

road safety issues

Wellington City

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 road network in Wellington City.

The number of injury crashes reported in 2004 in Wellington City was 330. This was a reversal of the downward trend of the preceding two years. The increase was mainly in the number of minor injury urban crashes. Rural casualty numbers were down in 2004 compared with previous years.

The estimated social cost of crashes in Wellington City in 2004 amounted to \$72 million.

Vehicle occupants were the largest casualty group between 2000 and 2004. Pedestrian and cycle casualties were higher than for comparable local authorities and numbers for both groups increased in 2004.

Forty-six percent of urban crashes were recorded as being at an intersection in 2004. Loss of control and rear-end/obstruction crashes represented 20 percent each of the recorded crashes in the city.

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

Major road safety issues

Wellington City

Pedestrians and cyclists

Intersections

Loss of control

Rear-end/obstructions

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2004 road trauma for Wellington City



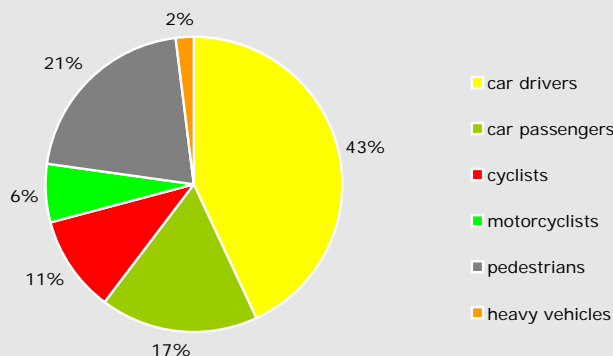
Deaths	1
Serious casualties	57
Minor casualties	343



Fatal crashes	1
Serious injury crashes	55
Minor injury crashes	274
Non-injury crashes	1056

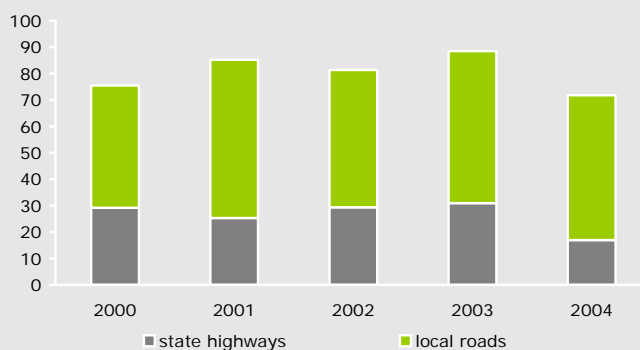
Road casualties 2000–2004

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.

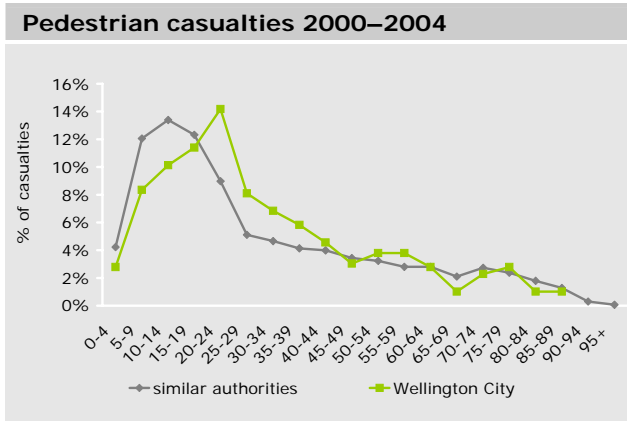
Pedestrians and cyclists

Between 2000 and 2004, pedestrians represented 21 percent and cyclists 11 percent of all road casualties in Wellington City.

Pedestrians

During the five-year period, the pedestrian casualty rate in Wellington City of 4.2 per 10,000 population was higher than that of similar local authorities, which had an average rate of 2.9 casualties per 10,000 population.

In particular, the percentage of pedestrians aged 20 to 64 years injured in crashes was higher than similar local authority levels.



Factors associated with pedestrian crashes were:

- pedestrians not looking when crossing (46 percent)
- pedestrians under the influence of alcohol or drugs (27 percent)
- pedestrians not correctly using the facilities provided (17 percent)
- pedestrians stepping into the road from between stationary vehicles (15 percent)
- pedestrians misjudging the traffic when in the roadway (eight percent).

Drivers also contributed to pedestrian crashes by:

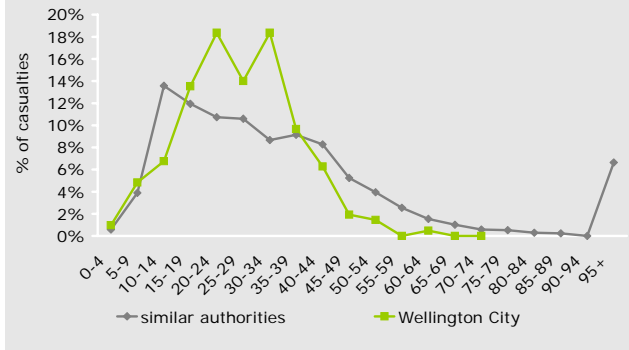
- failing to give way at crossings or signals (22 percent)
- not looking for pedestrians (17 percent)
- having their attention diverted by other parties or distractions either inside or outside the vehicle (15 percent).

Cyclists

The cyclist casualty rate in Wellington City of 2.4 per 10,000 population was higher than that of similar local authorities, which had an average rate of 1.9 casualties per 10,000 population.

The percentage of cyclists aged 15 to 39 years injured in crashes was higher than similar local authority levels.

Cyclist casualties 2000–2004



Factors associated with cycle crashes included:

- cyclists not obeying the road rules (20 percent)
- inattention – not looking for or not noticing other road users or obstructions (15 percent)
- cyclists overtaking on the left (10 percent).

Drivers contributed to cycle crashes by:

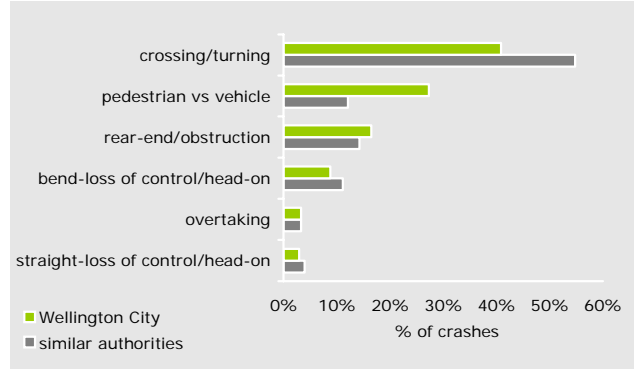
- failing to give way (48 percent)
- not seeing or looking for cyclists (55 percent).

Not seeing or looking for cyclists includes passing and then turning across the path of the cyclist or into the cyclist's space, often through misjudging the speed of the cyclist (14 percent).

Intersections

Forty-eight percent of reported urban injury crashes occurred at intersections in Wellington City between 2000 and 2004, which is comparable to similar authorities.

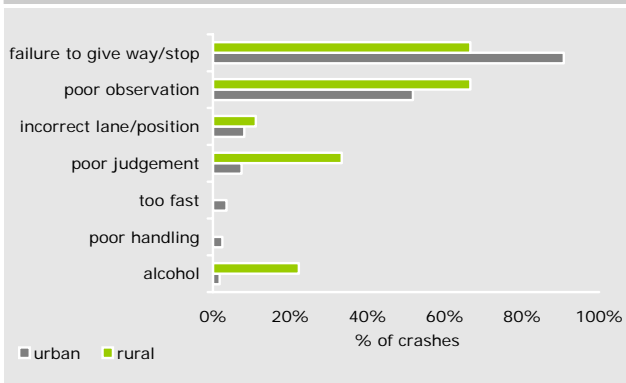
Urban intersection crash type 2000–2004



The crossing/turning crashes were predominantly at intersections involving right angle collisions (26 percent), right turns from side roads across through traffic (25 percent) and right turns into side roads across through traffic (35 percent).

The rear-end/obstruction crashes at intersections were dominated by queue situations (50 percent) but parked or parking vehicles within the immediate vicinity of an intersection were also a problem (24 percent).

Intersection crash factors 2000–2004

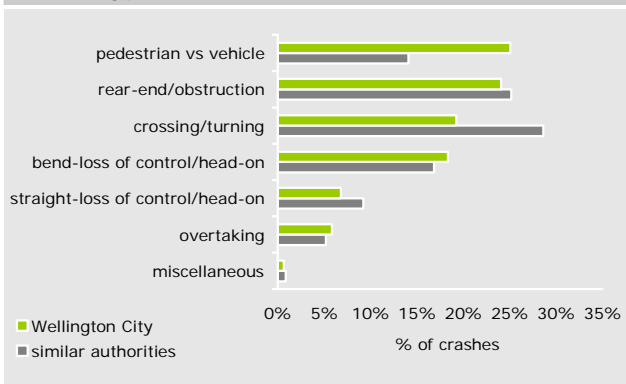


Factors associated with crossing or turning crashes at urban intersections were:

- failure to give way or stop (91 percent)
 - failing to see or look for other traffic (52 percent).
- These figures were comparable to similar authorities.

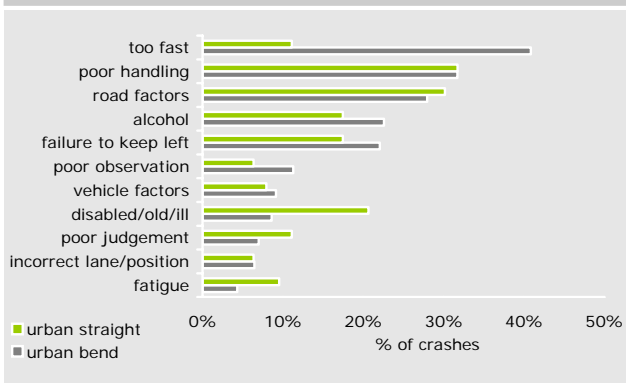
Loss of control

Crash type 2000–2004



Drivers losing control of their vehicles led to 25 percent of the reported injury crashes in the city. Eighteen percent of these occurred on bends and seven percent on straight sections of road.

Urban loss of control crash factors 2000–2004

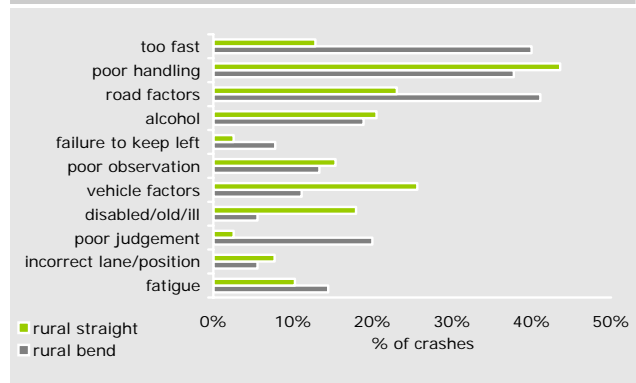


Factors associated with urban loss of control crashes were:

- travelling too fast for the conditions
- poor handling
- road factors, such as oil or other loose material
- alcohol
- failure to keep left
- disability/age/illness (particularly on straight roads).

Rural loss of control crash factors (principally on the state highways) were similar to the urban factors but poor judgement and vehicle faults were noteworthy.

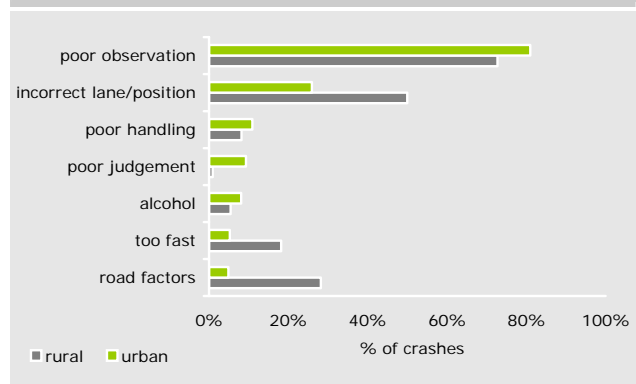
Rural loss of control crash factors 2000–2004



Rear-end/obstruction

Rear-end/obstruction collisions occurred in 24 percent of the reported injury crashes in Wellington City.

Rear-end/obstruction crash factors 2000–2004



Factors associated with rear-end/obstruction crashes indicated that drivers were not watching what was happening on the road ahead of them (over 70 percent).

The obstruction most commonly hit was a parked or stationary vehicle.

Speed

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

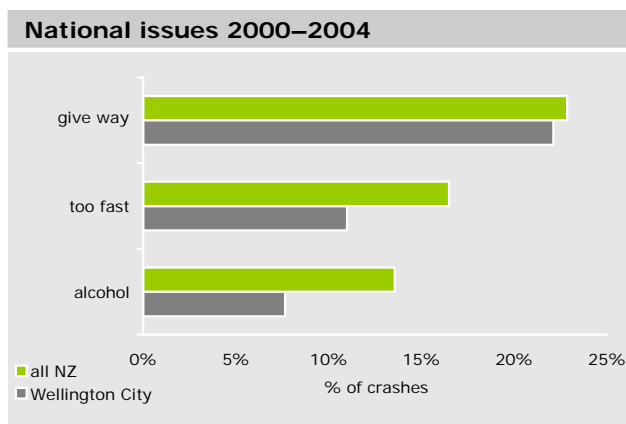
Excessive speed was a reported factor in 11 percent of injury crashes in Wellington City between 2000 and 2004. This was just below the national level of 16 percent.

Alcohol

Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive. Overall, approximately eight percent of injury crashes in Wellington City between 2000 and 2004 involved alcohol as a contributory factor compared with 14 percent of all crashes for New Zealand.

Failure to give way

Overall, 22 percent of crashes in Wellington City between 2000 and 2004 involved a vehicle failing to give way, which was below the figure for all of New Zealand of 23 percent.



Restraints

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

Front seatbelt surveys in 2004 indicated that 97 percent of drivers in Wellington City were observed wearing a restraint. This compares very favourably with 94 percent for all of New Zealand.

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