

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 2001–2005 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues in the Rangitikei District.

The number of injury crashes in the Rangitikei District increased from 43 in 2004 to 58 in 2005. The number of people injured in road crashes increased from 70 in 2004 to 123 in 2005. A significant part of this increase in casualties relates to a crash in 2005 involving two school buses, which resulted in one serious and 34 minor casualties.

Between 2001 and 2005, car occupants made up 80 percent of all road user casualties. Heavy vehicle occupants made up 13 percent of casualties. Eighty-nine percent of casualties were in rural areas.

Between 2001 and 2005, 68 percent of injury crashes involved drivers losing control of their vehicles, resulting in 19 fatal crashes. Twenty-two percent of injury crashes involved fatigue.

In 2005, the estimated social cost of crashes in the Rangitikei District was \$32 million.

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

Major road safety issues

Rangitikei District

Loss of control

Trucks

Fatigue

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2005 road trauma for Rangitikei District



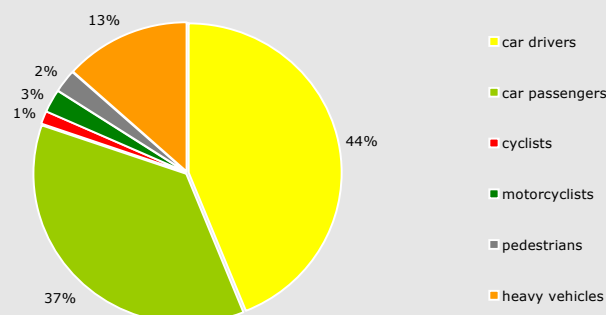
Deaths	4
Serious casualties	30
Minor casualties	89



Fatal crashes	3
Serious injury crashes	22
Minor injury crashes	33
Non-injury crashes	115

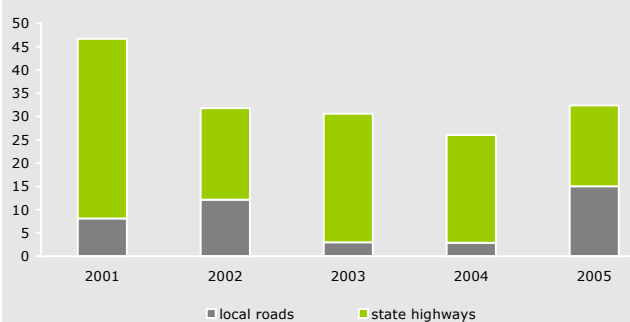
Road casualties 2001–2005

User type 2001–2005



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)

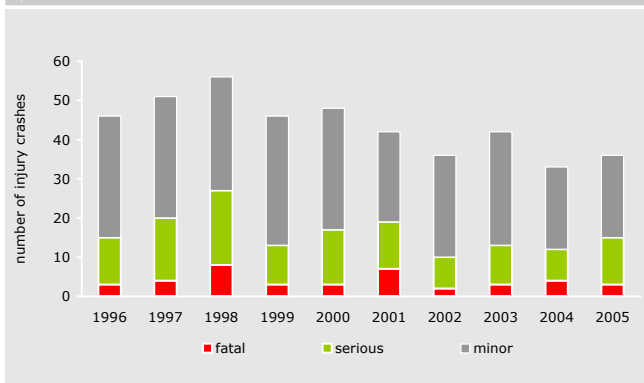


* The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2005 prices.

Loss of control

The most common type of crash in the Rangitikei District between 2001 and 2005 involved a driver losing control of their vehicle, either on a bend or on a straight section of road. Sixty-three percent of all crashes and 68 percent of injury crashes involved loss of control. Between 2001 and 2005, 30 of the 37 deaths in the Rangitikei District involved a driver losing control of their vehicle. There were also 74 serious and 217 minor casualties during this period resulting from a driver losing control of their vehicle.

Loss of control injury crashes by severity 1996-2005

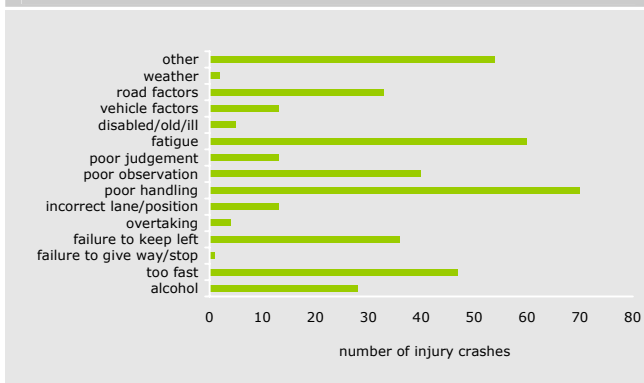


Ninety-four percent of loss of control injury crashes were in rural areas and 69 percent occurred on a bend compared with 31 percent on straight sections of road.

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 Rangitikei District were fences, ditches, banks, posts/poles and trees.

Between 2001 and 2005, fatigue, travelling too fast for the conditions, alcohol, poor handling, poor observation and failure to give way or stop were the main contributory factors in loss of control injury crashes.

Factors in loss of control injury crashes 2001-2005



Between 2001 and 2005, young drivers aged 15-24 years were involved in 39 percent of loss of control injury crashes. Sixty-five percent of drivers were male.

Trucks

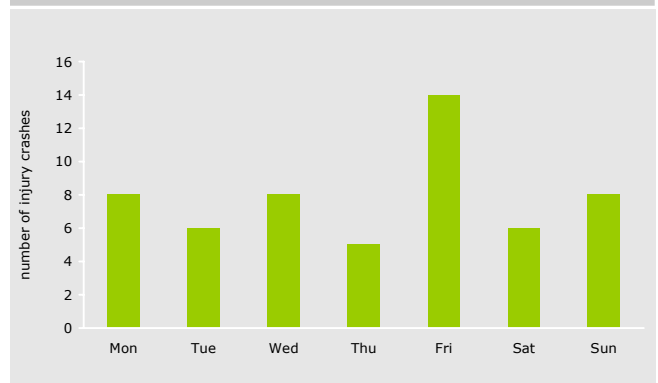
Seventeen percent of injury crashes in the Rangitikei District between 2001 and 2005 involved a truck.

The 48 injury crashes involving trucks resulted in seven deaths, 18 serious injuries and 50 minor injuries. There were an additional 86 non-injury crashes involving trucks during this period.

Eighty percent of all crashes involving trucks and 85 percent of injury crashes involving trucks occurred on the state highway network. Eighty percent of these crashes occurred on SH 1 and 20 percent on SH 3.

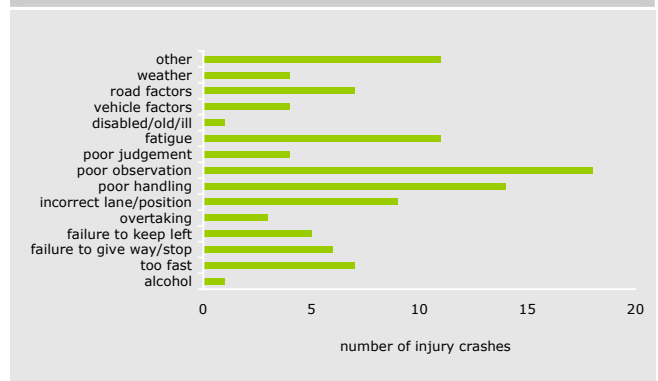
Seventy-nine percent of injury crashes involving trucks occurred at a mid-block location away from an intersection, 42 percent occurred during the hours of darkness, and 19 percent occurred on a wet road. Twenty-nine percent of injury crashes involving trucks occurred on a Friday; nearly twice as many as any other day of the week.

Injury crashes involving trucks by day of week 2001-2005



The main contributing factors in injury crashes involving trucks in the Rangitikei District between 2001 and 2005 were poor observation, poor handling, fatigue, speed too fast for the conditions and incorrect lane/position.

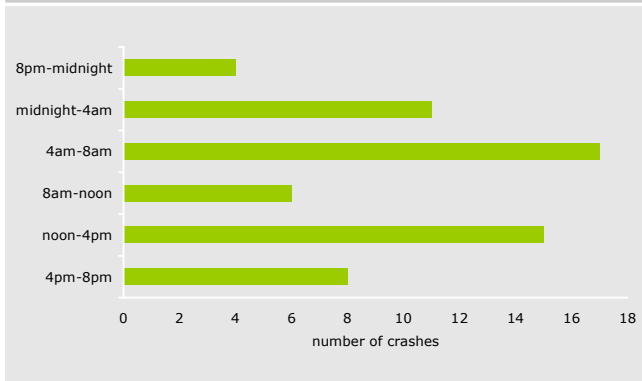
Factors in injury crashes involving trucks 2001-2005



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 effects and presence of driver fatigue is subjective as drivers are often unaware they have lost concentration or are unwilling to admit it. It is generally under-reported in crash statistics. Fatigue, however, was still recorded as a contributing factor in 22 percent of injury crashes in the Rangitikei District between 2001 and 2005. This proportion of crashes is significantly higher than all of New Zealand (six percent) and similar local authorities (11 percent).

Fatigue related injury crashes by time of day 2001-2005



The 61 injury crashes involving fatigue between 2001 and 2005 resulted in nine deaths, 25 serious injuries and 80 minor injuries.

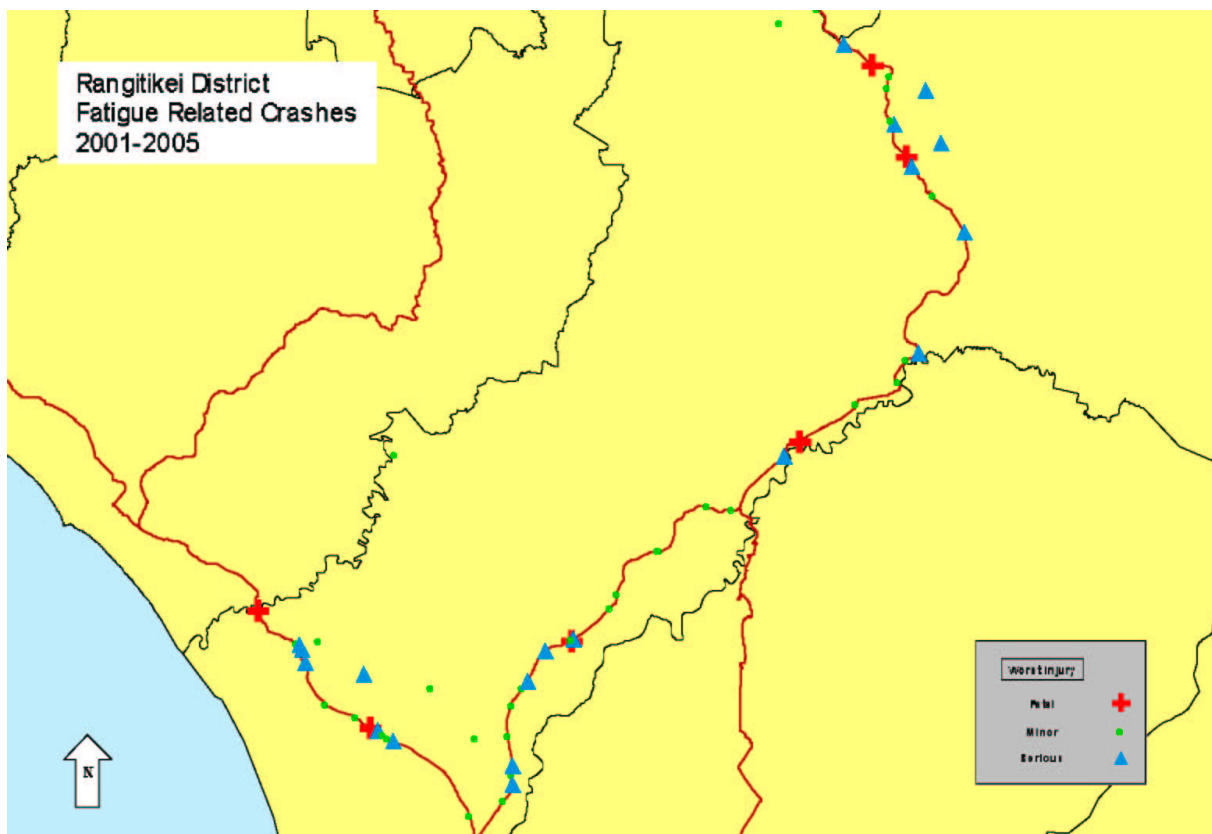
Seventy-four (65 percent) of the casualties in fatigue-related crashes were car passengers, 28 were occupants of a van/SUV and 10 were occupants of a truck.

Eighty-five percent of fatigue-related injury crashes between 2001 and 2005 occurred on the state highway network; 77 percent of these were on SH 1 and 23 percent were on SH 3.

Alcohol was a contributing factor in 15 percent of fatigue-related injury crashes between 2001 and 2005, while failure to keep left and incorrect lane/position contributed to 21 percent of crashes.

The body clock is programmed to make us feel sleepy in the early hours of the morning and during the mid-afternoon. Between 2001 and 2005 in the Rangitikei District, the number of crashes involving fatigue were highest at these times. Twenty-eight percent of injury crashes occurred between 4 am and 8 am while 25 percent occurred between midday and 4 pm.

Forty-eight percent of fatigue-related injury crashes occurred during the hours of darkness and half were on a weekend.



National issues

Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash and the greater the risk of serious injury or death.

During this period, speed too fast for the conditions was a factor in 19 percent of injury crashes in the Rangitikei District, which is higher than for all roads in New Zealand, and lower when compared to similar authorities.

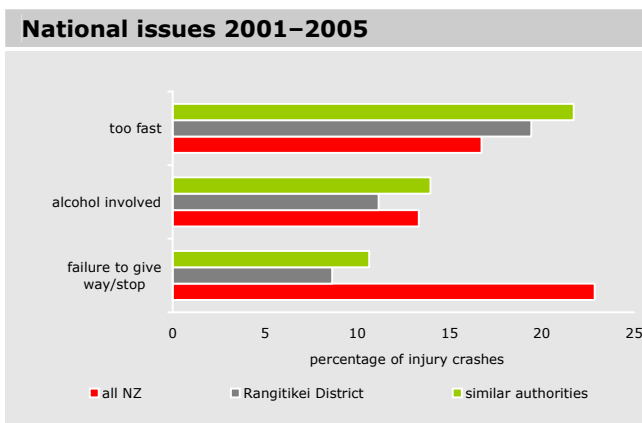
Alcohol

Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive. People that 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 2001 and 2005, alcohol was identified as a factor in 11 percent of crashes on roads in the Rangitikei District, which is lower compared with all of New Zealand and similar authorities.

Failure to give way

While most failure to give way crashes result in non-injury or minor injury crashes, many can have serious consequences. Nine percent of crashes on roads in the Rangitikei District between 2001 and 2005 involved drivers failing to give way.



Restraints

Wearing a safety belt reduces your chance of death or serious injury in a crash by 40 percent. Whether you sit in the front or the back seat, the risk of serious or fatal injury is virtually the same.

Results from the 2005 national restraint wearing survey showed that the national average of front seat safety belt wearing was 95 percent, compared to 91 percent for the Rangitikei District.

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