

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 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 \$20.58 million.

In 2003, 40 injury and 74 non-injury crashes were reported in the district. In these crashes, four people died and 63 suffered injuries. Eight (20 percent) of the 40 injury crashes occurred on urban roads and 32 (80 percent) occurred on rural roads.

A higher proportion (62 percent) of rural injury crashes in the district occurred on state highways. Drivers frequently lost control of their vehicles on curves.

In the five-year period from 1999 to 2003, 13 pedestrians, four cyclists, 11 motorcyclists, 29 heavy vehicle occupants and 247 car or van occupants were injured in road crashes. In the past two years, there has been a significant increase in heavy vehicle casualties.

Continued effort and commitment is required to address safety issues and reduce the number of people injured in road crashes in the district.

Major road safety issues




Wairoa District

- Loss of control on rural roads
- Intersections
- Alcohol
- Restraints

Nationally

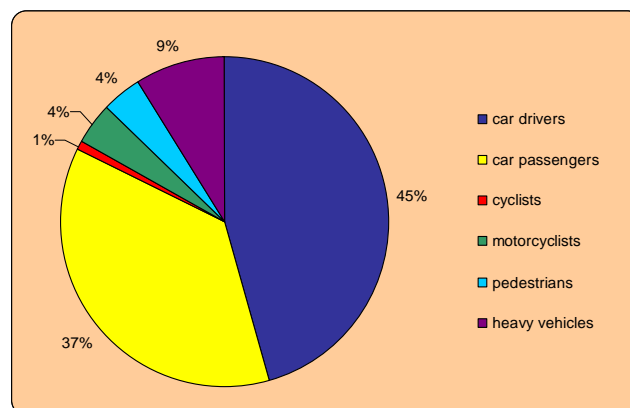
- Speed
- Alcohol
- Failure to give way
- Restraints

2003 road trauma for Wairoa District

	Deaths	4
	Serious casualties	7
	Minor casualties	56
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	Fatal crashes	3
	Serious injury crashes	7
	Minor injury crashes	30
	Non-injury crashes	74

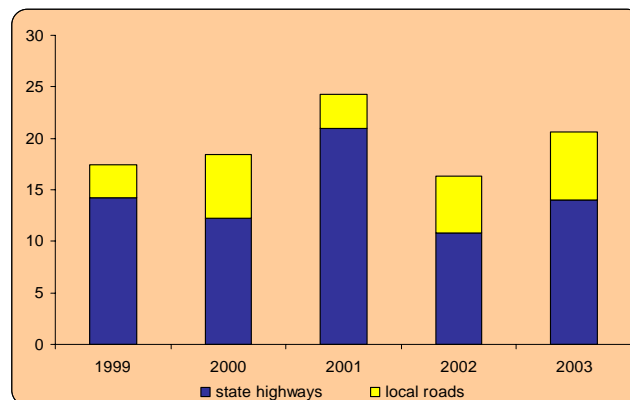
Road casualties 1999–2003

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.



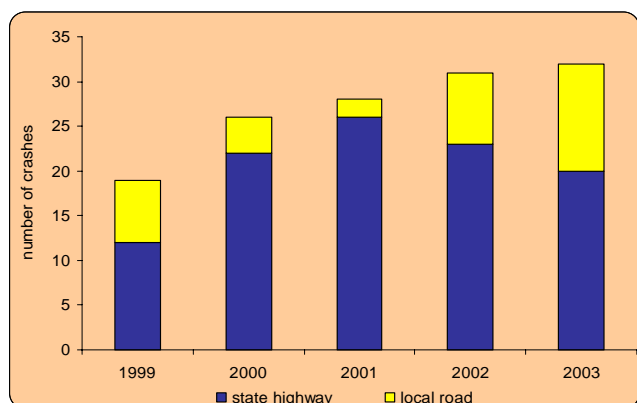
Loss of control on rural roads

In the past five years, 107 loss of control or head-on type crashes on rural roads resulted in people being injured. These accounted for 57 percent of the injury crashes reported throughout the district.

There has been an increase in the number of heavy vehicle crashes resulting in injuries with 19 heavy vehicle occupants injured in crashes in the past two years.

Seventy-six percent of rural injury crashes occurred on state highways in the district. The crash and casualty rate on rural roads and state highways in the Wairoa District was higher than reported in similar districts.

Injury crashes on rural roads

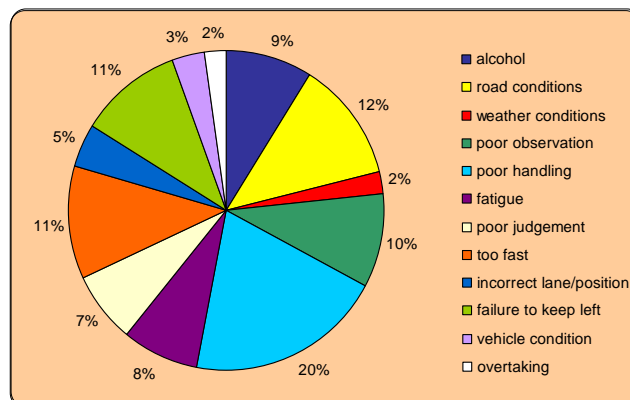


Factors that were commonly associated with rural road crashes included poor vehicle handling, failure to keep left, driver's inattention, poor judgement, and observation and fatigue. Road conditions were a factor in 22 percent of rural crashes. Speed (20 percent) and alcohol (15 percent) were also commonly reported contributing factors in injury crashes.

Over the past five years, approximately 33 percent of injury crashes in rural areas occurred during the hours of darkness. Twenty-eight percent of all rural injury crashes occurred in wet weather.

The objects most commonly struck in these crashes were fences, banks and ditches, 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.

Common factors in rural crashes



Other commonly recorded contributing factors relating to state highways and roads in the district were slippery road surface in wet weather, limited visibility, unusually narrow road, loose metal, or road under construction.

Recommended actions

Engineering

- Establish programmes to upgrade and maintain curve warning signs, markings and delineation on local rural roads, to the appropriate standards.
- Carry out safety audits and rural crash reduction studies on state highways to investigate and implement remedial treatment, particularly at black spots.
- Maintain roadsides clear of hazards and provide side protection where appropriate.
- Widen road carriageways and seal shoulders to provide additional vehicle wander and recovery space where feasible and cost effective.
- Maintain the pavement surface to provide good standards for skid resistance.
- Improve road shape and geometry.

Education

- Raise truck driver awareness of safe driving practices and policies through the road transport industry forum.
- Focus on raising awareness of concerns about inappropriate speed.
- Raise property owners' awareness of their responsibility and liability if their stock escapes onto the road reserve, causing trauma to motorists. Continue to promote safe and secure stock fences in the district.

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.
- Continue with stock and animal control programmes in the district.

T Intersections

Approximately 28 percent of all crashes reported in the Wairoa District occurred at intersections. In the past five years, 18 injury crashes and 186 non-injury crashes were reported at intersections, including driveways.

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

- 68 occurred at intersections with Give Way signs
- 29 occurred at intersections with Stop signs
- 43 occurred at driveways.

Factors recorded in crashes at intersections in the Wairoa District were commonly lack of observation at intersections and failure to give way or stop when required. Drivers travelling at excessive speed in urban areas remains a concern.

Recommended actions

Education

- Implement 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.
- Focus on road-user behaviour at intersections, including roundabouts.
- Consider targeted advertising promotions, to address crashes at intersections in the district.

Enforcement

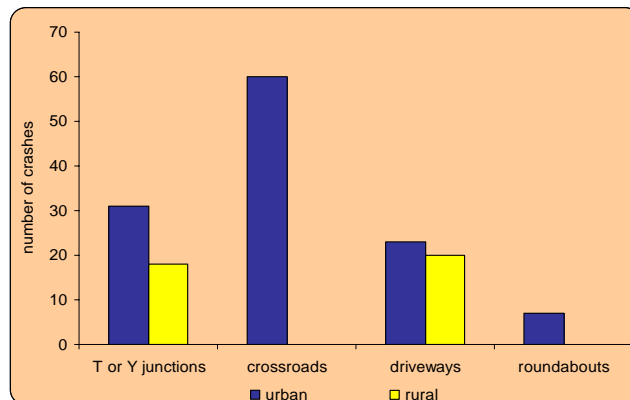
- Increase enforcement of compliance with Give Way and Stop controls at intersections.
- Conduct enforcement campaigns in conjunction with community programmes targeting intersections.
- Increase enforcement of speed on urban roads.

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 appropriate road markings, and Give Way or Stop signs are installed.

Crashes at intersections by intersection type



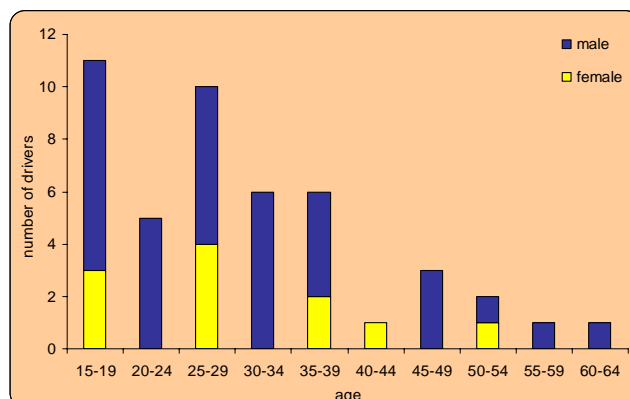
Alcohol

When compared with similar districts and all of New Zealand, alcohol-related injury crashes continued to be over-represented, particularly in rural areas of the Wairoa District.

Of the 183 injury crashes reported in the Wairoa District in the past five years, 45 (25 percent) had alcohol recorded as a key factor. Fourteen of these alcohol-related crashes occurred in urban areas and 31 occurred in rural areas. While the percentage of injury crashes involving alcohol in rural areas has decreased slightly, continued attention to drink-driving is required in both urban and rural areas.

Males in the 15 to 40 year age group were predominantly involved in crashes where alcohol was a recorded driver factor. However, drink-drive campaigns should be targeted at all drivers in the district to reduce crashes and injuries and to enhance safety for all road users in the district.

Alcohol-related crashes



Recommended actions

Education

- Promote safe drinking and driving habits, particularly among male drivers aged 15 to 40.
- Consider targeted advertising promotions, involving community and licensee consultation.
- Encourage and support licensees to actively promote host responsibility practices and designated driver schemes.
- Work with peer pressure groups such as SADD 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

While there has been a significant improvement in the use of front seat safety belts and child restraints in the Hawkes Bay Region, annual LTSA surveys show wearing rates particularly for adult rear safety belts and child restraints in the Hawkes Bay Region can still improve. A 100 percent restraint-wearing rate is the target.

Results from surveys conducted in the Hawkes Bay Region in 2003 and 2004 are:

- adult front safety belt compliance 89 percent (national average 93 percent)
- adult rear safety belt compliance 76 percent (national average 81 percent)
- child restraint compliance 83 percent (national average 86 percent).

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

Recommended actions

Education

- Continue to focus on improving attitudes to restraint wearing.
- Consider targeted advertising promotions, involving community consultation when determining correct media channel, and the style of resource to be developed.
- Promote and support child restraint schemes currently taking place locally.
- Implement activities 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.
- Continue with enforcement campaigns and work in conjunction with community programmes targeting restraint usage.

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes in the Wairoa District, please refer to the 1999 to 2003 Road Safety Data Report, or the Land Transport Safety Authority Crash Analysis System or contact the people or organisations listed on this page.

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