

road safety issues

Wanganui District

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 in the Wanganui District.

In the past five years, there were a total of 30 deaths and 142 serious injuries resulting from road crashes in the Wanganui District. Crash data for 2004, however, indicates a reduction in the total number of crashes reported compared with previous years. This is reflected in the reduced estimated social costs of crashes for the district in 2004, at \$27.75 million.

Vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists were involved in 38 percent of injury crashes and accounted for 28 percent of casualties between 2000 and 2004.

Excessive speed was a contributing factor in 14 percent of urban crashes and 25 percent of rural crashes between 2000 and 2004. Forty-one percent of crashes involved drivers losing control of their vehicle and 42 percent of crashes during the same period occurred at intersections.

Both local and national road safety issues are identified below. Details of specific issues for the Wanganui District are considered overleaf, while details of national issues are outlined on the back page.

Major road safety issues

Wanganui District

Vulnerable road users

Speed

Loss of control/head-on

Intersections

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2004 road trauma for Wanganui District



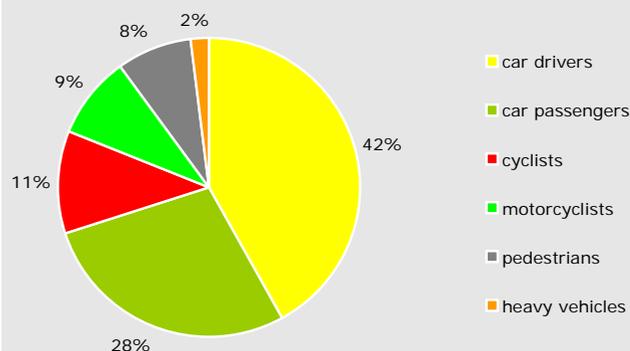
Deaths	5
Serious casualties	28
Minor casualties	94



Fatal crashes	2
Serious injury crashes	22
Minor injury crashes	57
Non-injury crashes	246

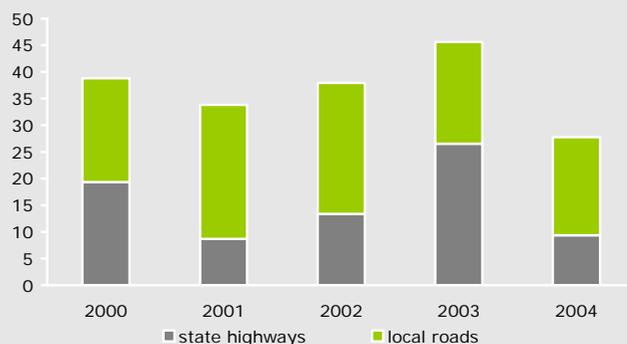
Road casualties 2000–2004

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.

Vulnerable road users

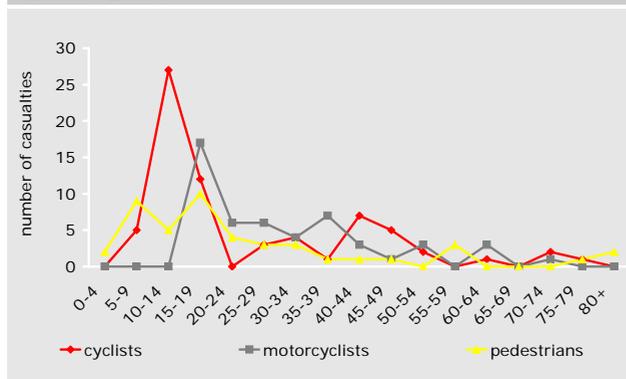
Pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists are all potentially vulnerable to injury when colliding with other vehicles as there is little physical protection from the impact. Vulnerable road users were involved in 38 percent of all injury crashes in the Wanganui District from 2000 to 2004.

In 2004, pedestrians accounted for 10 percent of all Wanganui District casualties compared with eight percent of casualties throughout New Zealand. Twenty-three percent of pedestrian casualties were aged 15 to 19 years.

Cyclist casualties accounted for 11 percent compared with the six percent average for similar local authorities. Thirty-eight percent of cyclist casualties from 2000 to 2004 were aged 10 to 14 years. Throughout New Zealand, 22 percent of casualties were in this age group.

In the period 2000–2004, motorcyclists accounted for nine percent of all casualties and of these, 33 percent were 15–19 year olds.

Age of vulnerable road user casualties 2000–2004



Of those vulnerable road users involved in crashes between 2000 and 2004, there were six fatalities, 46 serious injuries and 125 minor injuries. Motorcyclists were more likely to suffer a serious injury compared with pedestrians and cyclists. Of the 58 motorcycle crashes, there were two fatalities and 21 serious injuries. Thirty-one percent of crashes involving pedestrians also resulted in serious injuries.

Between 2000 and 2004, 86 percent of crashes involving vulnerable road users were in urban areas, of which 50 percent took place at intersections. Of these crashes, 34 percent were at crossroads, 30 percent at T junctions and 21 percent at a driveway. Of vulnerable road users, cyclists were involved in the most crashes at intersections. Of all cycle crashes, 67 percent occurred at intersections.

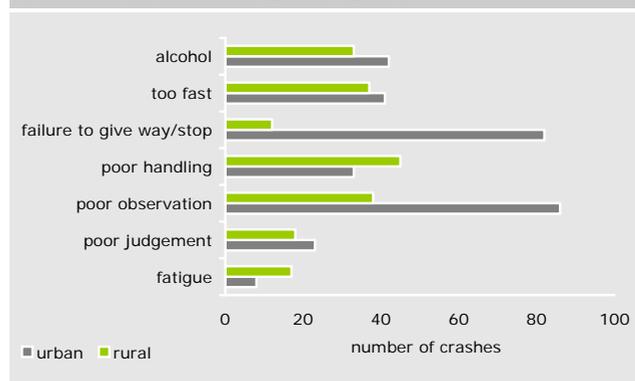
Of all crashes involving vulnerable road users between 2000 and 2004, 78 percent took place in daylight. Nine percent of crashes occurred between 8 am and 9 am and 40 percent between 3 pm and 6 pm.

Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash and the greater the risk of injury and death. Excessive speed was a contributing factor in 17 percent of urban crashes and 27 percent of rural crashes between 2000 and 2004. Both figures were greater than averages for similar local authorities and all of New Zealand.

Excessive speed, along with poor handling and poor observation, was one of the main factors contributing to rural crashes. It also contributed to around 40 urban crashes between 2000 and 2004.

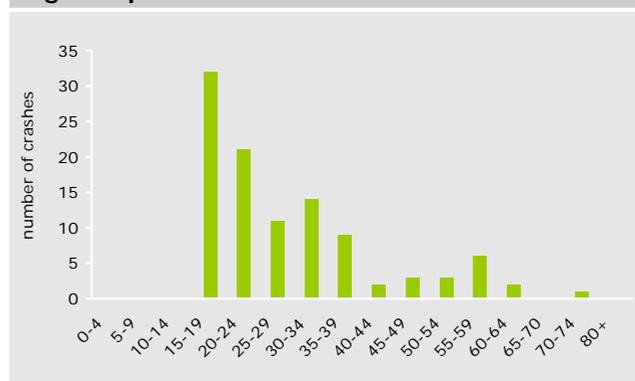
Factors in crashes 2000–2004



In 2004, of 104 speed-related crashes, 32 drivers were aged 15 to 19 years, 33 were in their 20s and 23 in their 30s.

From 2000 to 2004, 40 percent of the drivers involved in crashes where excessive speed was a factor held a learner or restricted licence.

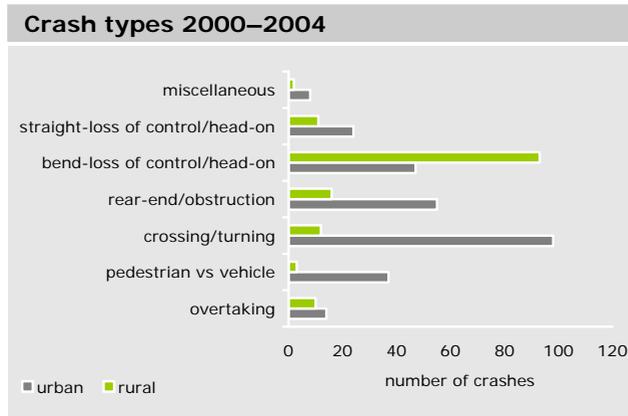
Age in speed-related crashes 2000–2004



Of drivers involved in speed-related crashes, 78 percent were male and 22 percent were female. Alcohol was found to be involved in 40 percent of speed-related crashes between 2000 and 2004.

Loss of control/head-on

Forty-one percent of crashes between 2000 and 2004 were loss of control/head-on crashes. Of these, 80 percent occurred on bends and 20 percent were caused by a driver losing control of a vehicle on a straight road. In 2004, 70 percent of rural crashes were loss of control crashes compared with 54 percent for similar local authorities and 25 percent nationally.



In 2004, there were five fatalities and 19 serious injuries due to loss of control/head-on crashes. There were also 45 minor injuries. However, since 2000, fatalities due to loss of control/head-on crashes made up more than half of the total fatalities on roads within the Wanganui District.

Loss of control crashes can result in either a head-on collision with another vehicle or a vehicle leaving the road and colliding with a roadside object, which can increase the severity of the crash. The most commonly hit object was a fence, followed by a post or pole. There were 12 fatalities and 47 serious injuries in crashes involving roadside objects between 2000 and 2004.

Drivers involved were typically males (75 percent) and under the age of 30 (44 percent). Twenty-six percent of drivers held learner or restricted licences.

Excessive speed was a contributing factor in 39 percent of loss of control/head-on crashes; poor handling was reported in 38 percent and alcohol in 32 percent of this crash type.

Forty-three percent of crashes occurred during the hours of darkness and 59 percent occurred on a road with a speed limit of 100 km/h. Fifty-nine percent also occurred on rural roads.

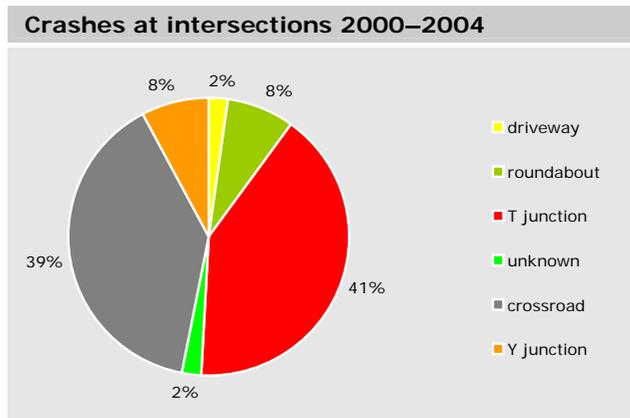
Intersections

Between 2000 and 2004, 42 percent of all crashes in the Wanganui District occurred at intersections. Of these, 85 percent were in urban areas.

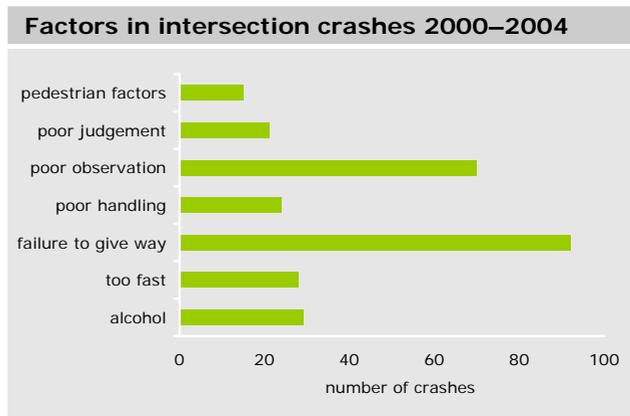
During this period, there were four fatalities, 46 serious injuries and 200 minor casualties from crashes at intersections.

Of those involved in intersection crashes between 2000 and 2004, 59 percent were male. Twenty-one percent of these males were aged 15 to 19 years compared with 13 percent throughout New Zealand. A further 11 percent were aged 20 to 24 years.

Forty-two percent of intersection crashes occurred at T junctions – of which 43 percent were uncontrolled – and 40 percent were at crossroads. Eight percent occurred at roundabouts.



The primary contributing factor to intersection crashes in the Wanganui District was failure to give way or stop (51 percent). Poor observation was attributed to 38 percent of crashes and alcohol to 16 percent. These figures do not compare favourably with all of New Zealand averages, where 27 percent of intersection crashes were due to failure to stop or give way and 27 percent were due to poor observation.



Alcohol

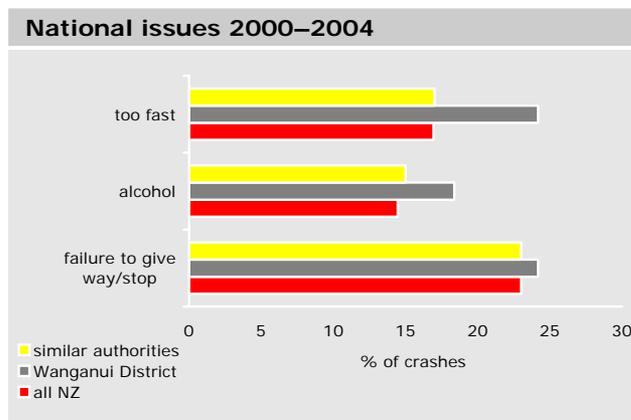
Drivers with a blood alcohol level over the legal limit (80 mg per 100 ml) are three times more likely to be involved in a crash than a sober driver.

Between 2000 and 2004, alcohol was a factor in 79 injury crashes in the Wanganui District and accounted for 18 percent of all injury crashes. Fifty-eight percent of these crashes occurred in the urban environment. Between 2000 and 2004, seven crashes where alcohol was a contributing factor resulted in 10 fatalities.

Failure to give way

Failure to give way at intersections is the third largest cause of death and injury crashes on New Zealand roads.

In the Wanganui District from 2000 to 2004, 104 injury crashes involved a vehicle failing to give way. This accounted for over 24 percent of all injury crashes.



Restraints

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

Results from a 2004 survey showed that throughout New Zealand 94 percent of front seat adults wore safety belts. In the Wanganui District, the seatbelt wearing rate was 91 percent. Potentially, three fatalities could have been prevented had a seatbelt been worn at the time of the crash.

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