

road safety issues

Rangitikei 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 Rangitikei District.

The total number of crashes in 2004 was 153, down from 167 in 2003. Minor casualties declined from 75 in 2003 to 47 in 2004; however, there were nine fatalities in 2004 compared with five fatalities in 2003.

Drivers losing control of their vehicle accounted for 69 percent of injury crashes from 2000 to 2004, resulting in 19 fatal crashes. Eighteen percent of injury crashes in the Rangitikei District involved trucks. Driver fatigue was a factor in 22 percent of crashes.

The estimated social cost of crashes in 2004 was \$23.8 million. This was less than in 2003 when the cost was \$30.9 million. Between 2000 and 2004, much of the social cost can be attributed to crashes on state highways.

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

Major road safety issues

Rangitikei District

Loss of control

Trucks

Fatigue

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2004 road trauma for Rangitikei District



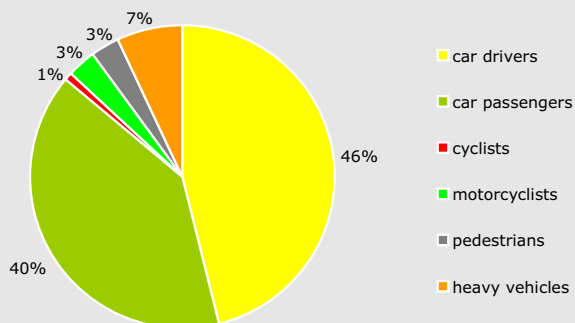
Deaths	9
Serious casualties	14
Minor casualties	47



Fatal crashes	4
Serious injury crashes	8
Minor injury crashes	31
Non-injury crashes	110

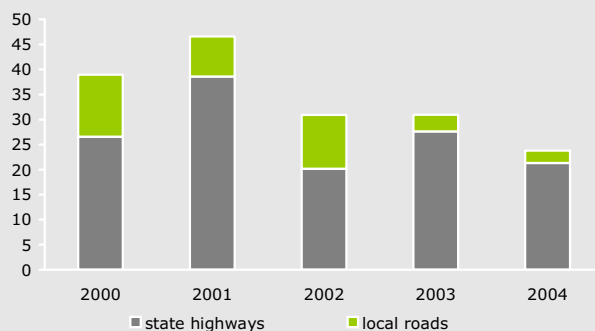
Road casualties 2000–2004

User type 2000–2004



Estimated social cost of crashes*

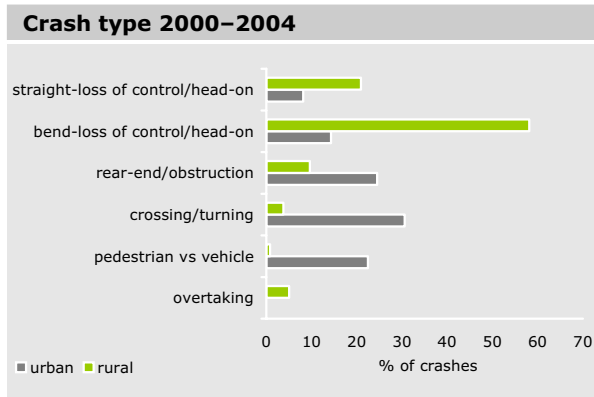
Social cost (\$ million)



*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

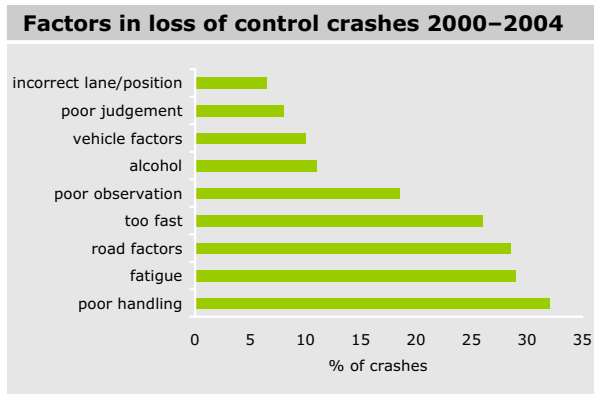
The most common type of crash in the Rangitikei District between 2000 and 2004 involved a driver losing control of their vehicle, either on a bend or on a straight section of road. Over this period, 69 percent of injury crashes involved a loss of control compared with 41 percent of injury crashes nationally. Of these, there were 30 fatalities and 81 seriously injured casualties.



Loss of control crashes can result in a head-on collision with another vehicle or the vehicle leaving the road and potentially colliding with roadside objects. Three quarters of loss of control crashes resulting in injury from 2000 to 2004 involved a vehicle hitting a roadside object. Of these, there were 17 fatalities.

Ninety-five percent of loss of control crashes occurred on rural roads and 78 percent occurred on state highways. Forty-one percent of loss of control crashes occurred during the hours of darkness.

Of the drivers involved, one third were aged between 15 and 24, with a further 10 percent of drivers aged 25 to 29. Of crashes involving 15–24 year olds, 46 percent held learner or restricted licences.



Poor handling of the vehicle was a contributing factor in 32 percent of loss of control crashes in the five-year period. Other notable factors were fatigue, road factors, excessive speed, poor observation and alcohol.

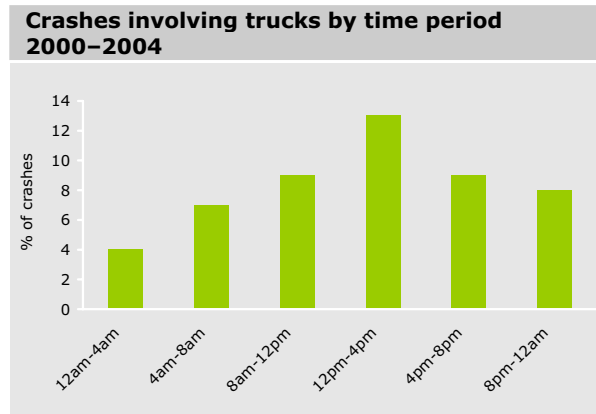
Trucks

Seventeen percent of crashes in the Rangitikei District from 2000 to 2004 involved a truck.

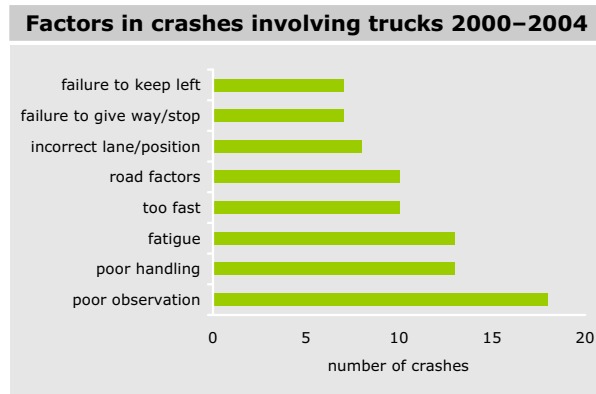
Of crashes involving trucks, there was a total of 10 fatalities, including one crash in 2004 which accounted for three lives. There were a further 18 seriously injured casualties from such crashes.

Seventy-eight percent of truck crashes occurred on a state highway – 75 percent on SH 1 and the remaining 25 percent on SH 3. Eighty-four percent of crashes occurred at a mid-block location.

Over one third of crashes involving trucks occurred during the hours of darkness, while almost a third of crashes occurred on a Friday – nearly twice as many as any other day of the week. The highest number of heavy vehicle crashes occurred between noon and 4 pm, with 13 crashes recorded in the period 2000–2004.



The main contributing factors in truck crashes were poor observation (18 crashes), poor handling and fatigue (13 crashes each). Excessive speed contributed to 10 crashes.



Fatigue

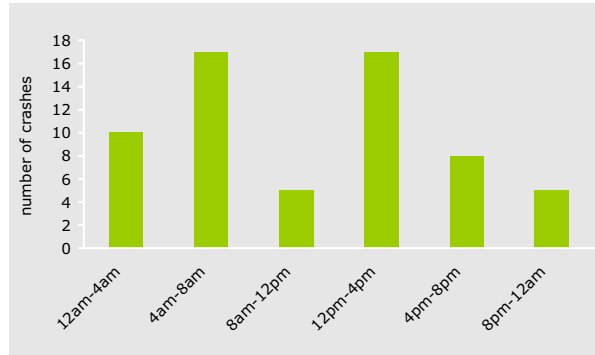
From 2000 to 2004, fatigue was a contributing factor in 62 crashes in the Rangitikei District, accounting for 22 percent of all injury crashes. This figure was much greater than that of similar local authorities where 11 percent of crashes were due to fatigue. Nationally, just six percent of crashes were attributed to fatigue.

There were 11 fatalities from crashes in which fatigue was implicated from 2000 to 2004. During the same period, there were 30 serious injuries.

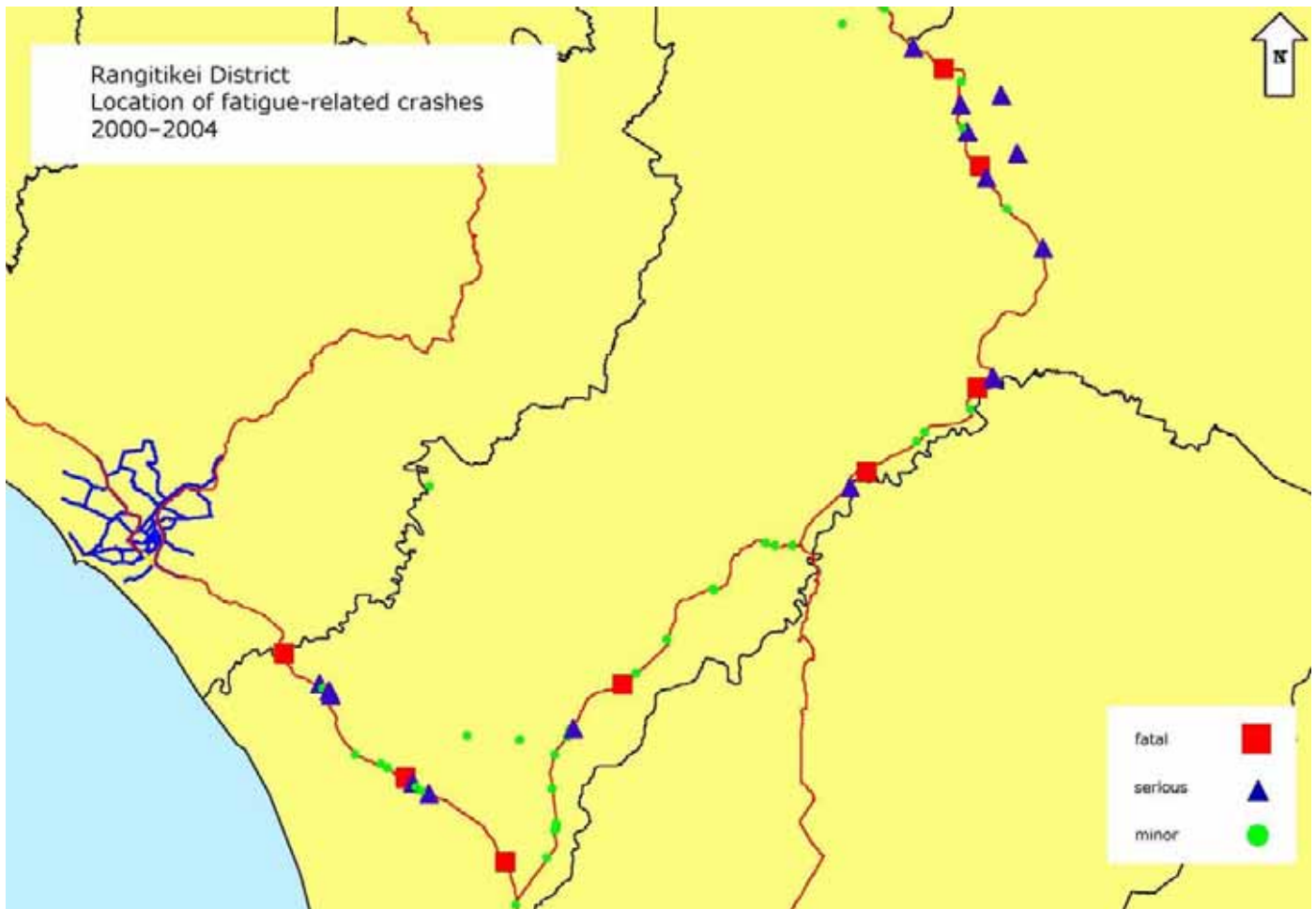
Ninety percent of fatigue-related crashes were on state highways, of which 71 percent occurred on SH 1 and 29 percent on SH 3.

Eighty-five percent of injury crashes involved cars or vans and 12 percent involved trucks. Forty percent of drivers involved in fatigue-related injury crashes were female.

Fatigue-related crashes by time period 2000-2004



The body clock is programmed to make us feel sleepy in the early hours of the morning and during the mid-afternoon. Between 2000 and 2004 in the Rangitikei District, the numbers of crashes were highest at these times. Twenty-seven percent of injury crashes occurred between midday and 4 pm while 27 percent occurred between 4 am and 8 am. In all, 47 percent of crashes occurred during the hours of darkness.



Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash and the greater the risk of injury or death. Excessive speed was a factor in 63 crashes in the Rangitikei District between 2000 and 2004. This comprised 22 percent of injury crashes in the district.

Alcohol

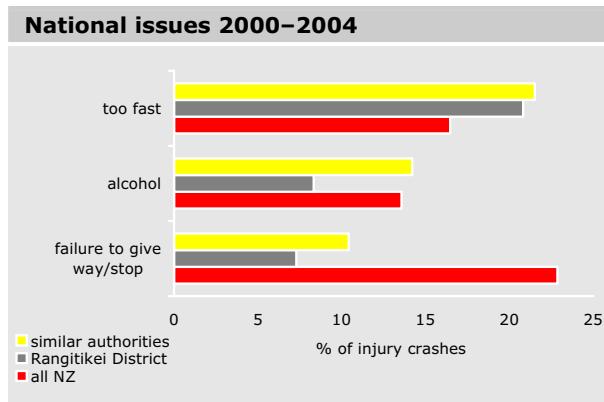
Drivers with a blood alcohol level over the legal limit (80 mg per 100 ml) are three times more likely to be involved in a crash than a sober driver.

Between 2000 and 2004, alcohol was a factor in 25 injury crashes in the Rangitikei District and accounted for nine percent of all injury crashes. Seventy-six percent of these crashes occurred in a rural environment.

Failure to give way

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

Twenty-three injury crashes in the Rangitikei District between 2000 and 2004 involved a vehicle failing to give way. This accounted for eight percent of all 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 Rangitikei District the seatbelt wearing rate was 94 percent. Potentially, one fatality could have been prevented had a seatbelt been worn at the time of the crash.

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