

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 Buller district.

In the last five years, 172 injury crashes and 253 non-injury crashes were reported on roads within the Buller district. These crashes resulted in 23 people dying. In addition, 72 people received serious injuries while 191 received minor injuries.

Most crashes were in rural areas of the district, with 22 of the 23 fatalities, 54 of the 72 seriously injured casualties, and 146 of the 191 minor casualties sustained in rural areas.

The person most likely to be injured in a crash in the Buller district was a driver or a passenger of a car or van in the 25 to 29 year age group.

In the last five years in urban areas of the district, the number of crashes each year was about half that of the previous five years. There were no apparent trends in the rural areas.

Major road safety issues:

Buller district

Rural roads

Female road users

Alcohol

Overseas drivers

Local roads

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2001 road toll for Buller district



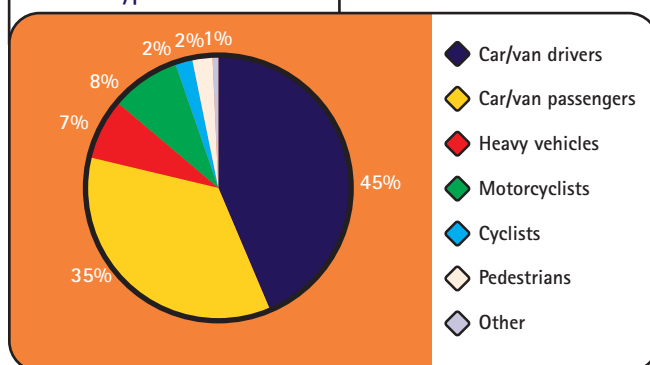
Deaths	9
Serious casualties	12
Minor casualties	34



Fatal crashes	7
Serious injury crashes	8
Minor injury crashes	18
Non-injury crashes	51

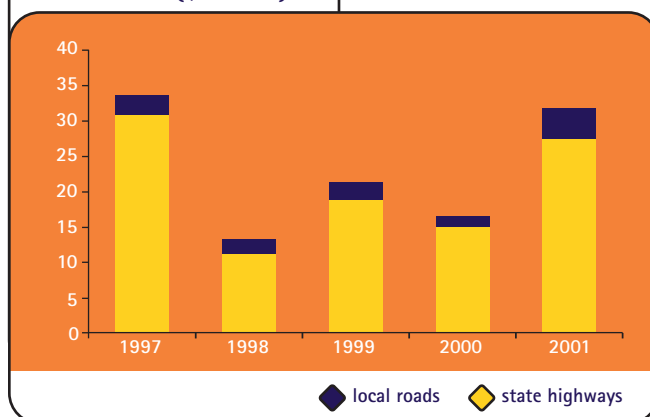
Road user casualties 1997–2001

User type 1997–2001



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 2001 prices.

Rural roads

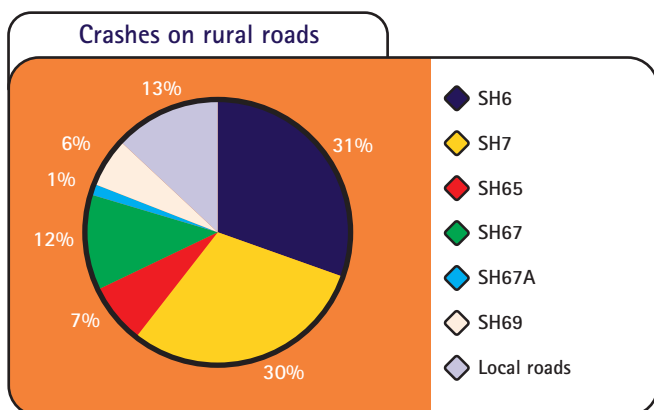
In the Buller district eight of every 10 injury crashes and seven of every 10 non-injury crashes happened in rural areas. Consequently, over 95 percent of fatalities, three quarters of serious injuries and over three quarters of minor injuries were sustained in crashes in rural areas.

In rural areas, almost 90 percent of crashes resulted from loss of control, with over three quarters of these being at bends. The most common crash causes were speed, slippery surface, alcohol, inexperience, failure to keep left, loss of control, and inattention. Almost half of rural crashes happened on wet roads.

When vehicles lose control on rural roads they often leave the road and possibly collide with roadside objects. In the Buller district, the roadside features most often hit were banks and ditches, or the vehicle fell over the edge of a drop.

Males were most likely to be driving vehicles involved in crashes in rural areas, with those in the 25 to 29, the 30 to 34 and the 35 to 39 year age groups being most involved. Female drivers were involved in only one quarter of rural crashes.

State highways were the most heavily trafficked rural roads in the Buller district. Almost 90 percent of rural crashes in the district were on state highways. The map opposite (Figure 1) illustrates the location of crashes on rural roads in the Buller district.



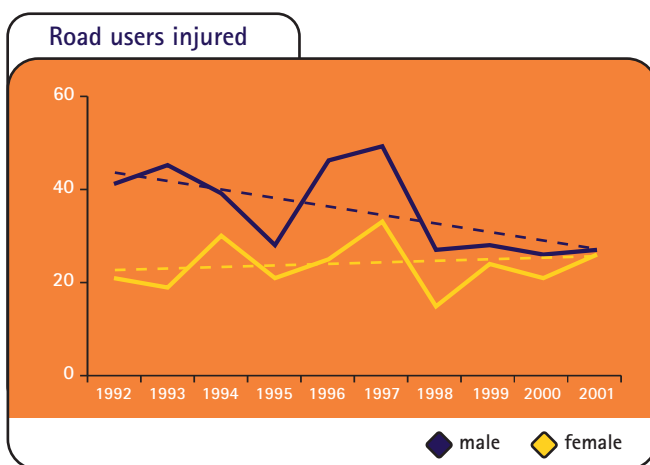
Recommended actions

- Support enforcement targeting high-risk areas.
- Support enforcement campaigns aimed at speed control, especially during wet conditions.
- Support education campaigns aimed at improving awareness of appropriate speeds for the driving conditions, particularly at corners and bends.
- Ensure shoulders are kept as clear as practicable of roadside objects.
- Maintain road drainage.

Female road users

In the last four years, the number of males injured in crashes in the Buller district dropped by about one third. The number of male drivers involved in injury crashes also reduced by about one third in the same period.

The number of females injured has not reduced, with the number injured in road crashes in the district last year being the third highest since 1992. The number of female drivers involved in injury crashes has also not reduced.



Over nine of every 10 females involved in injury crashes were travelling in cars or vans. For males, the figure was less than three quarters. Over half of the females injured in the last five years were passengers, while for males only one fifth were passengers.

Female drivers were more likely to be involved in intersection crashes than males. The factors often associated with female road users were inexperience, fatigue, inattention and failure to give way.

Female drivers were more likely than males to have crashes in urban areas and were less likely than males to have crashes in rural areas. For female drivers the 20 to 24 and the 25 to 29 year age groups were most often involved in crashes.

Recommended actions

- Support education and advertising campaigns on the right of way rules.
- Encourage enforcement activities targeting drivers who fail to stop or give way.
- Improve driving skills through programmes like Defensive Driving.
- Support strategic enforcement campaigns aimed at restraint use.
- Use peer pressure groups like Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD) to convey messages.

Figure 1
Buller district
Crashes on rural roads
1997–2001

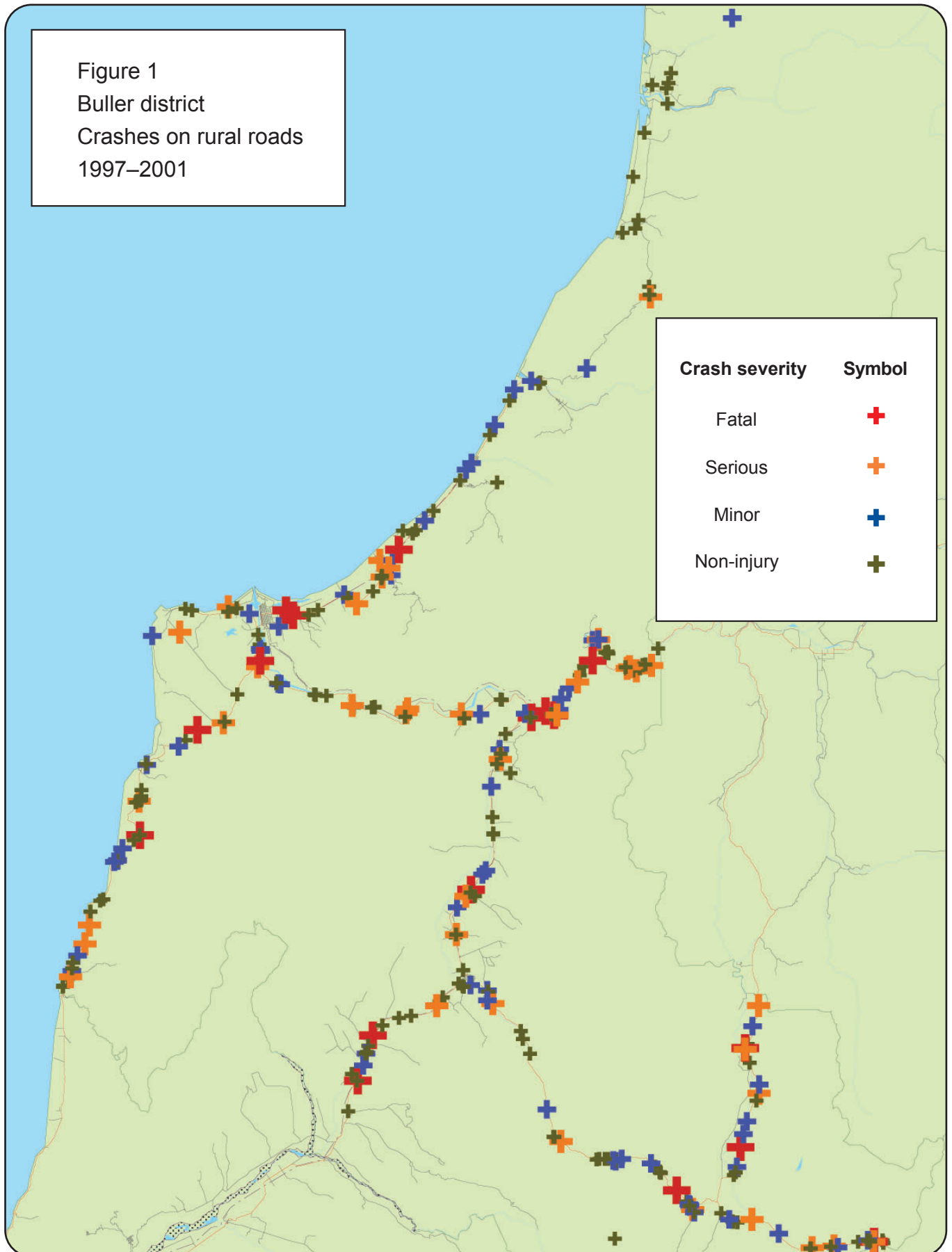
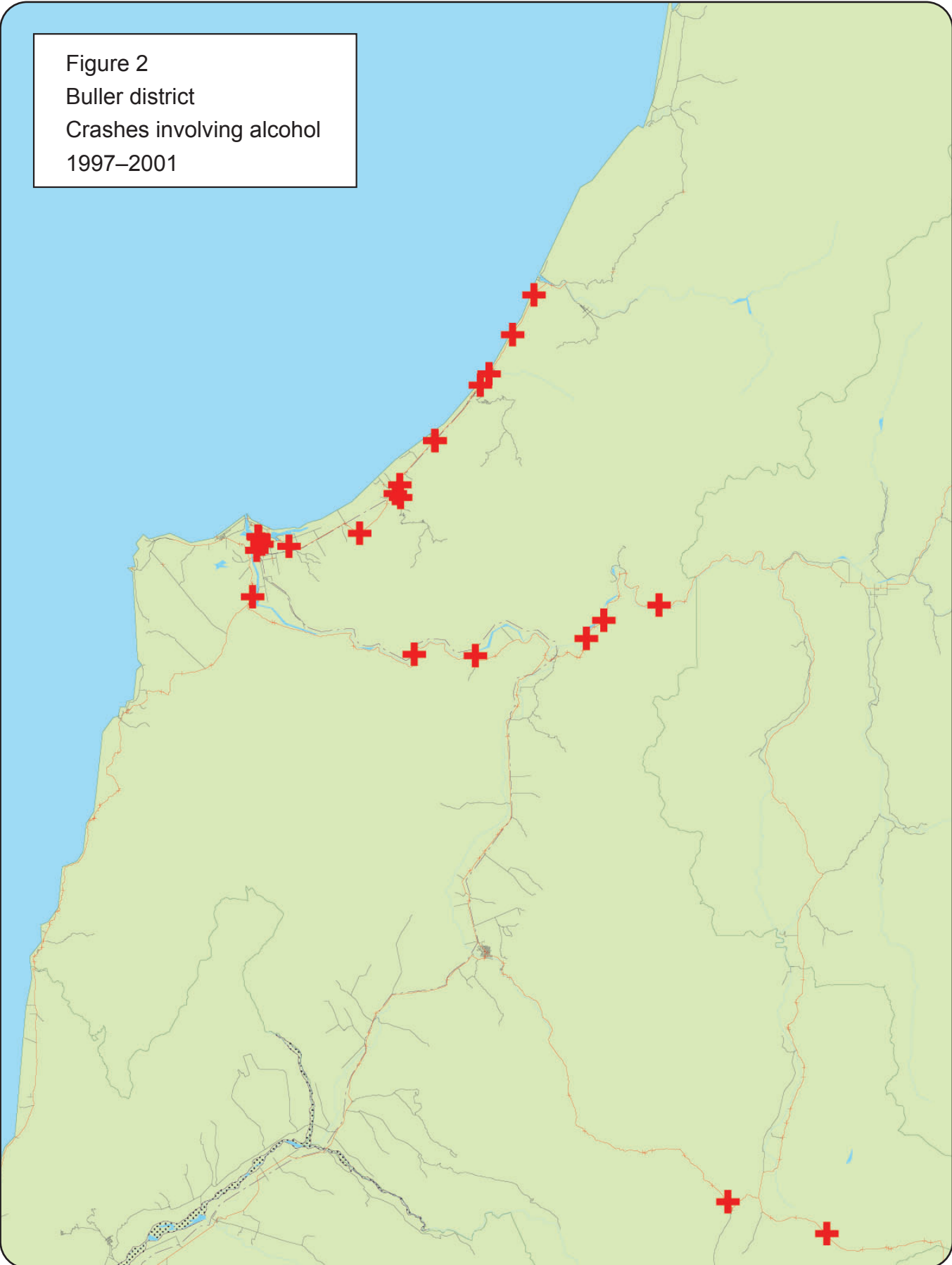


Figure 2
Buller district
Crashes involving alcohol
1997–2001

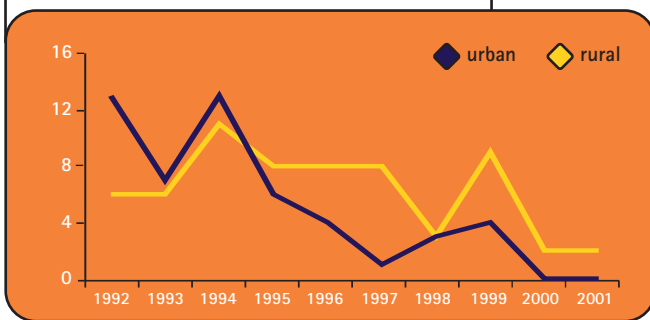


Alcohol

In the Buller district, alcohol impairment was one of the significant factors in road crashes, particularly in the urban areas. However, over the last 10 years there was a significant reduction in the incidence of alcohol involvement. In the last two years, no crashes involving alcohol were reported in urban areas of the district. In the rural areas two alcohol-related crashes were reported in 2000 and 2001. In 1999, the number of alcohol-related crashes reported in both urban and rural areas was significantly higher.

The locations of crashes involving alcohol are shown opposite in Figure 2.

Casualties in alcohol-involved crashes



Recommended actions

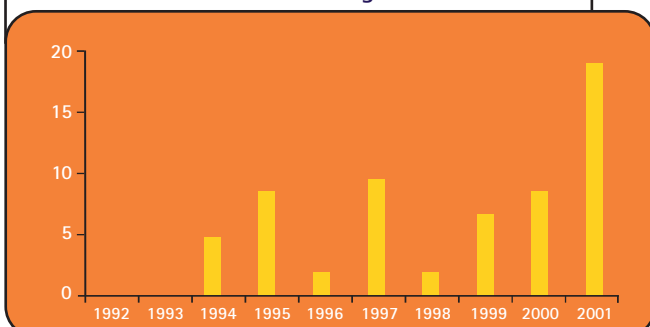
- Continue to support drink-driving strategic enforcement campaigns.
- Continue to support education campaigns aimed at drink-driving.

Overseas drivers

While the overall numbers of overseas drivers involved in crashes in the district was small, the number increased over the last eight years. Last year, the number of crashes involving overseas drivers was double the previous high number.

The crash type most likely to involve an overseas driver was the loss of control crash, with more than four of every five crashes being of this type. Most occurred at bends. Inexperience, failure to keep left, speed and driver control were most often reported as causes of crashes involving overseas drivers.

Casualties in crashes involving overseas drivers



Recommended actions

- Target overseas drivers through local campaigns and tourism/visitor support networks.
- Encourage rental car companies to ensure tourists are adequately informed about driving in New Zealand.

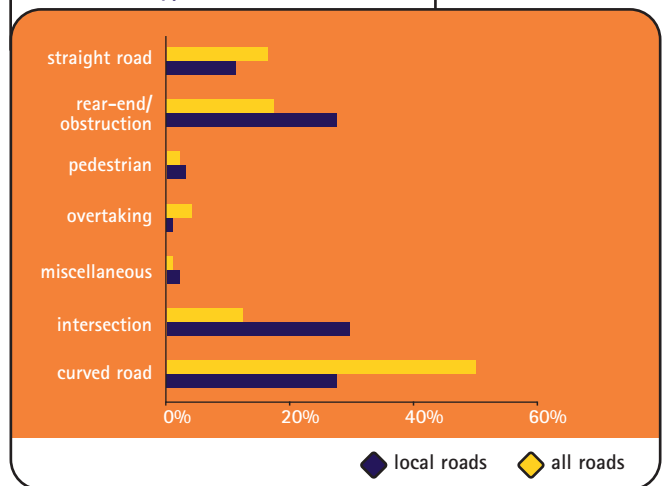
Local roads

Overall, one third of crashes in the district occurred on urban roads. On local roads, almost three quarters occurred in urban areas. The crash types that most often happened on local roads were crashes at intersections and rear-end or collision with obstruction crashes.

Failure to give way, poor checking, speed and alcohol were the causes most often reported in crashes on local roads.

Drivers and passengers in cars and on motorcycles were most often injured in crashes on local roads. Male drivers represented just over half of the drivers. For both males and females, the under 20 year age group was most often involved in crashes on local roads. Males in the 25 to 29 and the 30 to 34 year age groups were also well represented.

Crash types on local roads



Recommended actions

- Support enforcement activities targeting drivers who fail to give way or stop in urban areas.
- Encourage education programmes to address driving at appropriate speed, keeping a safe distance, signalling intentions and choosing a safe gap.

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 road controlling 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 level of deaths and injuries in the Buller district.

Funding for community projects in the Buller district from the NZRSP for the 2002/2003 year has been confirmed as follows:

Project	Funding
Speed – rural and urban	\$2,000
Drive Sober – Inangahua	\$5,500
Restraints	\$2,500
Poor observation	\$2,500

Buller district will also be involved this year in regionally funded projects to target the high-risk issues of speed, alcohol, restraints and pedestrian issues. These projects have been funded as follows:

Project	Funding
Regional road safety co-ordinator	\$38,000
Rural speed	\$30,000
Restraints – education/publicity campaign	\$3,500
Street skills – Bike Wise	\$2,700
Young drivers	\$10,000
Driver fatigue	\$15,200
Kidsafe Week 2002	\$2,700

Road environment

Buller district has an allocation for minor safety projects in Transfund's National Land Transport Programme 2002–2003.

Police enforcement

Included in the 6,120 hours to be delivered by police in the Buller district, as below, is police support for community projects.

	Hours
Strategic – alcohol/drugs, speed, restraint and visible road safety enforcement	4,960
Traffic management including crash attendance, incidents, emergencies and events	950
School road safety education	100
Police community services	90

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road safety in the Buller district please refer to the 1997 to 2001 Road Safety Data Report or one of the contacts listed below:

Land Transport Safety Authority Regional Manager Dennis Robertson Phone 03 363 5661	New Zealand Police Hugh Flower Tasman District Headquarters Private Bag 39, Nelson Phone 03 546 3855 Mobile 025 266 7170
Regional Education Advisor Bob Clements Phone 03 363 5677	Buller District Council Steve Griffin PO Box 21, Westport Phone 03 789 7239
Area Road Safety Engineer Geoff Holland Phone 03 363 5645	Transit New Zealand Peter Connors Area Engineer PO Box 1479, Christchurch Phone 03 366 4455
Road Safety Co-ordinator Malcolm White 39 Albert Mall PO Box 20, Greymouth Phone 03 768 4912 teachu@xtra.co.nz	

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