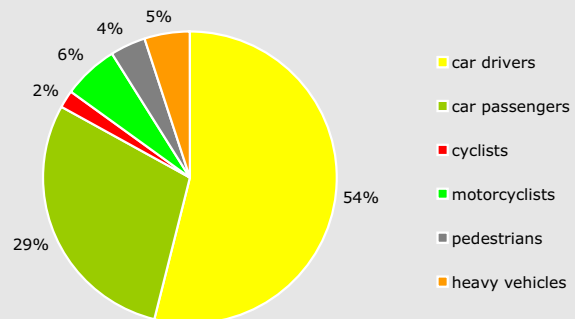
|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| Deaths             | 18  |
| Serious casualties | 57  |
| Minor casualties   | 271 |



|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Fatal crashes          | 17  |
| Serious injury crashes | 48  |
| Minor injury crashes   | 170 |
| Non-injury crashes     | 462 |

### Road casualties 2000–2004

#### User type 2000–2004



### Estimated social cost of crashes\*

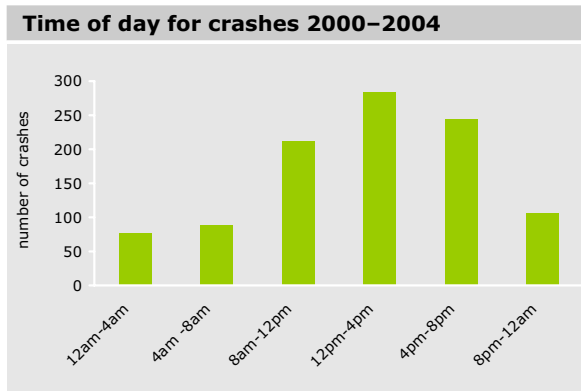
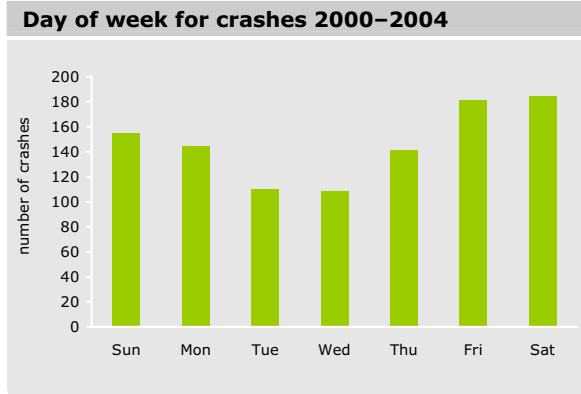
#### Social cost (\$ million)



\*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.

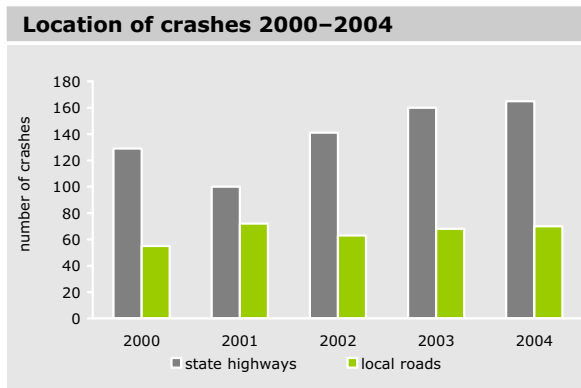
## When crashes occurred

Crashes resulting in injury can occur at any time, but in the Eastern Waikato Area from 2000 to 2004, Saturdays and noon to 4 pm were the worst periods.



## Where crashes occurred

During the 2000–2004 period, approximately 89 percent of fatal crashes (where one or more people were killed) and 74 percent of injury crashes occurred on rural roads. In rural areas there is a greater chance of a fatal crash occurring than in an urban area, due to the higher speed limits.



## Who was involved

From 2000 to 2004, 1,537 people were injured on Eastern Waikato Area roads.

**Road user groups involved in crashes**

| Road user groups        | Casualties urban | Casualties rural |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Drivers                 | 48%              | 56%              |
| Passengers              | 27%              | 29%              |
| Heavy vehicle occupants | 1%               | 7%               |
| Motorcyclists           | 7%               | 6%               |
| Cyclists                | 5%               | 1%               |
| Pedestrians             | 12%              | 1%               |

**Age groups of those involved in crashes**

| Age groups in years | Crashes—males | Crashes—females | Population in Eastern Waikato Area |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| <5                  | 1%            | 2%              | 8%                                 |
| 5–9                 | 3%            | 3%              | 8%                                 |
| 10–14               | 4%            | 5%              | 8%                                 |
| 15–19               | 20%           | 17%             | 6%                                 |
| 20–24               | 13%           | 12%             | 5%                                 |
| 25–29               | 11%           | 7%              | 7%                                 |
| 30–34               | 10%           | 10%             | 7%                                 |
| 35–39               | 8%            | 7%              | 8%                                 |
| 40–44               | 7%            | 8%              | 7%                                 |
| 45–49               | 5%            | 5%              | 6%                                 |
| 50–54               | 4%            | 4%              | 6%                                 |
| 55–59               | 3%            | 4%              | 5%                                 |
| 60–64               | 4%            | 5%              | 5%                                 |
| 65–69               | 3%            | 3%              | 5%                                 |
| 70–74               | 2%            | 3%              | 4%                                 |
| 75–79               | 1%            | 3%              | 2%                                 |
| 80+                 | 1%            | 2%              | 3%                                 |

**Gender of those involved in crashes**

| Gender | Urban crashes | Rural crashes |
|--------|---------------|---------------|
| Male   | 198           | 727           |
| Female | 163           | 437           |

## Poor observation

Poor observation includes:

- inattention or failing to notice, eg failing to notice traffic lights while driving home on 'autopilot' and thinking about what to cook for tea
- attention being diverted, eg being distracted by children in the back seat
- not seeing or looking for another road user until too late, eg not checking behind when changing lanes or experiencing near misses at intersections.

Nationally, not seeing or looking for other parties until too late was the third highest contributing factor in injury crashes in 2004 and resulted in a total social cost of \$605 million.

Failure to see or look for another road user until too late caused 2,255 crashes in 2004 – a greater number of crashes than either speeding or drink-driving, but with a lower social cost and a lower rate of severity.

In the Eastern Waikato Area, poor observation was a factor in 29 percent of injury crashes in 2004, a decrease from 2003, and decreasing against the national trend.

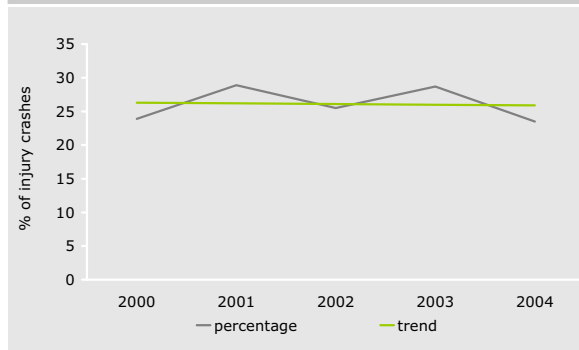
There were 310 injury crashes relating to poor observation reported in the last five years.

Poor observation was predominantly a rural issue in the Eastern Waikato Area in 2004 and was a factor in 24 percent of the injury crashes occurring on roads with a speed limit greater than 70 km/h.

Poor observation has decreased as a factor on rural roads over the last five years, with the number of injury crashes falling from 47 in 2003 to 44 in 2004.

In the Eastern Waikato Area, 45 percent of poor observation crashes occurred at intersections.

### Rural poor observation crashes 2000–2004



Poor observation is a challenging issue for all road safety groups to address. In particular, thought needs to be given on how to address:

- complacency of drivers
- looking but not seeing
- roading networks that contain surprises for the inattentive driver.

## Key locations

The Eastern Waikato Area is made up of a number of territorial local authorities (TLAs). The following provides a breakdown of the key locations at which poor observation crashes occurred during the 2000–2004 period.

|   |
|---|
| <b>Thames–Coromandel District</b>       |
| SH 26 and SH 25 intersection            |
| SH 25, 60 m north of Manaia Rd          |
| Banks St, 100 m west of Parawai Rd      |
| <b>Hauraki District</b>                 |
| SH 2 and SH 25 intersection             |
| SH 2, 300 m south of Woodlands Rd       |
| SH 25 and Hauraki Rd intersection       |
| <b>Matamata–Piako District</b>          |
| SH 27 and Paeroa Tahuna Rd intersection |
| SH 1 and SH 29 intersection             |
| SH 26 and Seddon Rd intersection        |

## Territorial local authority performance

The following table provides the percentage of poor observation related crashes that occurred for each TLA and their peer group during the period 2000–2004:

|                            | TLA | Peer group* |
|----------------------------|-----|-------------|
| Thames–Coromandel District | 27% | 30%         |
| Hauraki District           | 26% | 25%         |
| Matamata–Piako District    | 36% | 30%         |

\*Peer groups consist of TLAs which have similar geographical, population and traffic volume profiles.

## Speed

Speed includes not only exceeding the speed limit, but also driving too fast for the condition of the road. No matter how good drivers think they are, speeding significantly increases the chances of crashing, resulting in serious injury or death.

- A child struck in a suburban street by a car travelling at 10 km over the speed limit will be killed.
- Driving at 100 km/h in light rain requires the same stopping distance as driving at 120 km/h on a sunny day.
- Driving at 50 km/h in dry conditions requires 37 metres stopping distance. Driving at 100 km/h in dry conditions requires 111 metres stopping distance.

Nationally, speed is one of the major contributing factors to road crashes. For the 12 months to the end of December 2004, excessive speed probably contributed to 36 percent of fatal crashes and 16 percent of injury crashes.

During 2004, there were 1,769 crashes where the driver was travelling too fast for the conditions, resulting in a total social cost of \$954 million.

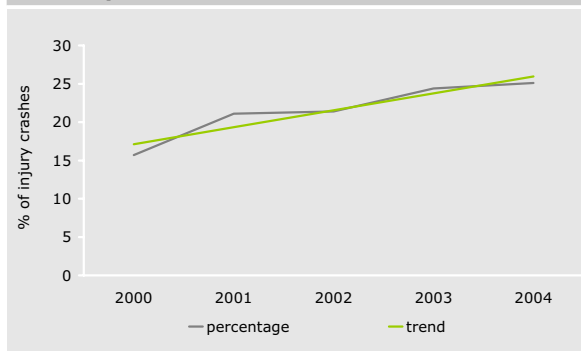
In the Eastern Waikato Area, excessive speed was a factor in 22 percent of injury crashes in 2004. This was a slight decrease from 2003 and decreasing in line with the national trend.

There were 213 speed-related injury crashes reported in the last five years.

Speeding was predominantly a rural issue in the East Waikato Area in 2004 and was a factor in 25 percent of the injury crashes occurring on roads with a speed limit greater than 70 km/h. Most roads in the Waikato were built for 80 km/h speeds and cannot be driven safely at the open road maximum of 100 km/h.

Speed has increased as a factor on rural roads over the last five years, with the number of injury crashes rising from 40 in 2003 to 47 in 2004.

**Rural speed-related crashes 2000–2004**



## 2004 public attitudes survey

Responses from the Waikato Region indicated:

- 46 percent of drivers said that they enjoyed driving fast on the open road
- 17 percent of drivers agreed that there was little chance of a crash when speeding if they were careful
- 38 percent of drivers thought that the risk of being caught speeding was small
- 83 percent thought that enforcing the speed limit helped to lower the number of road deaths.

## Territorial local authority performance

The Eastern Waikato Area is made up of a number of territorial local authorities (TLAs). The following table provides the percentage of speed-related crashes that occurred for each TLA and their peer group during the period 2000–2004:

|                            | TLA | Peer group* |
|----------------------------|-----|-------------|
| Thames–Coromandel District | 30% | 21%         |
| Hauraki District           | 19% | 22%         |
| Matamata–Piako District    | 17% | 21%         |

\*Peer groups consist of TLAs which have similar geographical, population and traffic volume profiles.

## Drink-driving

Alcohol affects the way people drive. Studies repeatedly show that the risk of crashing increases as a driver's blood alcohol level increases. Contrary to popular opinion, people with a high blood alcohol level are more likely to be injured or killed in a crash than those who have not consumed alcohol. If injured, they are also more likely to encounter complications in their recovery.

For every 100 drink-drivers or riders killed in road crashes, 59 of their passengers and 36 other road users die with them.

Nationally, alcohol was the second highest contributing factor in road crashes during 2004 and resulted in a total social cost of \$758 million.

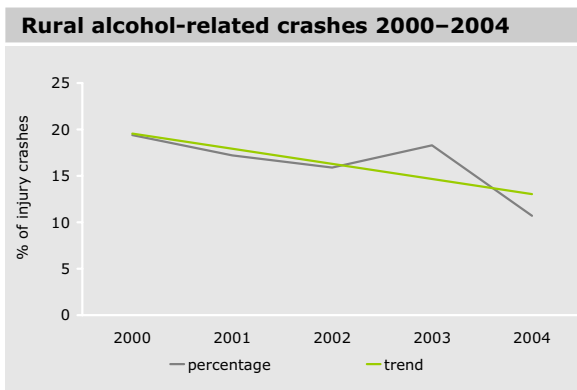
For the 12 months to December 2004, alcohol-affected drivers contributed to 30 percent of all fatal crashes and 12 percent of all injury crashes.

In the Eastern Waikato Area, alcohol was a factor in 12 percent of injury crashes in 2004, a decrease from 2003, and decreasing in line with the national trend.

There were 164 alcohol-related injury crashes reported in the last five years.

Drink-driving was predominantly a rural issue in the Eastern Waikato Area in 2004 and was a factor in 11 percent of the injury crashes occurring on roads with a speed limit greater than 70 km/h.

Drink-driving has fluctuated as a factor on rural roads over the last 10 years, with the number of injury crashes falling from 30 in 2003 to 20 in 2004.



A small group of regular high-risk drink-drivers make up only one percent of all drivers on the road at night and weekends, but are responsible for nearly half the crash deaths at that time.

Last drink surveys are completed by New Zealand Police officers at the time of processing drink-drivers. The information from these surveys is used in a number of ways and includes assisting:

- liquor licensing assessment groups to identify at-risk premises
- the New Zealand Police to target their activities to drink-driving
- health authorities to target their activities and to monitor the impacts of any legislation changes.

## Key locations

The Eastern Waikato Area is made up of a number of territorial local authorities (TLAs). The following provides a breakdown of the key locations at which drink-driving crashes occurred during the 2000–2004 period.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Thames–Coromandel District</b>        |
| SH 25, 300 m south of Lockhart Place     |
| Purangi Rd, 400 m south of Rees Ave      |
| SH 25A, 2,000 m east of SH 26            |
| <b>Hauraki District</b>                  |
| SH 2, 2,000 m south of Crean Rd          |
| SH 2, 500 m north of Awaiti Rd           |
| Hauraki Rd, 1,000 m north of Raratuna St |
| <b>Matamata–Piako District</b>           |
| SH 27, 400 m north of Wardville Rd       |
| SH 26, 230 m north of Harbottle Rd       |
| SH 26 and Seddon Rd intersection         |

## Territorial local authority performance

The following table provides the percentage of alcohol-related crashes that occurred for each TLA and their peer group during the period 2000–2004:

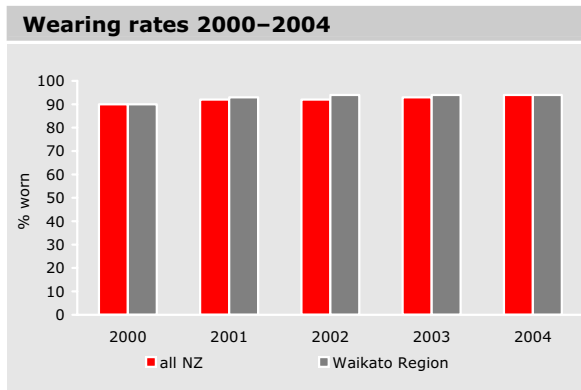
|                            | TLA | Peer group* |
|----------------------------|-----|-------------|
| Thames–Coromandel District | 18% | 16%         |
| Hauraki District           | 16% | 14%         |
| Matamata–Piako District    | 15% | 16%         |

\*Peer groups consist of TLAs which have similar geographical, population and traffic volume profiles.

## Restraints and helmets

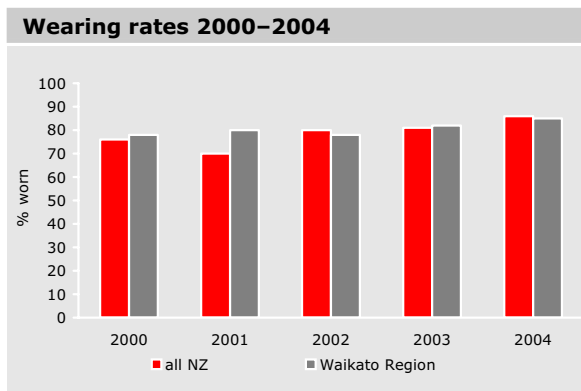
In the 12 months to March 2005, 85 people who were killed on the roads were not wearing safety belts. According to police officers, at least 20 of those lives (four were children) would have been saved had they used the restraints available to them.

### Front seat safety belt use – adult



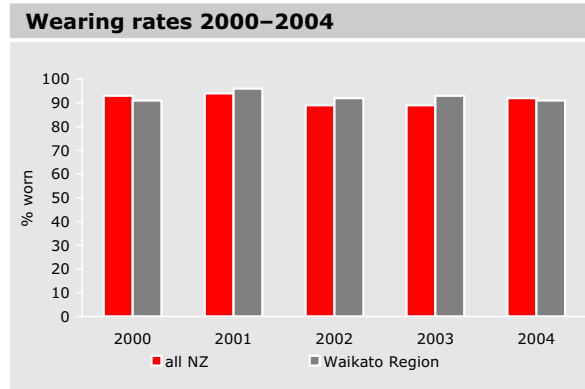
Responses from the Waikato Region to the 2004 public attitudes survey indicated that 37 percent of those surveyed thought that the chance of an adult being caught not wearing a safety belt when driving was very or fairly likely.

### Rear seat safety belt use – adult



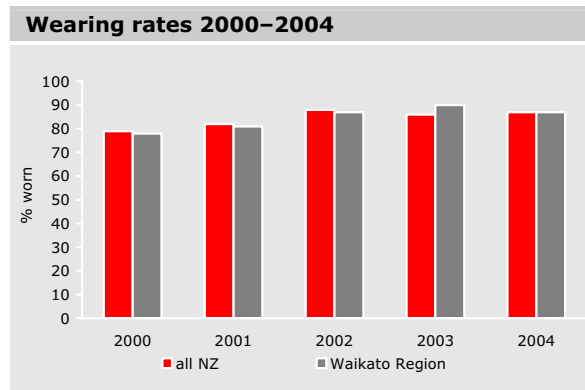
Responses from the Waikato Region to the 2004 public attitudes survey indicated that 17 percent of those surveyed thought that the chance of an adult being caught not wearing a safety belt as a rear seat passenger was very or fairly likely.

## Cycle helmets



Since becoming compulsory in 1994, cycle helmet use has increased substantially. The wearing rate in the Waikato Region has fluctuated over the past three years but continues to be below the national figure.

## Child restraints



Responses from the Waikato Region to the 2004 public attitudes survey indicated that 30 percent of those surveyed thought that the chance of being if a child under five in a back seat was caught not in a child restraint was very or fairly likely.

## New Zealand Transport Strategy

The *New Zealand Transport Strategy* (NZTS) defines the government's vision for transport – 'By 2010, New Zealand will have an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable transport system.'

The strategy has five main objectives:

- to assist economic development
- to assist safety and personal security
- to improve access and mobility
- to protect and promote public health
- to ensure environmental sustainability.

All modes of transport (road, rail, sea and air) will be looked at in an integrated and long-term way.

Implementation will occur through policy development, rules and legislation (such as the Land Transport Management Act), the Road Safety to 2010 strategy, work on emissions control, measures to improve maritime and aviation security, and rail safety.

The NZTS is also a reference point for those who wish to contribute to government transport policy and planning. All future projects that seek funding from the National Land Transport Fund will have to actively take into account the strategies' objectives.

## Land Transport New Zealand

The 2004 amendment to the Land Transport Management Act (LTMA) provided for the establishment of Land Transport New Zealand (Land Transport NZ), a Crown agency that assumed the responsibilities of the Land Transport Safety Authority and Transfund New Zealand from 1 December 2004.

Land Transport NZ was proposed as an outcome of the 2004 Transport Sector Review. The review sought to re-engineer the government transport sector to better enable it to deliver on the objectives of the NZTS.

Land Transport NZ's objective is to contribute to an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system, working in partnership with central, regional and local government and many other stakeholders to help develop land transport solutions.

Land Transport NZ will focus on optimal use and development of New Zealand's land transport system, taking a long-term view.

Although there will no longer be an agency focused solely on land transport safety, safety will be maintained and improved.

## Network safety co-ordination

Managing the safety of the roading network is an important task that road safety partners have been working on at both a national and regional level for many years.

The Ministry of Transport has established a Network Safety Co-ordination Group which will report to the National Road Safety Committee. This group hosted a workshop that renewed focus on the co-ordination of safety activities across the three E's approach – engineering, education and enforcement.

The workshop was to develop a model for how this co-ordinated approach could be used consistently in all regions. A commitment was made at this workshop for the co-ordinated approach to be used on the 'worst' state highway corridors in each region.

## Road policing

'Enforcement activity is a vital part of improving road safety, and the New Zealand Police are key partners contributing to the *Road Safety to 2010* strategy and its objectives.

*'It is of major concern that 2005 has seen a huge increase in the number of fatal motor vehicle crashes on our Waikato Police District roads.*

*The vast majority of our fatal crashes have occurred when vehicles have crossed the centre line and collided with an approaching vehicle.*

*The Waikato highways carry a large number of heavy motor vehicles and if a driver crosses the centre line and collides with a heavy motor vehicle, their chances of survival are somewhat limited.*

*The Waikato Police District has also been plagued with a number of multiple fatal motor vehicle crashes over recent months which have not helped our road toll in any way at all.*

*All drivers must take responsibility for the manner in which they drive, just as they must take responsibility for their own actions and need to consider the consequences for their families.*

*The major contributing causes to serious and fatal motor vehicle crashes within the district are:*

- poor observation
- excess speed
- failing to give way
- restraints.

*If we can only concentrate on these four issues we will be able to make a significant impact on the number of crashes that occur within our Waikato Police District.'*

Pieri Munro

Acting District Commander – Waikato

## Partnerships

Land Transport New Zealand works closely with many road safety partners at national, regional and local levels. These include government departments, enforcement agencies, territorial local authorities, health authorities and local service providers.

Some of the key road safety partners in the Eastern Waikato Area include:

New Zealand Police

Waikato District Road Policing Manager

Inspector Leo Tooman

PO Box 3078, Hamilton

Phone 07 850 7063

Road Safety Co-ordinators

Waikato Region

Road Safety Promotions and Marketing

Barnaby Bates

PO Box 4010, Hamilton East

Phone 07 856 7184

Eastern Waikato Districts

Alison Ruru

PO Box 266, Te Aroha

Phone 07 868 2335

Local Authority Engineers

Thames–Coromandel District Council

Alex Finn

Private Bag, Thames

Phone 07 868 6025

Hauraki District Council

Gene Thomsen

PO Box 17, Paeroa

Phone 07 862 8609

Matamata–Piako District Council

Neville Boag

PO Box 266, Te Aroha

Ph 07 844 8179

TNZ Area Manager

Hendrik Van Blerk (Acting)

PO Box 973, Hamilton

Phone 07 957 1610

Accident Compensation Corporation

Waikato/King Country Area

ACC Injury Prevention Consultant

Lisa Taylor

PO Box 952, Hamilton

Phone 07 957 5826

## Assistance from Land Transport New Zealand

The Midland Regional Office is able to assist partners in activities such as:

- implementation of safety management systems
- crash reduction studies
- safety audits
- crash data provision and analysis
- general road engineering advice
- general road safety advice
- community development
- community programmes
- long-term council community plans
- land use planning
- land transport programme development.

The Land Transport New Zealand website also contains road safety information, including electronic copies of this report and all of the others that have been produced for the country. We encourage you to visit this site: [www.landtransport.govt.nz](http://www.landtransport.govt.nz)

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