



briefing notes - road safety issues

West Coast Region

New Zealand Transport Agency, (NZTA), has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data for the 2005–2009 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues to help identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in West Coast Region.

In March 2010 the Government released a new strategy, “Safer Journeys”, to build on the gains made under the Road Safety to 2010 Strategy. The focus of these Issues Reports has changed to reflect the new strategy. Many of the issues reported on in the past fit neatly into the new strategy. An explanation of where things fit is included in this report.

The issues chosen for this report are drawn from: the most common crash types, those that appear over-represented when West Coast Region is compared to similar local bodies, those with high social cost, (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes), or those that are a priority under Safer Journeys.

We have included a brief overview of crashes in the region.

We encourage West Coast Region to delve deeper into the highlighted issues and other road safety issues in the district. Contact the NZTA Southern Performance Information Team in Christchurch for additional information from the Ministry of Transport’s Crash Analysis System (CAS).

Major road safety issues

Note
Issues are not in
any order

West Coast Region

Bend - loss of control or head-on
Speed
Overseas drivers

2009 road trauma

Casualties

West Coast Region

Deaths 6
Serious casualties 42
Minor casualties 154

Nationally

Speed
Alcohol / Drugs
Young Drivers
Roads and Roadsides
Motorcyclists

Crashes

West Coast Region

Fatal crashes 6
Serious injury crashes 35
Minor injury crashes 102
Non-injury crashes 230

Safer Journeys

For the past few years road safety in New Zealand has been directed by the Road Safety to 2010 strategy. This strategy was introduced in 2003 and aimed to reduce deaths and casualties from road crashes.

In March 2010 the Government released a new strategy, "Safer Journeys", to build on the gains made under the Road Safety to 2010 strategy.

Under this new strategy, road safety will be looked at from a system wide approach rather than focusing on the road user. The emphasis will be on improving all the parts road transport system that impact on safety; the road, the vehicle, travel speeds and the road user.

A number of areas were chosen as the areas of focus under the strategy. These areas were assigned a priority, based on research that shows five major areas of concern, five areas of lesser concern, and three areas where continued focus is needed, or concern is emerging.

These divisions are shown in the table opposite. This table is a direct extract from page 12 of the Safer Journeys document, which can be found at:

<http://www.transport.govt.nz/saferjourneys/Documents/SaferJourneyStrategy.pdf>

In this year's Road Safety Issues Briefing Notes changes have been made to the wording, and to the data presented, to better reflect and emphasise the connections to the new strategy.

On the following page we present a table that shows the areas of "high concern" under the Safer Journeys strategy. This table allows some relative comparison of the Safer Journeys priorities across the local bodies and regional authorities in the Canterbury / West Coast Region of the New Zealand Transport Agency.

Table 3 – Safer Journeys' areas of concern and the Safe System

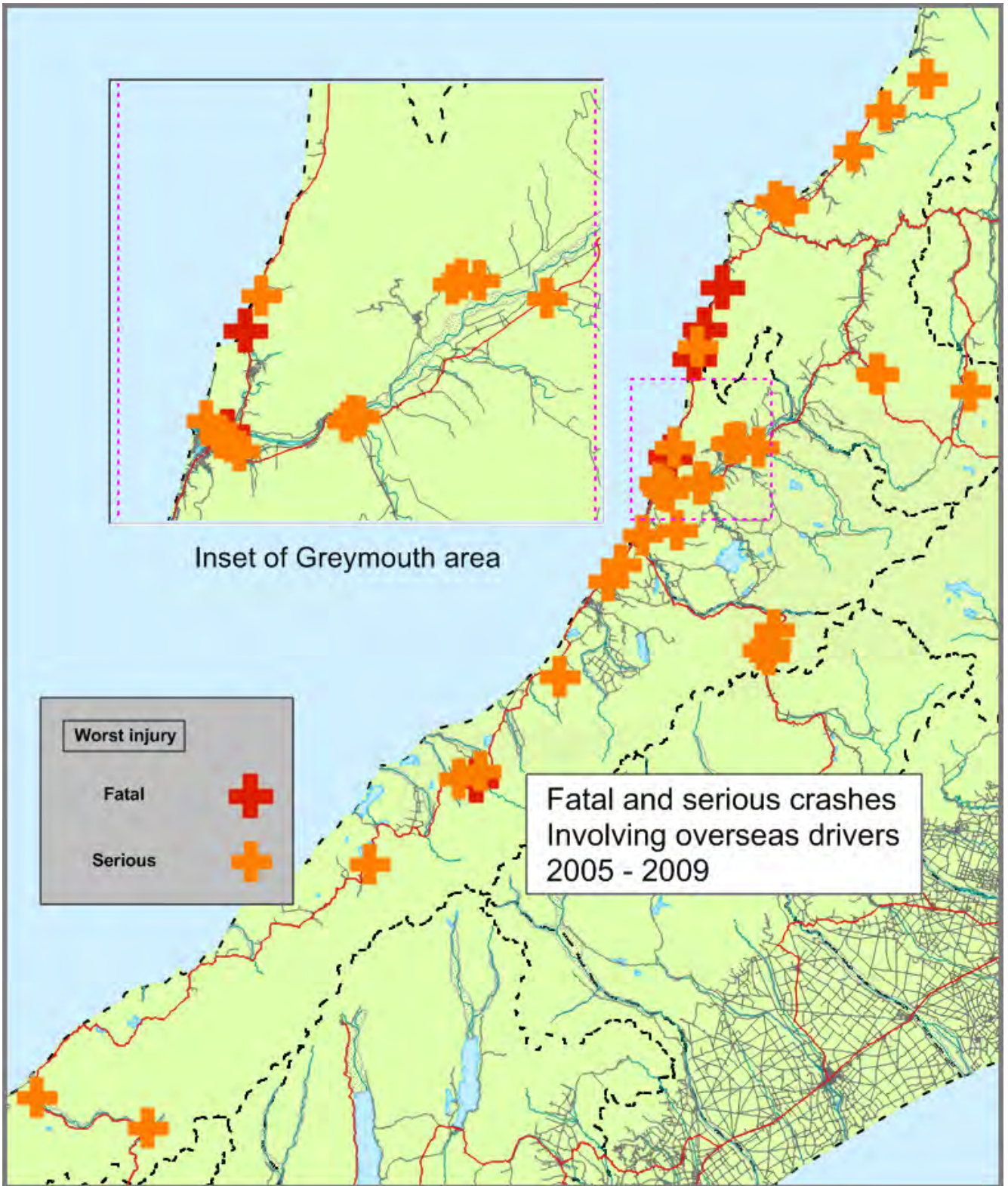
AREAS OF CONCERN WE WILL ADDRESS	WHERE WE WILL TAKE ACTION ACROSS THE SAFE SYSTEM			
	SAFE ROADS AND ROAD-SIDES	SAFE SPEEDS	SAFE VEHICLES	SAFE ROAD USE
Areas of high concern				
Reducing alcohol/drug impaired driving			✓	✓
Increasing the safety of young drivers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Safe roads and roadsides	✓			
Safe speeds	✓	✓	✓	
Increasing the safety of motorcycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
Areas of medium concern				
Improving the safety of the light vehicle fleet			✓	✓
Safe walking and cycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
Improving the safety of heavy vehicles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reducing the impact of fatigue	✓	✓	✓	✓
Addressing distraction	✓		✓	✓
Reducing the impact of high risk drivers		✓	✓	✓
Areas of continued and emerging focus				
Increasing the level of restraint use			✓	✓
Increasing the safety of older New Zealanders	✓	✓	✓	✓

For some priorities (eg motorcycling), complementary action will be taken across all four areas of the Safe System. For others (eg reducing the impact of drink driving or safe roads), more effort would be focussed on one or two of the four Safe System areas.

Source
Safer Journeys, Road Safety Strategy 2010-2020
Ministry of Transport
March 2010

Status of the areas of "high concern" from Safer Journeys 2020 - Canterbury / West Coast Region
(table is based on 2005 to 2009 fatal and serious crashes - local roads as well as State Highways)

Area of concern	Reducing alcohol and drug impaired driving	Increase the Safety of young drivers	Safer roads and roadsides		Reducing speed related crashes	Increasing the safety of motorcycling
Measure	Percentage of crashes with this factor	Percentage of at fault drivers 24 years or less	Percentage of crashes with an object struck	Number of intersections with two or more fatal or serious casualties in the last five years	Percentage of crashes with this factor	Percentage of crashes involving a motorcyclist
Buller District	17	26	58	0	32	29
Grey District	20	23	49	1	29	31
Westland District	16	32	56	0	32	22
Kaikoura District	15	24	62	0	38	28
Hurunui District	18	21	64	0	34	16
Waimakariri District	20	32	50	3	17	15
Christchurch City	16	34	31	83	15	22
Selwyn District	20	26	45	5	16	17
Ashburton District	21	28	45	2	25	16
Timaru District	18	35	36	2	17	27
Mackenzie District	6	23	63	0	13	3
Waimate District	30	36	45	0	23	23
Chatham Islands	38	17	75	0	25	38
West Coast Region	17	34	55	1	31	27
Canterbury Region	17	31	39	95	18	20
New Zealand	23	34	45	446	23	18



Overview

In 2009 on West Coast Region local roads in there were 45 reported injury crashes, of which 13 were fatal or serious. In addition, on State Highways there were 99 reported injury crashes of which 28 were fatal or serious.

The table below shows the number of casualties resulting from the 144 injury crashes by rural or urban areas (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

Casualties 2009 West Coast Region				
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	4	38	125	167
Urban	2	4	31	37
Total	6	42	156	204

In 2009, two thirds of fatalities, 90 percent of serious injuries and 80 percent of minor injuries were sustained in crashes in rural areas of the region.

Over the last ten years, the number of fatal crashes has fluctuated between a high of 15 in 2001 and a low of 4 in 2006. Since 2004, there has been a reasonably steady increase in both serious injury and minor injury crashes.

Crash trends in West Coast Region				
Year	Fatal Crashes	Serious Crashes	Minor Crashes	Total Crashes
2000	5	27	50	82
2001	15	25	66	106
2002	12	19	59	90
2003	5	26	80	111
2004	10	26	64	100
2005	6	29	72	107
2006	4	32	86	122
2007	6	32	85	123
2008	7	26	91	124
2009	6	35	103	144

The following table illustrates where the issues considered for this report fit within the Safer Journeys priority. The numbers and percentages give an indication of how they fit in the priorities for West Coast Region.

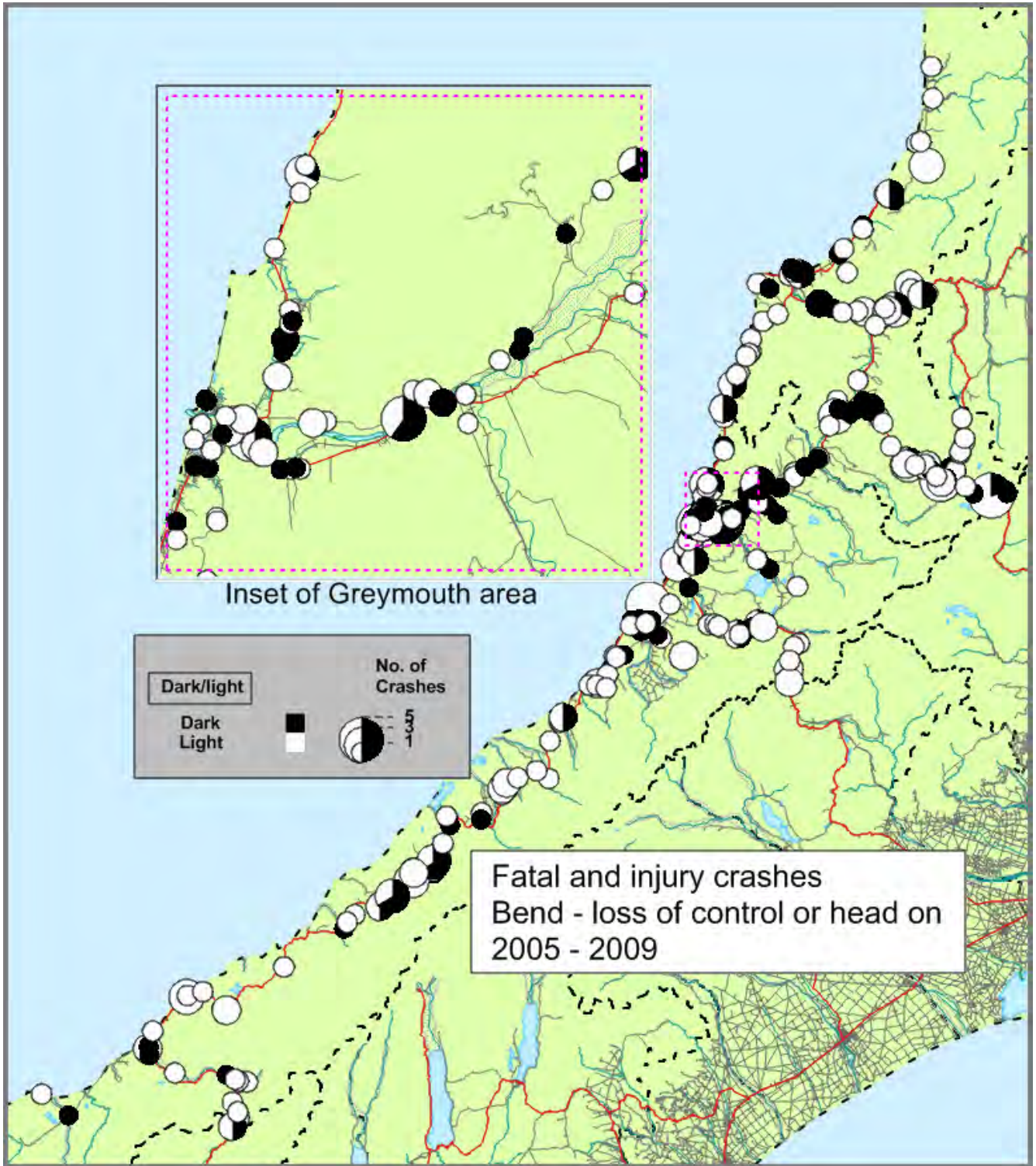
Crash characteristics (2005 to 2009) West Coast Region				
Crash type or contributory cause	Percent fatal and serious crashes	Percent all injury crashes	No. of injury crashes	Safer Journeys priority
Alcohol	17	15	92	1
Too fast	31	29	181	1
At bends	60	56	345	1
On straights	17	16	100	1
Intersections	10	17	105	1
Road factors	20	19	118	1
Motorcycling	26	15	99	1
Young drivers	35	34	206	1
Fatigue	11	10	60	2
Distraction	9	5	64	2
Pedestrians	3	2	14	2
Cycling	2	2	14	2
Heavy vehicles	13	10	63	2
Older road users	7	6	39	3
Overseas drivers	16	18	114	-

Further information about the 181 injury crashes on local roads in West Coast Region, 2005 to 2009:

- 8 deaths, 54 serious injuries and 189 minor casualties
- Five year age group with most at fault drivers in injury crashes: 15 to 29 years (26 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$14.94 m

Further information about the 439 injury crashes on State Highways in West Coast Region, 2005 to 2009:

- 22 deaths, 145 serious injuries and 490 minor casualties
- Five year age group with most at fault drivers in injury crashes: 20 to 24 years (16 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$50.05 m



Bend - loss of control or head on

Between 2005 and 2009, 56 percent of all injury crashes in West Coast Region were bend - loss of control or head on crashes. These crashes resulted in 18 deaths, 119 serious injuries and 362 minor injuries.

There are no obvious trends in the crash numbers

Bend - loss of control or head on crashes West Coast Region (2005 - 2009)				
Crash year	Fatal crashes	Serious crashes	Minor crashes	Total
2005	3	17	41	61
2006	3	15	49	67
2007	3	24	51	78
2008	4	15	42	61
2009	4	22	52	78
Total	17	93	235	345

Young drivers, those aged 15 to 24 years represented 36 percent of at fault drivers in these crashes. In this age group, males made up just over three quarters of at fault drivers. Overall males represented just under three quarters of at fault drivers.

Drivers in the 30 to 39 years and the 40 to 49 years age groups each made up fifteen percent of at fault drivers in these crashes

At fault drivers in Bend - loss of control or head on crashes 2005 to 2009			
Ages	Male	Female	Total
15 to 19	43	12	55
20 to 24	49	17	66
25 to 29	26	10	36
30 to 39	30	19	49
40 to 49	40	10	50
50 to 59	30	8	38
60 to 69	19	4	23
70 and over	11	7	18
Total	248	87	335

If drivers lose control, their vehicles may crash into roadside hazards such as ditches, banks, poles or trees. Hitting roadside objects can result in a minor off-road event becoming more serious.

The most common roadside hazards struck in injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes in West Coast Region were cliffs or banks (72), over bank (51), tree (45), ditch (45) and fence (37) from a total of 319 objects struck.

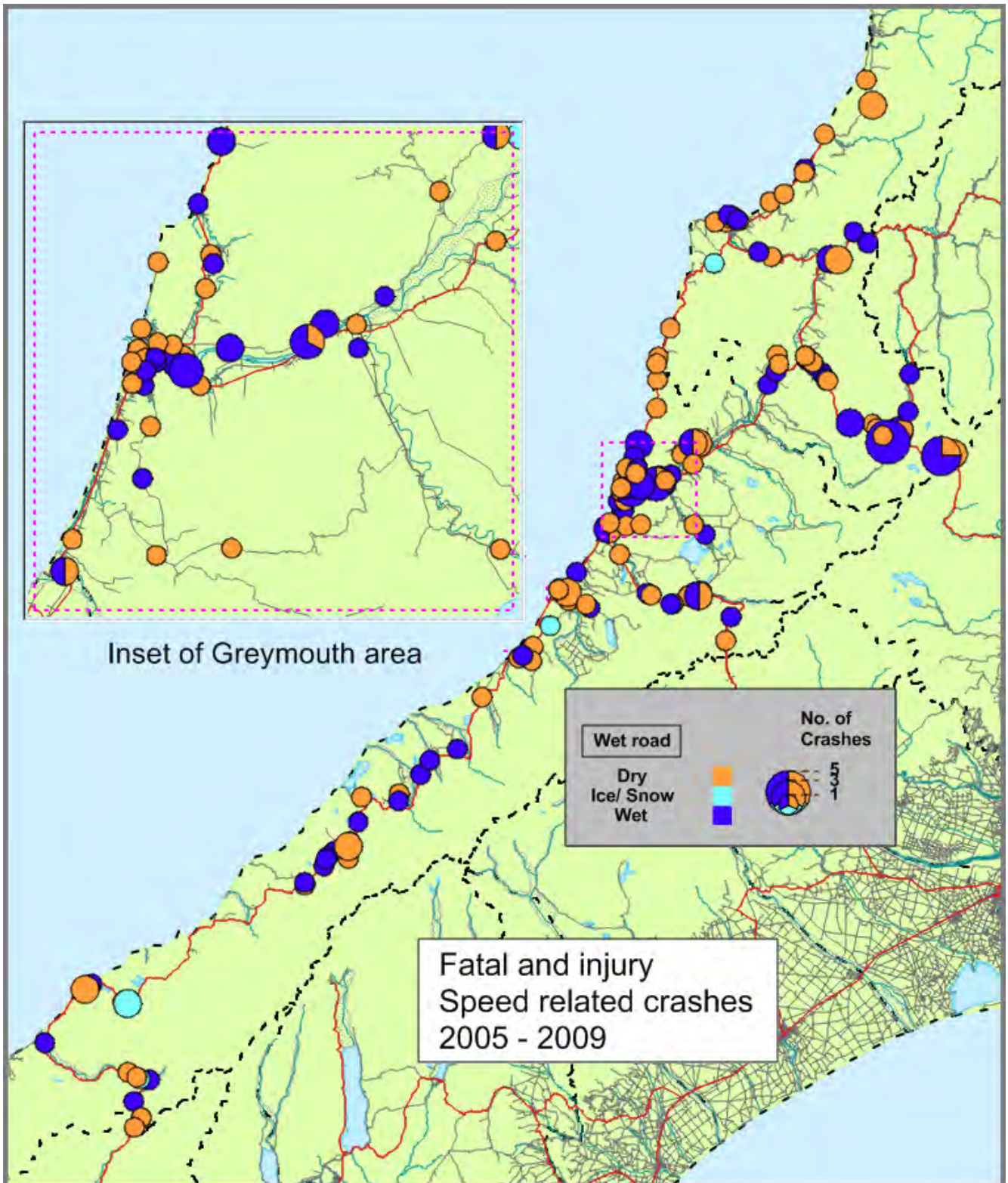
A roadside hazard was struck in 70 percent of bend - loss of control crashes in the Region.

Further information about the 92 injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes on local roads in West Coast Region, (2005 to 2009) :

- 4 deaths, 34 serious injuries and 89 minor injuries
- 33 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 59 percent of crashes involved speed too fast for the conditions
- 16 percent involved road factors
- 50 percent involved poor handling
- 67 percent were on rural roads
- 31 percent were on wet or icy roads
- 46 percent were at night
- Worst month March
- Worst day of week Sunday
- Worst time period 6 pm till 9 pm

Further information about the 253 injury bend - loss of control or head on crashes on State Highways in West Coast Region, (2005 to 2009):

- 14 deaths, 85 serious injuries and 273 minor injuries
- 12 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- 42 percent of crashes involved speed too fast for the conditions
- 26 percent involved road factors
- 65 percent involved poor handling
- 94 percent were on rural roads
- 51 percent were on wet or icy roads
- 25 percent were at night
- Worst month February
- Worst day of week Saturday
- Worst time period 3 pm till 6 pm



Speed

Nationally, speed is one of the major contributing factors to road crashes. Reducing speeds is an important road safety goal. Excessive speed increases the likelihood of a crash occurring by reducing the time available for a driver to react to a situation. It also leads to more severe injuries. Research has shown that a one km/h reduction in average speed can produce a three percent reduction in injury crashes.

Speed related crashes in CAS are not necessarily crashes where the driver was exceeding the posted speed limit but are crashes where in the opinion of the Police Officer reporting the crash the driver was travelling too fast for the prevailing conditions.

Between 2005 and 2009, 29 percent of injury crashes in West Coast Region involved travelling too fast for the conditions. These crashes resulted in 7 deaths, 59 serious injuries and 196 minor injuries.

Speed related crashes, West Coast Region					
Area	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Rural	22	25	47	15	35
Urban	5	12	7	6	7
Total	27	37	54	21	42

Almost 80 percent of these crashes were on roads in rural areas of the region.

The other main causes contributing to speed related crashes were:

- Handling errors
- Errors of judgement
- Alcohol

Almost three quarters of the at fault drivers in speed related crashes were male. Overall young drivers represented 46 percent of at fault drivers.

Age and gender of at fault drivers in speed related injury crashes. (2009 - 2009) West Coast Region

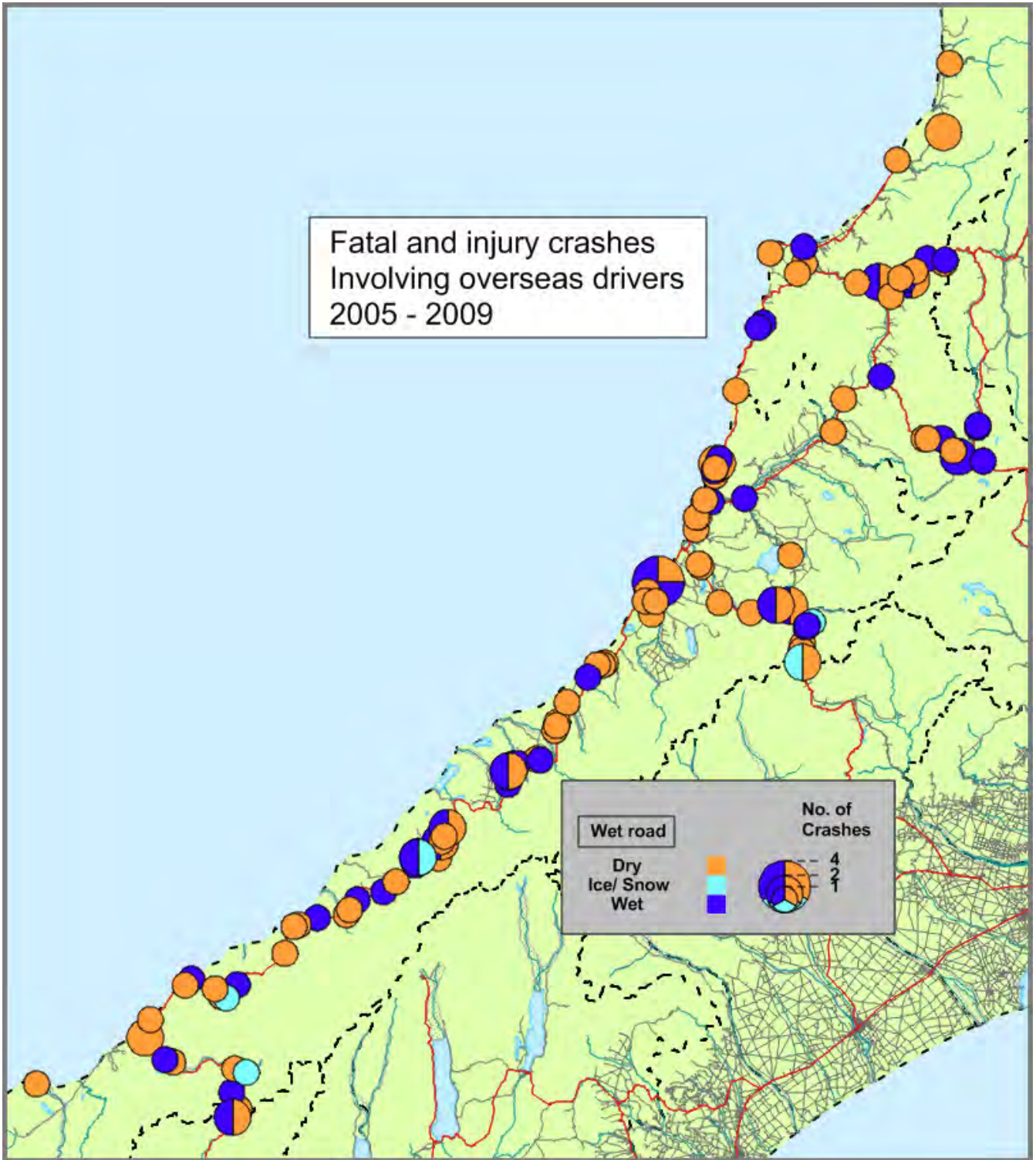
Drivers age *	Male	Female	Total
15-19 years	34	9	43
20 - 24	30	9	39
25 - 29	14	5	19
30 - 39	19	12	31
40 - 49	16	3	19
50 - 59	9	3	12
60 - 69	4	3	7
70+	6	1	7
Total	132	45	177

Further information about the 62 speed related injury crashes in West Coast Region on local roads (2005 to 2009):

- 2 deaths, 22 serious injuries and 69 minor injuries
- Most common crash type Bend - loss of control or head on
- 76 percent mid-block
- 42 percent urban
- 34 percent wet or icy road
- 53 percent night time
- Worst month March
- Worst day of week Sunday
- Worst time 6 pm - 9 pm

Further information about the 119 speed related injury crashes in West Coast Region on State highways (2005 to 2009):

- 5 deaths, 37 serious injuries and 127 minor injuries
- Most common crash type Bend - loss of control or head on
- 89 percent mid-block
- 9 percent urban
- 57 percent wet or icy road
- 26 percent night time
- Worst month June, November
- Worst day of week Tuesday
- Worst time 3 pm - 6 pm



Overseas drivers

On roads in West Coast Region between 2005 and 2009 21 percent of injury crashes involved overseas drivers. These 132 crashes resulted in 5 deaths, 54 serious injuries and 168 minor injuries. Overseas drivers may include both tourists and New Zealand residents driving on an overseas licence.

Casualties from crashes involving overseas drivers (2005 - 2009) West Coast Region					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Fatal	2	0	0	1	2
Serious	11	10	9	16	8
Minor	44	31	28	25	40
Total	57	41	37	42	50

The number of casualties from crashes involving overseas drivers dropped from a high of 57 to a low of 37 in 2007, but has since risen to almost the previous high.

Injury crashes involving Overseas drivers (2005 to 2009) West Coast Region		
Highway number	Number of crashes	Social cost of crashes (m)
SH 6	86	\$35.5
SH 65	2	\$0.18
SH 67A	1	\$0.09
SH 69	1	\$0.09
SH 7	12	\$7.3
SH 73	15	\$4.8
District roads	15	\$9.2

Almost nine in every ten crashes in that involved an overseas driver in the area were on rural roads.

On roads in West Coast Region, 60 percent of all crashes involving overseas drivers were Bend - loss of control or head-on crashes. Straight road - loss of control or head on crashes accounted a further 16 percent.

Male drivers of all ages made up almost 90 percent of at-fault drivers. All ages are represented.

Ages of drivers at fault in crashes involving overseas drivers West Coast Region (2005-2009)			
Ages (years)*	Male	Female	Total
15 to 19	4	3	7
20 to 24	15	7	22
25 to 29	12	7	19
30 to 39	15	11	26
40 to 49	15	6	21
50 to 59	11	6	17
60 to 69	12	1	13
70 +	4	1	5
Total	88	42	100

The common home locations of the overseas drivers were:

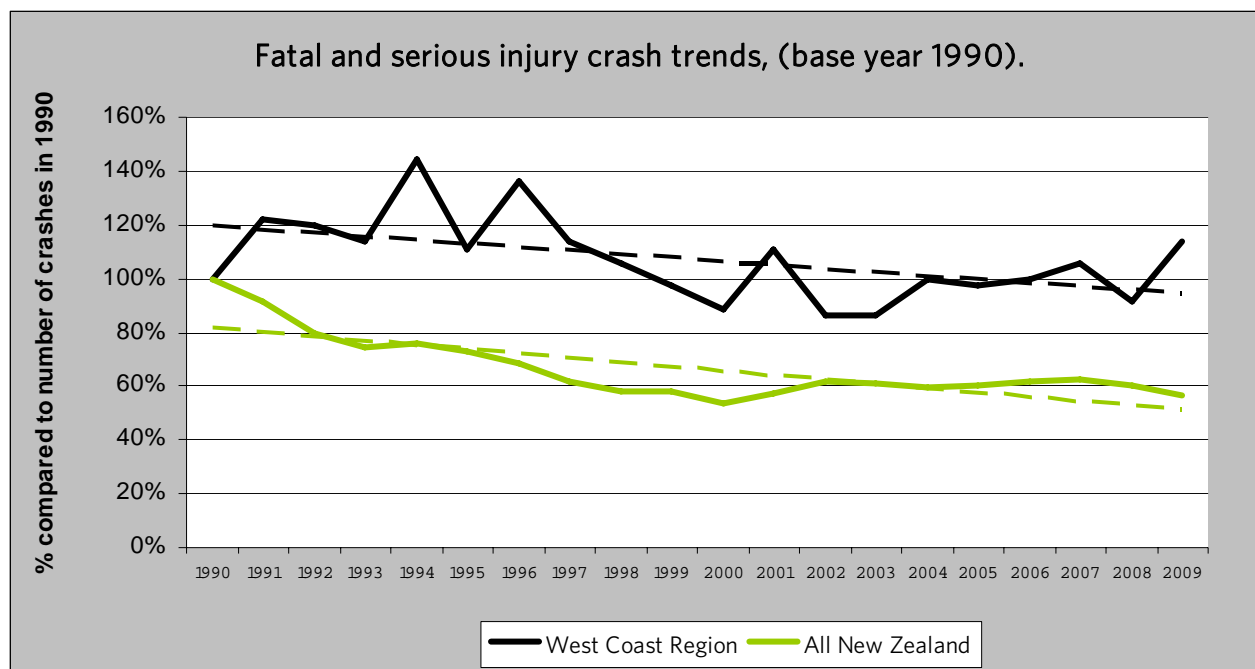
Europe	32
North America	22
United Kingdom	21
Asia	17
Australia	13

Further information about the injury crashes involving overseas drivers in West Coast Region 2005 to 2009:

- Most common crash factors were:- Poor handling, Poor observation, Poor judgement and Too fast.
- 7 percent of crashes were at intersections
- 10 percent of crashes at night
- 41 percent in of crashes in wet or icy conditions
- Worst month February
- Worst day of week Tuesday
- Worst times midday to 3 pm

Looking back - the last two decades.

The vision of the Government's "Safer Journeys" road safety strategy is "A safe road system that is increasingly free of road deaths and serious injuries". The chart below illustrates the progress made in reducing fatal and serious casualties since 1990, for both West Coast Region and for the country as a whole.



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