

road safety issues

July 2002

The Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) has prepared this Road Safety Issues Report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 1997–2001 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in the Wairoa district.

The estimated social cost of road crashes reported in the Wairoa district last year was \$23.86 million.

In the year 2001, 40 injury and 69 non-injury crashes were reported in the district. In these crashes, six people died and 61 suffered injuries.

Of the 40 injury crashes reported last year, 12 (30 percent) occurred on urban roads, and 28 (70 percent) occurred on rural roads.

Since record low numbers of casualties (40 in 1998 and in 1999), the number of people injured in crashes last year increased to 67. This is the highest number reported in the past 10 years.

In the five-year period 1997 to 2001, 12 pedestrians, five cyclists, 17 motorcyclists and 13 heavy vehicle drivers or occupants were injured in road crashes. The number of motorcyclists and pedestrians injured has increased slightly over the past 10 years.

Continued effort is required to reduce the number of people injured in road crashes in the region.

Major road safety issues:

Wairoa district

Loss of control on rural roads

Intersections

Alcohol

Restraints

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2001 road toll for Wairoa district

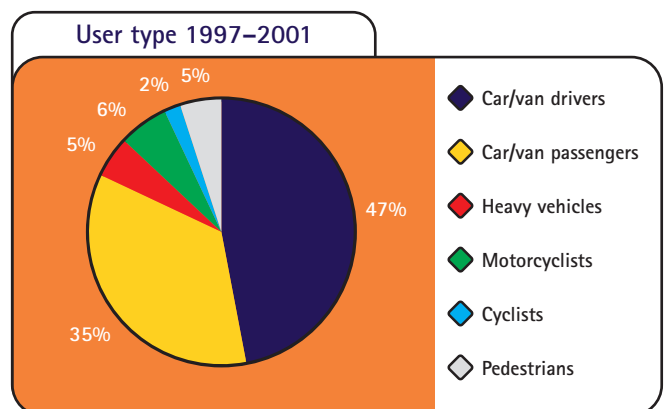


Deaths	6
Serious casualties	17
Minor casualties	44

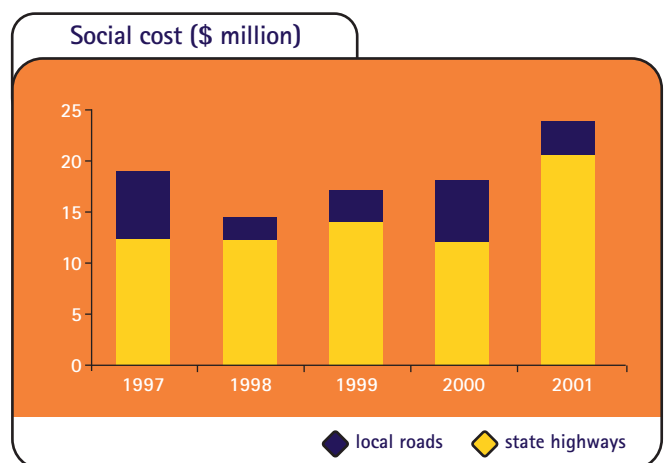


Fatal crashes	4
Serious injury crashes	8
Minor injury crashes	28
Non-injury crashes	69

Road user casualties 1997–2001



Estimated social cost of crashes*



* 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 2001 prices.



Loss of control on rural roads

In the past five years, 104 loss of control or head-on crashes resulted in people being injured. These accounted for 66 percent of injury crashes reported in the district.

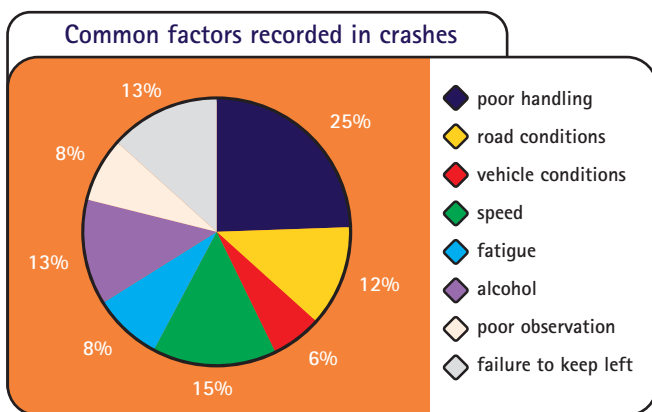
The percentage of loss of control or head-on crashes on curves was much higher than reported in similar districts.

Sixty-five percent of rural injury crashes in the region occurred on rural state highways where drivers frequently lost control of their vehicles on curves. When compared with similar districts, the rate of crashes and casualties reported on state highways in the Wairoa district was the highest.

More people receive serious injuries in rural road crashes. Further improvement in wearing of restraints in vehicles could be expected to reduce the number and severity of injuries.

Factors that were commonly associated with rural road crashes included poor vehicle handling, failure to keep left, driver's inattention, poor judgement and observation, fatigue, and road and vehicle conditions. Speed and alcohol were also commonly reported contributing factors. Thirty-nine percent of the injury crashes in rural areas occurred during the hours of darkness. Twenty-six percent of all rural crashes occurred in wet weather.

The objects most commonly struck by vehicles in these crashes were fences, banks, ditches, trees, poles, bridges and guard-rails. A number of vehicles lost control on steep shoulders of the road or when returning to the seal from an unsealed steep shoulder.



Other commonly recorded contributing factors relating to state highways and roads in the district are: slippery road surface in wet weather, limited visibility, road unusually narrow, and loose metal or road under construction. Stray or wild animals often cause drivers to lose control of their vehicles.

Twenty (19 percent) of the injury crashes occurred on unsealed roads in the district.



Recommended actions

Engineering

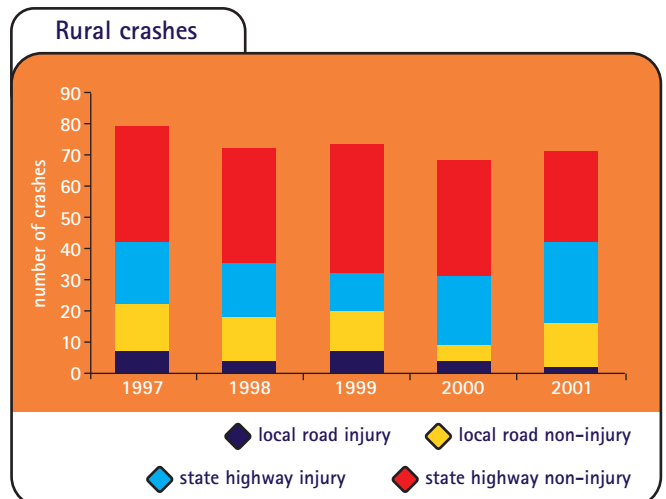
- Establish programmes to upgrade and maintain curve warning signs, markings and delineation on local rural roads, to the appropriate standards.
- Continue with rural crash reduction studies to investigate and carry out remedial treatment at black spots and treatment to routes giving priority to those with higher incidence of crashes reported.
- Maintain roadside clear of hazards and provide side protection where appropriate.
- Widen road carriageway and seal shoulders to provide additional vehicle wander and recovery space where feasible and cost effective.
- Maintain pavement surface to provide good standards for skid resistance.
- Improve road geometry.
- Remove stray and wild animals from state highways and road reserves.

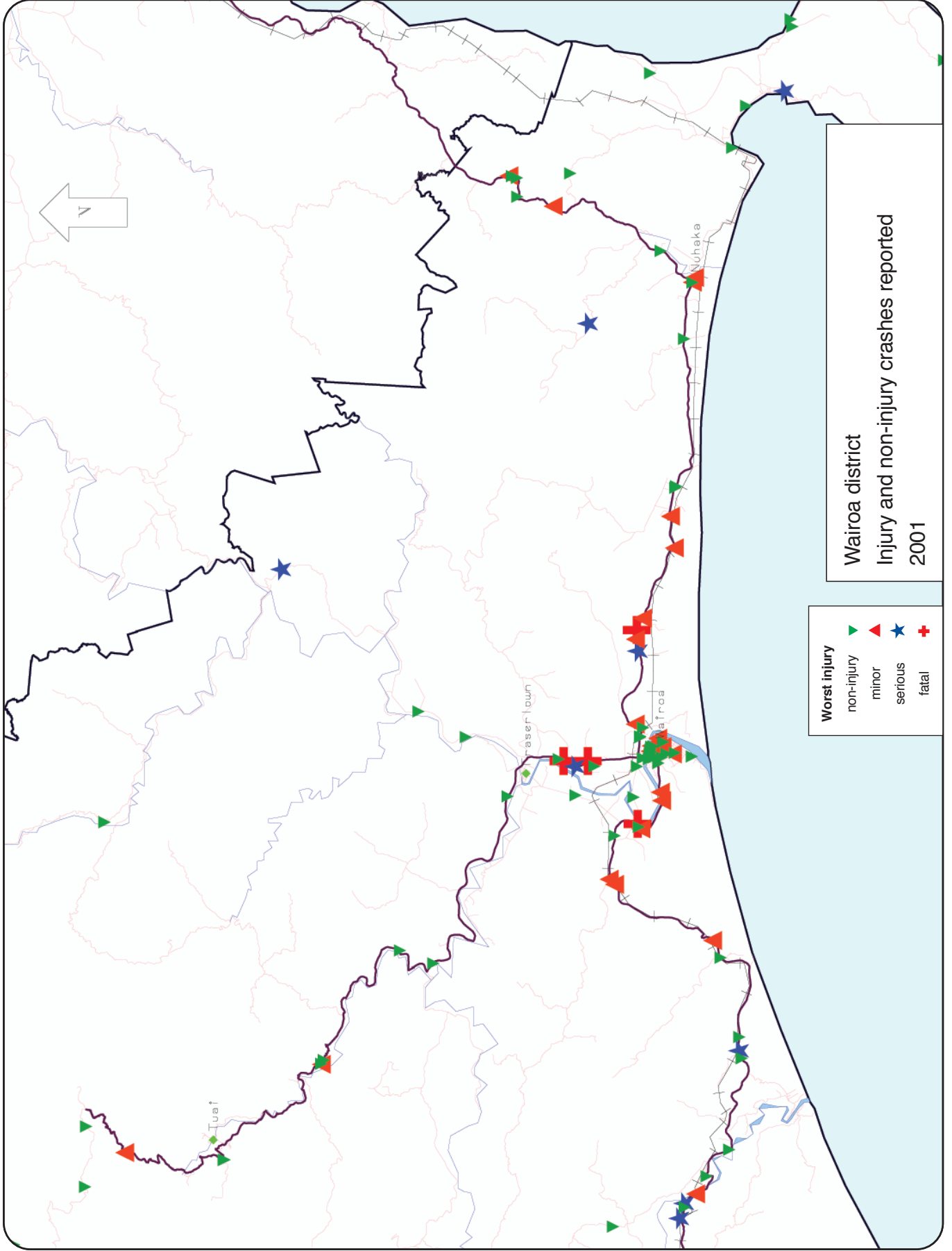
Education

- Raise rural driver awareness of the need to drive appropriately for the road environment, through various community programmes. Messages to be promoted should relate to general driver behaviour activities, including speed.
- Educate drivers to be aware of the risks of speeding and driving too fast for road conditions.
- Promote safe and secure stock fences in rural areas.

Enforcement

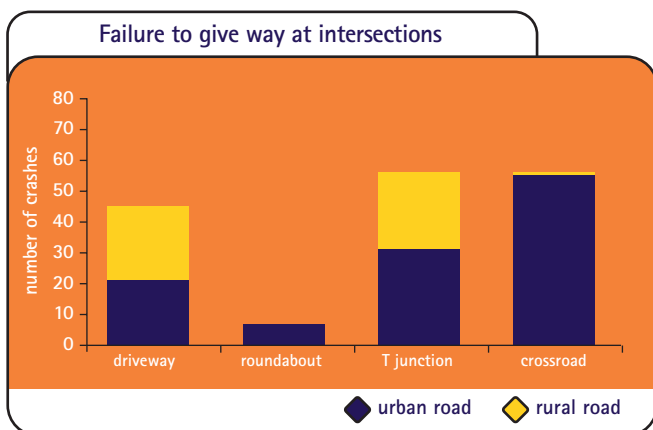
- Continue enforcement focusing on inappropriate speed in rural areas.
- Target enforcement to times and locations of greatest risk.
- Co-ordinate enforcement campaigns targeting road user behaviour, working in conjunction with community programmes.
- Continue with stock and animal control programmes in the district.





Intersections

Approximately 26 percent of all crashes reported in the Wairoa district occurred at intersections. In the past five years, 23 injury crashes and 144 non-injury crashes were reported at intersections (including driveways).



Of the injury and non-injury crashes reported at intersections during the past five years:

- 66 occurred at intersections with Give Way controls
- 26 occurred at intersections with Stop controls
- 75 occurred at driveways or uncontrolled intersections.

Factors recorded in crashes at intersections in the Wairoa district were commonly a failure to give way or stop when required, and poor observation. Alcohol was also a factor in some crashes reported at intersections.

Recommended actions

Education

- Support education programmes and publicity campaigns focusing on road user behaviour at intersections, including roundabouts. Strategies are to include radio and newspaper advertising, posters and brochures.
- Campaigns to raise driver awareness of the need to check for oncoming traffic (including cyclists and motorcyclists) at intersections and also when entering and leaving driveways.

Enforcement

- Increase enforcement of compliance with Give Way and Stop controls at intersections.
- Conduct enforcement campaigns targeting intersections, in conjunction with community programmes.

Engineering

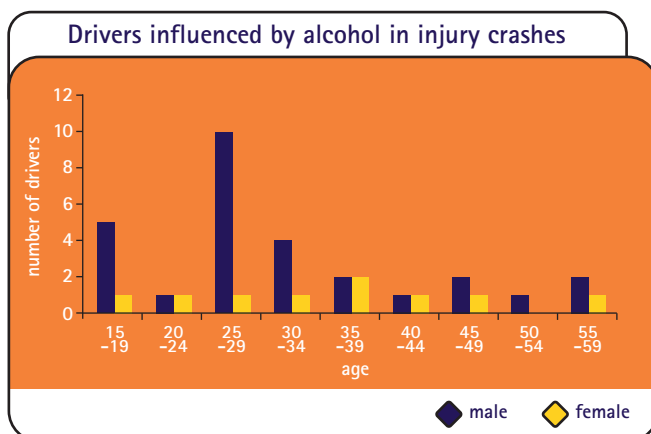
- Continue with crash reduction studies to investigate and, if required, carry out remedial work at intersections to improve safety.
- Ensure appropriate sight distance is established and maintained at intersections and those intersections are appropriately controlled with Give Way or Stop signs.

Alcohol

When compared with other similar districts and all of New Zealand, alcohol-related injury crashes were over-represented in both urban and rural areas of the Wairoa district.

Of the 158 injury crashes reported in the Wairoa district in the past five years, 33 (21 percent) had alcohol recorded as a key factor. Ten (six percent) of these injury crashes occurred in urban areas and 23 (15 percent) of the injury crashes occurred in rural areas. While the percentage of injury crashes involving alcohol has decreased slightly, continued attention to drink-driving is required in both urban and rural areas.

Males in the 15 to 35 year age group were predominantly involved in crashes where alcohol was a recorded factor. However, the drink-drive campaigns should be targeted to all drivers in the district, to reduce injuries and enhance safety for all road users in the region.



Recommended actions

Education

- Continue with existing advertising campaigns and initiate new concepts to promote safe drinking and driving habits, particularly among drivers in the 15 to 35 year age groups. Both rural and urban sectors need to be targeted.
- Encourage community responsibility (including licensees) by promoting host responsibility practices and designated driver schemes.
- Work with community groups to convey sober driver messages to young drivers.

Enforcement

- Target enforcement at known high-risk areas and times and to the appropriate age group.
- Co-ordinate enforcement campaigns targeting drink-driving and working in conjunction with community programmes.
- Continue to support compulsory breath testing programmes.



Restraints

There has been a significant improvement in the use of front seat safety belts and child restraints in the Hawkes Bay region. However, the use of rear safety belts remains well below the national average and needs to improve. A 100 percent restraint wearing rate is the target.

Results from surveys conducted in the Hawkes Bay region are:

- adult front safety belt compliance 90 percent (national average 92 percent)
- adult rear safety belt compliance 52 percent (national average 70 percent)
- child restraint compliance 90 percent (national average 82 percent).

The benefits of wearing safety belts are significant in the event of a crash in preventing or reducing the severity of injuries.

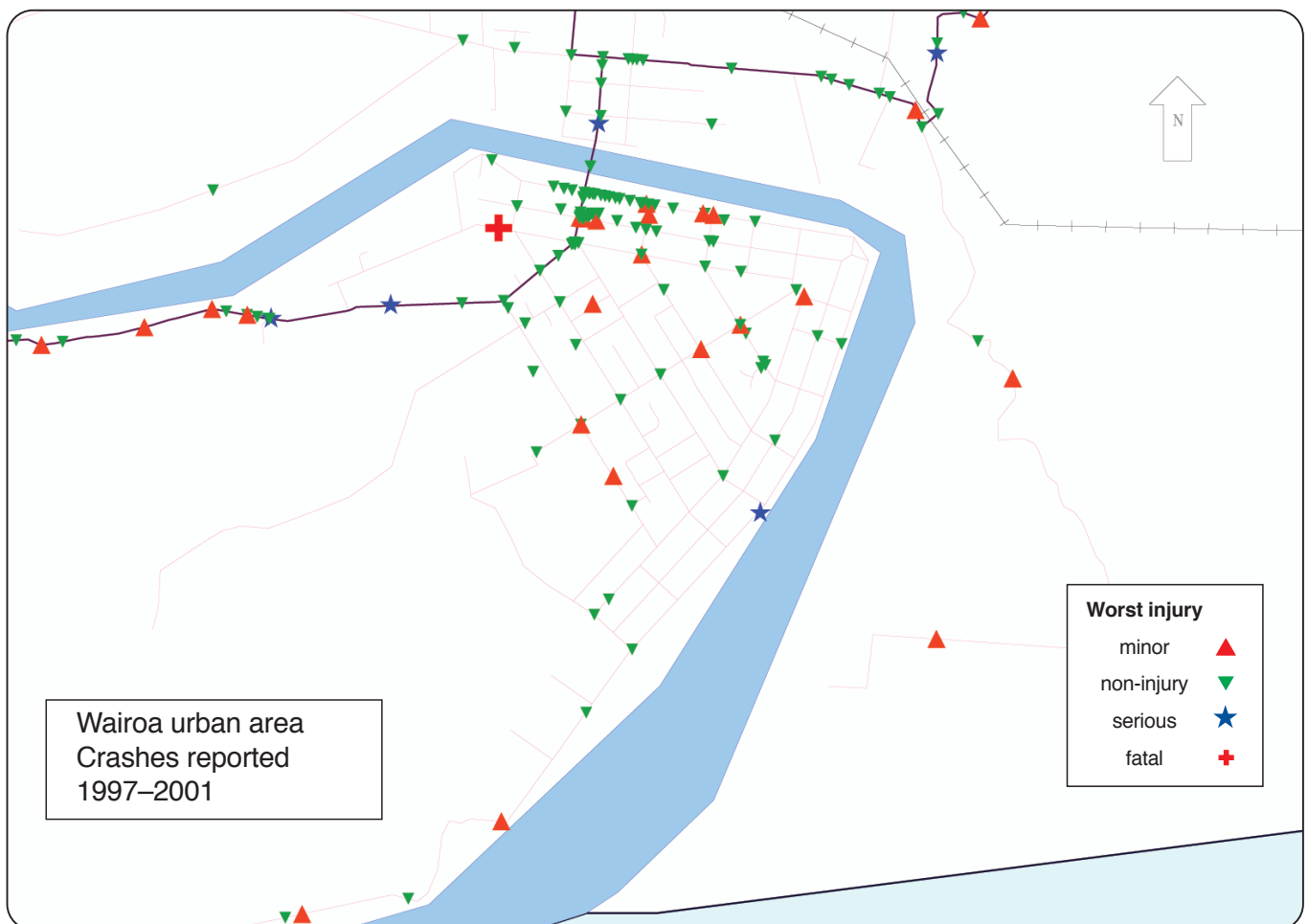
Recommended actions

Education

- Implement publicity to improve attitudes to safety belt wearing.
- Continue with existing and implement new community programmes that are designed to increase safety belt wearing compliance. Strategies to include radio advertising, print media and billboards.
- Conduct programmes to work in conjunction with nationally driven campaigns, eg Kidsafe Week and Back to School promotions.

Enforcement

- Support strategic enforcement campaigns aimed at restraint usage.
- Promote restraint wearing random spot checks.
- Co-ordinate enforcement campaigns and work in conjunction with community programmes targeting restraint usage.



New Zealand Road Safety Programme

Reducing trauma involves a multi-pronged approach, which includes education, engineering and enforcement. The New Zealand Road Safety Programme (NZRSP) provides funding to educate road users to change their behaviour through projects delivered by road safety co-ordinators and community groups. The programme also funds the New Zealand Police for their targeted enforcement activities and support of community road safety projects. Transfund New Zealand provides funding to local authorities for roading projects through its National Land Transport Programme.

Community projects

Community funding of road safety projects aims to encourage local involvement and ownership of issues, and target local resources and effort to local risks. Central to community programmes is the need to develop and motivate local partnerships in road safety to help reduce the deaths and injuries in the Wairoa district and to enhance the level of safety within the region.

Wairoa and Gisborne road safety community projects funded by the NZRSP for 2002/2003 have been confirmed as follows.

Project	Funding
Urban and rural alcohol	\$15,000
Speed	\$6,400
Committee approved community projects	\$10,000
Restraints	\$8,000
Intersections	\$4,000
Other projects	\$3,900

Police enforcement

To support community projects, the New Zealand Police will deliver a further 27,790 hours in the Wairoa/Gisborne districts as follows:

Project	Hours
Speed control	4,000
Drinking or drugged driver control	8,000
Restraint device control	3,000
Visible road safety enforcement	7,000
Traffic flow supervision	190
Crash attendance and investigation	2,970
Incidents, emergencies and disasters	180

Project	Hours
Events	330
School road safety education	1,620
Police community services	500

LTSA and Wairoa/Gisborne District Councils will liaise with the New Zealand Police who are responsible for delivering these hours, appropriate to risk.

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes in the Wairoa district, please refer to the 1997 to 2001 Road Safety Data Report or the Land Transport Safety Authority Accident Investigation System, or contact the people or organisations listed below:

Land Transport Safety Authority Regional Manager Pat Aldridge	New Zealand Police Senior Sergeant Tony Bates PO Box 74, Wairoa Phone 06 838 8345
Regional Education Advisor Kate Irvine	Wairoa District Council District Engineer John Patterson PO Box 54, Wairoa Phone 06 838 7309
Senior Road Safety Engineer Colin Goble	Transit New Zealand Regional Highways Manager Neville Harkness PO Box 740, Napier Phone 06 835 1750
For LTSA Staff contact details see below.	
Road Safety Co-ordinator Hawkes Bay Region David Teesdale Roadsafe Hawkes Bay PO Box 447, Napier Phone 06 834 1815	

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