

road safety issues

Marlborough 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 Marlborough District.

The number of people killed or seriously injured in road crashes in the Marlborough District increased from 30 in 2003 to 48 in 2004. The number of minor injury casualties also increased.

Car occupants made up 75 percent of all road user casualties from 2000 to 2004. Cyclists were the next largest casualty group, making up 11 percent of all road user casualties. The Marlborough District has seen an upward trend in these casualties from 2000 to 2004.

Almost 60 percent of injury crashes on rural roads between 2000 and 2004 in the Marlborough District involved a driver losing control of a vehicle on a bend. In urban areas most injury crashes occurred at an intersection.

The total social cost of crashes in the Marlborough District was \$63 million in 2004.

Both national and local road safety issues are identified below. Specific issues relating to the Marlborough District are considered overleaf. National issues are discussed on the back page.

Major road safety issues

Marlborough District

Loss of control on bends

Intersections

Cyclists

Fatigue

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2004 road trauma for Marlborough District



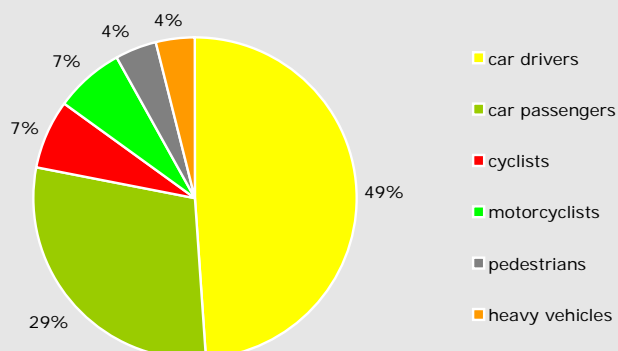
Deaths	10
Serious casualties	38
Minor casualties	112



Fatal crashes	10
Serious injury crashes	30
Minor injury crashes	68
Non-injury crashes	269

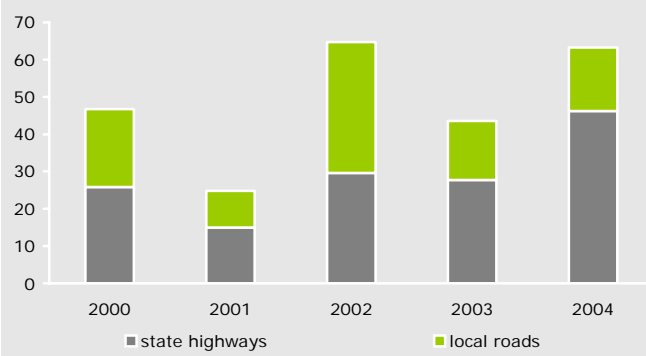
Road casualties 2000–2004

User type 2000–2004



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)



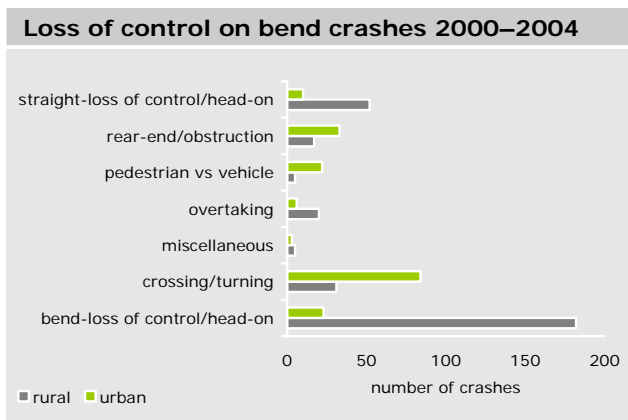
*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2004 prices.

Loss of control on bends

The most common type of crash in the Marlborough District between 2000 and 2004 involved a driver losing control of their vehicle on a bend (42 percent of all injury crashes) and a further 13 percent lost control on a straight section of road. Over this five-year period, there were 205 loss of control on bend crashes resulting in 92 deaths or serious injuries, and a further 237 minor injuries.

Loss of control crashes can result in either a head-on collision with another vehicle or the vehicle leaving the road, potentially resulting in a collision with a roadside object. Such an occurrence may increase the severity of a crash. The most common roadside hazards hit in the Marlborough District were cliffs/banks, ditches, fences and trees.

Sixty-two percent of loss of control on bend crashes occurred on the state highways, and of these 94 percent were in the rural area. Of the local road loss of control on bend crashes, 80 percent occurred in rural areas.



Compared with all crashes in the Marlborough District, a higher proportion of loss of control on bend crashes occurred at night (40 percent) and 27 percent occurred in wet or icy road conditions.

Travelling at a speed too fast for the conditions was a contributing factor in 38 percent of loss of control injury crashes between 2000 and 2004. Other significant factors included poor handling skills, alcohol, poor observation and fatigue.

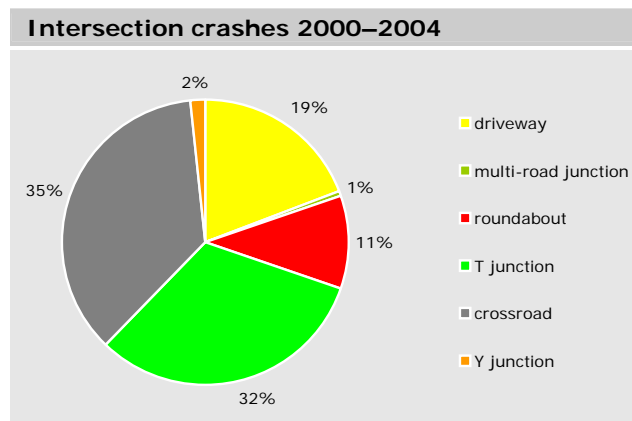
Although most loss of control crashes involved cars, 21 percent involved a van or ute and 13 percent featured trucks. Thirty-two percent of all the drivers involved were aged between 15 and 24 years.

Intersections

Between 2000 and 2004, there were a total of 188 crashes (or 38 percent of all crashes) at intersections and driveways in the Marlborough District. Of these, 36 (19 percent) occurred at private driveways and accesses.

Crashes at intersections and driveways made up 70 percent of all urban injury crashes and 20 percent of all rural injury crashes in the Marlborough District between 2000 and 2004. Seventy percent of intersection crashes occurred on local roads (as opposed to state highways) and of these, 79 percent occurred in the urban area.

On average there were 38 injury crashes per year at intersections and driveways during this five-year period, which resulted in a total of 52 deaths and serious injuries.



The main types of intersection crashes involved a collision between vehicles either crossing or turning (60 percent), or a vehicle being hit from behind – for instance, when in a queue waiting to pass through the intersection.

Thirty-five percent of all intersection crashes between 2000 and 2004 occurred at crossroads, 32 percent at T junctions and 11 percent at roundabouts. Over half of T junction crashes occurred at a location without any Give Way or Stop signs and markings.

Almost 30 percent of all road users injured in intersection crashes were pedestrians, cyclists or motorcyclists. Cyclists in particular were over-represented in crashes (26 percent of cycle crashes) at roundabouts compared with other types of intersection. The majority of pedestrian injuries occurred at driveways.

Twenty-four percent of intersection crashes occurred between 3 pm and 5 pm and 23 percent occurred between 8 am and 11 am. Three quarters of the crashes occurred on a weekday.

Cyclists

Cyclists made up the third highest casualty group in the Marlborough District, at seven percent of recorded casualties from 2000 to 2004. This has been an increasing trend with casualties more than tripling over the past five years. On average, there have been 10 injury crashes involving cyclists each year between 2000 and 2004. Overall, the proportion of cyclist casualties over this period was significantly greater than nationally or in similar local authorities.

Of the 51 cyclist casualties in the Marlborough District between 2000 and 2004, 10 were killed or seriously injured.

Seventy-three percent of cycle crashes in the Marlborough District occurred on local (non-state highway) roads in the urban area.

Eighty-six percent of all cycle crashes happened at a driveway or intersection. Of these, 38 percent occurred at a crossroad, 26 percent at roundabouts and 24 percent at T junctions.



Sixty-five percent of all cyclist casualties were male. Thirty-nine percent of cyclists involved in injury crashes between 2000 and 2004 were aged between 10 and 19 years.

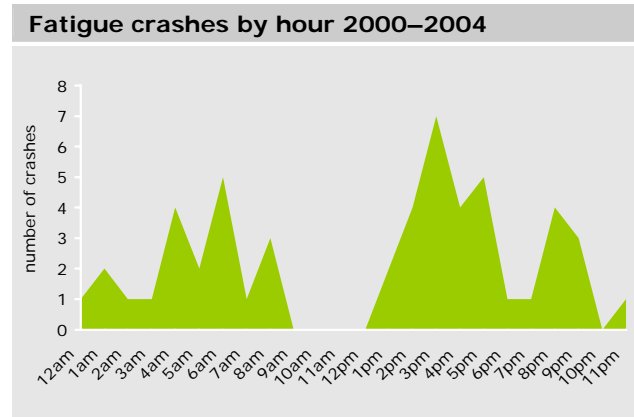
Eighty-two percent of crashes involving cyclists occurred on weekdays, and of these, 50 percent happened in the commuting hours from 8 am to 9 am and from 3 pm to 5 pm.

One third of cycle crashes in the Marlborough District occurred during the summer months of January through to March.

Fatigue

Staying alert is crucial for safe driving. Fatigued drivers may have slower reaction times, putting themselves and others in danger when they encounter unusual, unexpected or emergency situations. Identification of the presence and effects driver fatigue is subjective; drivers are often unaware that they lost concentration or are unwilling to admit it. It is generally under-reported in crash statistics. Fatigue was recorded as a contributing factor in 11 percent of injury crashes in the Marlborough District over the period from 2000 to 2004. This proportion of crashes was higher than for all of New Zealand and for similar authorities.

Drivers travelling through the Marlborough District on the state highways are at risk of becoming fatigued because of the long distances they are likely to be travelling, and/or because of commitments to ferry sailings. Indeed, 89 percent of fatigue-related crashes occurred on state highways, of which 61 percent were on SH 1S. Most (94 percent) of the state highway crashes were in the rural area.



The body clock is programmed to make us feel sleepy in the early hours of the morning and during the mid-afternoon. The number of crashes involving fatigue in the Marlborough District between 2000 and 2004 appeared to be highest at these times.

Forty-eight percent of fatigue-related crashes occurred at night, far higher than for all crash types at 28 percent.

The 52 fatigue-related crashes recorded in the Marlborough District resulted in 75 casualties – two fatalities, 17 serious injuries and 56 minor injuries. Almost all the casualties were car passengers, but two were occupants of a truck. Over 37 percent of road users injured in fatigue-related crashes were aged between 15 and 24 years.

Most fatigue-related crashes in the Marlborough District (96 percent) resulted in a loss of control with the vehicle leaving the road.

Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash and the greater the risk of serious injury or death. Excessive speed is a particular issue on roads in the rural areas of the Marlborough District. During the 2000–2004 period, travelling too fast for the conditions was a factor in 20 percent of injury crashes in the Marlborough District, which was lower than for all roads in New Zealand, but higher compared with similar authorities.

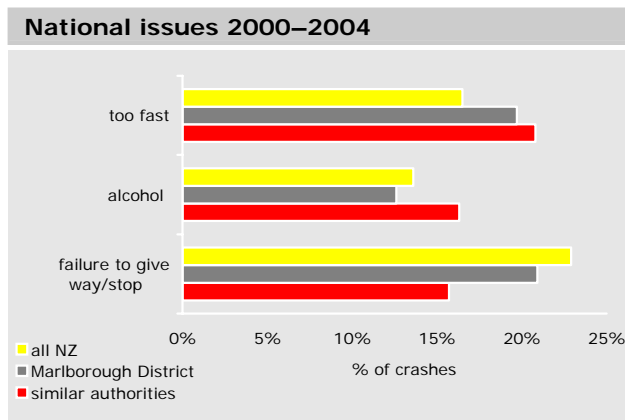
Alcohol

Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive. People who drink and drive (with a blood alcohol level over 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 identified as a factor in 13 percent of crashes on roads in the Marlborough District, which is lower than both the national average and for similar authorities.

Failure to give way

While most failure to give way crashes result in non-injury or minor injury crashes, failing to give way can have severe consequences. Between 2000 and 2004, 21 percent of crashes on roads in the Marlborough District involved drivers failing to give way, and of these over 25 percent resulted in a fatal or serious crash.



Restraints

Wearing a safety belt reduces the chance of death or serious injury in a crash by 40 percent. Whether in the front or the back seat, the risk of serious or fatal injury if not wearing a safety belt is virtually the same. Results from the 2004 national restraint wearing survey showed that the national average of front seat safety belt wearing was 94 percent, compared with 96 percent for the Marlborough District.

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