

briefing notes - road safety issues

Buller District

Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2003–2007 period.

The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and be a resource to help identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in Buller District.

This report is the ninth road safety report for Buller District. All the material unless otherwise stated in this report applies to both local roads and to Transit New Zealand (Transit NZ) roads.

In each new report one year's data is added to a five year block and the oldest dropped so it is unlikely that the core issues would change radically from report to report.

The issues chosen for this report are drawn from either the most common crash types, those that appear over-represented when Buller District is compared to similar local bodies or those with high social cost (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes mainly). We have included a brief overview of crashes in the district.

We encourage local bodies to use the free access to the Ministry of Transport's Crash Analysis System to delve deeper into the highlighted issues.

Major road safety issues

Buller District

Bends

Speed

2007 road trauma

Casualties

Buller District

Deaths

2

Serious casualties

20

Minor casualties

53

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints

Crashes

Buller District

Fatal crashes

2

Serious injury crashes

18

Minor injury crashes

35

Non-injury crashes

47

Overview

In 2007 on local roads in Buller District there were 9 injury crashes and 14 non-injury crashes. In addition there were 46 injury crashes and 33 non-injury crashes on Transit New Zealand (Transit NZ) roads, both as reported by the New Zealand Police.

The table below shows the number of injuries resulting from the 55 injury crashes, by rural or urban areas for all roads, (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

Casualties by environment 2007

	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	1	19	42	62
Urban	1	1	11	13
Total	2	20	53	75

In 2007 there were nearly twice as many fatal and serious injury crashes than in 1998. The annual numbers of these crashes have fluctuated with no obvious trend. Similarly the annual numbers for minor injury and non-injury crashes have fluctuated with no obvious trend.

Crash trends

Year	Fatal crashes	Serious injury crashes	Minor injury crashes	Non-injury crashes
1998	1	10	20	55
1999	3	11	18	44
2000	1	13	17	59
2001	7	9	18	52
2002	3	9	13	53
2003	1	7	28	53
2004	4	12	20	71
2005	1	9	22	38
2006	1	13	27	59
2007	2	18	35	47

Injury crashes 2003 - 2007

Crash type or contributory cause 2003 to 2007	Local Road Percent of injury crashes	Transit Road Percent of injury crashes
Alcohol	28%	10%
Too fast	24%	32%
Straight—lost control crash	24%	13%
Bend—lost control crash	39%	68%
Crossing / turning crash	22%	10%
Road factors	15%	21%
Vulnerable road users (Percent of casualties)	21%	9%
1, Pedestrians	5%	2%
2, Cyclists	3%	1%
3, Motorcyclists	13%	6%

Further information about 2003 to 2007 injury and non-injury crashes on local roads:

- Worst month March, August
- Worst day Friday
- 23 percent on wet roads
- 40 percent at night
- 32 percent at intersections
- Social cost of crashes in 2007 was \$4.1m

Further information about 2003 to 2007 injury and non-injury crashes on Transit NZ roads

- Worst month May
- Worst day Friday
- 48 percent on wet roads
- 30 percent at night
- 16 percent at intersections
- Social cost of crashes in 2007 was \$22.1m

Crashes at bends

Between 2003 and 2007 59 percent of all crashes in Buller District occurred at bends. These crashes resulted in 7 fatalities, 49 serious injuries and 131 minor injuries.

Crash numbers have remained fairly constant from 2003 to 2006, but injury crashes increased in 2007.

Crashes at bends 2003 to 2007				
Crash year	Fatal crashes	Serious crashes	Minor crashes	Non-injury crashes
2003	1	4	16	28
2004	3	6	11	37
2005	1	7	14	21
2006	1	7	20	34
2007	1	17	22	27
Total	7	41	83	27

Most crashes at bends involved a driver losing control of their vehicle and either running off the road or colliding with another vehicle.

After drivers lose control their vehicles often crash into roadside hazards such as ditches, banks, poles or trees. Hitting these objects can result in a relatively minor off-road event turning into something far more serious.

The three most common roadside hazards struck in injury crashes in Buller District were cliffs or banks (32), ditches (20) and trees (16) from a total of 120 objects struck.

Main characteristics of injury crashes at bends	
Crash characteristic	Percentage of crashes
Single vehicle	71%
Alcohol	15%
Excessive speed for the conditions	43%
Road factors	21%
Poor handling	48%
Rural road	93%
Wet road	44%
Night time	27%

Further information about injury crashes on bends (2003 to 2007) on local roads in Buller District :

- 0 deaths, 11 serious injuries and 10 minor injuries
- 88 percent of at fault drivers were male
- Most common crash type "Turning left"
- Most common age group 40-49 years
- 41 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- Worst month March
- Worst day of week Wednesday, Saturday
- Worst time period 3 pm - 6 pm

Further information about injury crashes on bends (2003 to 2007) on Transit NZ roads in Buller District :

- 7 deaths, 38 serious injuries and 121 minor injuries
- 74 percent of at fault drivers were male
- Most common crash type "Turning right"
- Most common age group 40-49 years
- 11 percent of crashes involved alcohol
- Worst month November
- Worst day of week Friday
- Worst time period midday - 3 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 drivers to respond to situations and it leads to more serious injuries. Research has shown that a one km/h reduction in mean speed can produce a three percent reduction in injury crashes.

Between 2003 and 2007 31 percent of injury crashes in Buller District involved travelling too fast for the conditions. These crashes resulted in 9 fatalities, 69 serious injuries and 206 minor injuries.

Speed related crashes					
Speed related crashes	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Rural	12	25	16	24	43
Urban	4	1	1	7	6
Total	16	26	17	31	49

In the last two years the number of reported crashes where speed was identified as a factor has increased

The most common speed related crash is one when in which a driver lost control on a right hand bend. The second most common crash is when a driver lost control on a left hand bend.

The main causes contributing to speed related crashes were:

- Handling errors
- Alcohol
- General errors of judgement

Age and sex of at fault speeding drivers

Drivers at fault in speed related injury crashes (2003- 2007)	Male	Female	Total
15 - 19 years	12	4	16
20 - 24	4	3	7
25 - 29	3	1	4
30 - 39	7	1	8
40 - 49	6	1	7
50 - 59	7	2	9
60 - 69	2	2	4
70+	3	1	4
Total	44	15	59

Males represented 76 percent of at fault drivers in speed related crashes.

Further information about speed related injury crashes in Buller District on local roads (2003 to 2007):

- no deaths, 7 serious injuries and 7 minor injuries
- Most common crash type "Lost control on a bend"
- 90 percent mid-block
- 10 percent wet road
- 20 percent night time
- Worst month March
- Worst day of week Saturday
- Worst time 3 pm - 6 pm

Further information about speed related injury crashes in Buller District on Transit NZ roads (2003 to 2006):

- 3 deaths, 13 serious injuries and 53 minor injuries
- Most common crash type "Lost control on bend"
- 89 percent mid-block
- 67 percent wet road
- 35 percent night time
- Worst month June
- Worst day of week Friday
- Worst time midday - 3 pm

National issues

This section contains some brief information on the key national road safety issues as measured in Buller District. They may have been covered elsewhere in this document or not be a specific issue.

Speed

In Buller District, "Too fast" was recorded in 59 fatal and injury crashes in the district in the last five years resulting in 3 deaths and 80 injuries. Speed as a factor in crashes is increasing.

89 percent of all speed-related crashes were lost control on bends. Alcohol and Poor handling were the other driver factors most often associated with speed in injury crashes.

76 percent of at fault drivers in these injury crashes were males. The most common ages of these drivers were between the ages of 15 to 19 years

Alcohol

In Buller District, alcohol was involved in 27 fatal and injury crashes in the district in the last five years resulting in 1 deaths, and 33 other injuries. The number of injury crashes involving alcohol is increasing.

67 percent of all alcohol crashes were in rural areas of the district. 63 percent of these were Lost control crashes on bends. Speed and Poor handling were the other factors often associated with alcohol in injury crashes.

79 percent of at fault drivers in these injury crashes were males. The most common ages of these drivers were between the ages of 30 to 59 years

Failure to give way

In Buller District failure to give way or stop was reported in 30 fatal and injury crashes during the last five years resulting in 1 death and 45 other injuries.

Poor observation was the driver factor most often associated with failure to give way.

81 percent of at fault drivers in these injury crashes were males. The most common ages of these drivers were between the ages of 30 to 49 years

Restraints

The Ministry of Transport conducts surveys of restraint use. The results of these surveys are at a regional level, and may not be fully appropriate to a Territorial Authority. The results are obtainable from the Ministry of Transport website.

<http://www.transport.govt.nz/belts-index/>

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