

# road safety issues

**T**he Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 1999–2003 period. The intent of the report is to highlight key road safety issues in the South Taranaki District.

Over the last four years there was a steady increase in the number of injury crashes in the district. In 2003, seven people were killed and 120 injured in crashes on roads in the South Taranaki District. Compared with the previous year, these crashes resulted in one additional fatality and two additional serious casualties and 11 minor casualties.

Between 1999 and 2003, occupants of cars and vans were the largest casualty group making up 81 percent of all road-user casualties. Road users in the 15 to 19 year age group represented over 21 percent of all injury-related casualties.

Between 1999 and 2003, 69 percent of all injury crashes in the district occurred on rural roads, particularly as a result of road users losing control of their vehicles. Thirty percent of all injury crashes took place at intersections. Compared with 2002, there was an increase in the number of alcohol-related crashes in the district with a nine percent increase in urban areas and a five percent increase in rural areas.

The estimated social cost of crashes in the South Taranaki District for 2003 was \$44.08 million, an increase of \$7.38 million on the previous year.

Both national and local road safety issues are identified below. The specific concerns for the South Taranaki District are considered in detail overleaf.

## Major road safety issues

### South Taranaki District

Intersections
Speed
Alcohol
Younger road users

### Nationally

Speed
Alcohol
Failure to give way
Restraints



## 2003 road trauma for South Taranaki District

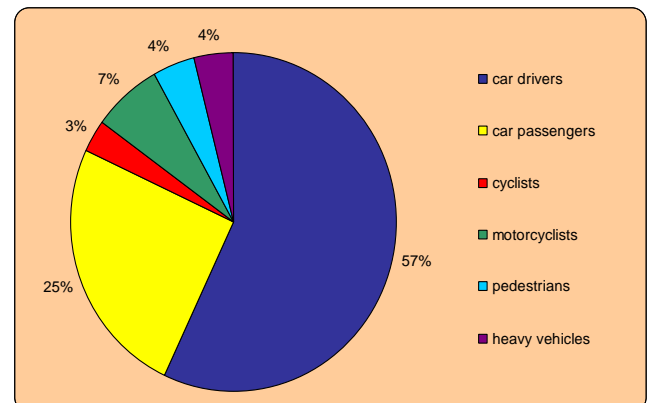
Deaths	7
Serious casualties	18
Minor casualties	102



Fatal crashes	7
Serious injury crashes	15
Minor injury crashes	65
Non-injury crashes	104

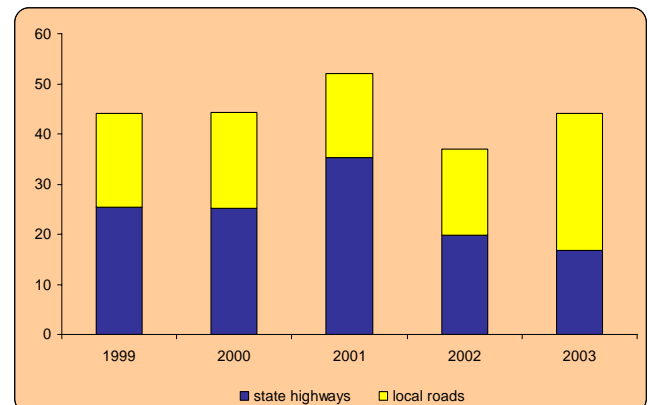
## Road casualties 1999–2003

### User type 1999–2003



## 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 2002 prices.

## Intersections

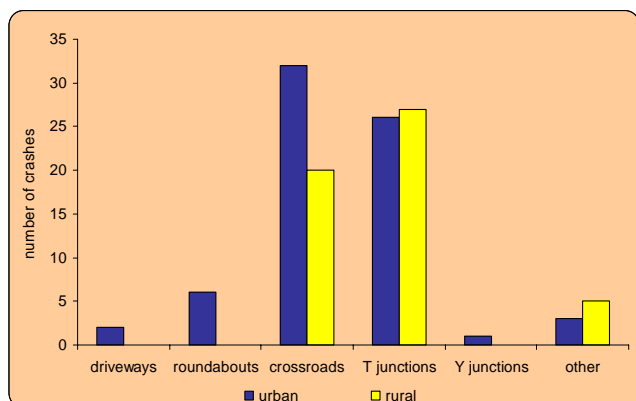
Failure to give way has been highlighted as one of the four major factors contributing to road crashes in New Zealand for 2003. In the South Taranaki District, failure to give way was also a major cause of concern.

Between 1999 and 2003, crashes at intersections made up 30 percent of all injury crashes.

In total, 60 intersection crashes were reported in 2003 in the South Taranaki District. Of these crashes, four resulted in serious injuries, 25 in minor injuries and 31 resulted in no injuries.

Of the 29 injury crashes, 65 percent took place on urban roads. This was a 35 percent increase on 2002. On rural roads, the proportion of injury crashes occurring at intersections remained fairly constant compared with the previous year.

### Crashes by intersection type 1999–2003



In 2003, 41 percent of injury crashes at intersections involved a collision between vehicles making a crossing or turning movement. Of all the injury-related intersection crashes, 52 percent were caused by poor observation and 41 percent by failure to give way or stop.

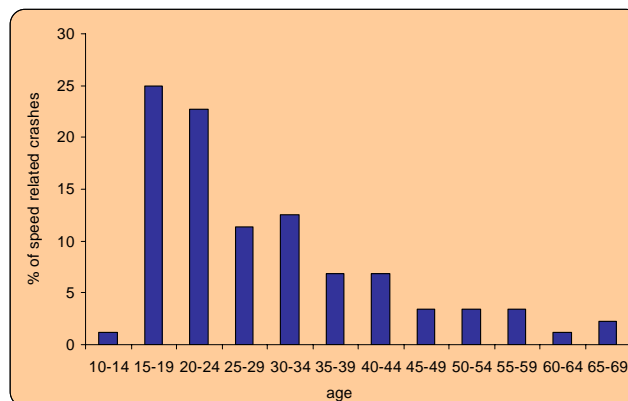
Due to the high number of injury crashes at intersections in the South Taranaki District, road users need to take extra care at intersections.

## Speed

Speed is one of the main contributing factors in crashes in the South Taranaki District as well as nationally. Vehicle speed is a major determinant of the outcome of a crash. Driving at excessive speed increases the likelihood of a crash and increases the severity of injuries sustained.

Of the 397 injury crashes in the South Taranaki District between 1999 and 2003, 96 were speed-related. Fourteen crashes were fatal, 28 serious and 54 resulted in minor injuries. One quarter of drivers involved in speed-related crashes were in the 15 to 19 year age group and 22 percent were in the 20 to 24 age group.

### Speed-related crashes by age 1999–2003



Between 1999 and 2003, 60 percent of all speed-related crashes took place on a bend in the road. This was due to drivers losing control of their vehicles as a result of either poor attention (15 percent), poor handling (35 percent), alcohol (31 percent) or a combination of all three. In 2003, there was a sharp increase in the number of loss of control crashes on bends compared with 2002. Over the last four years, loss of control crashes have shown a significant upward trend.

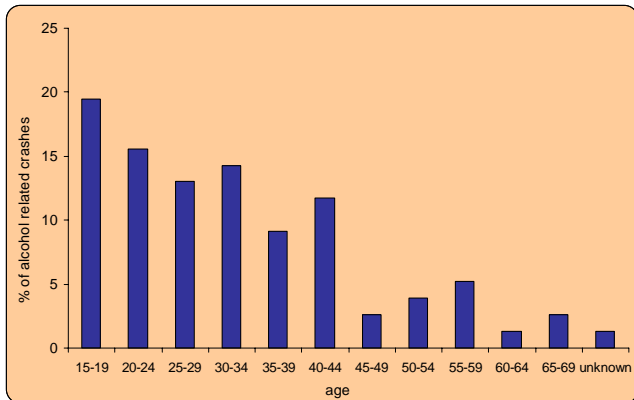
The percentage of urban crashes involving excessive speed has reduced from 22 percent in 2002 to seven percent in 2003. However, speed-related crashes on rural roads increased by 33 percent from 2002.



## Alcohol

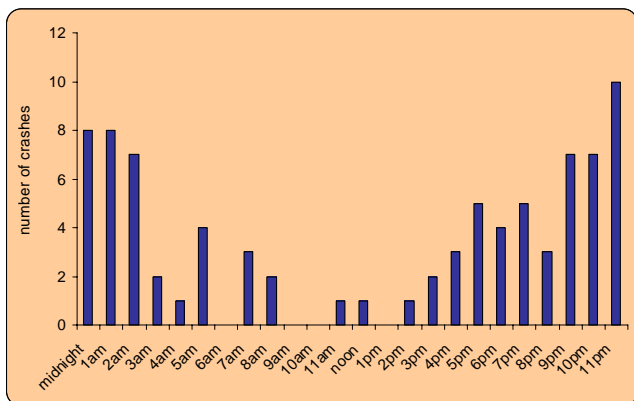
Between 1999 and 2003, 21 percent of all injury crashes involved alcohol as a factor. Sixty percent of alcohol-related crashes happened on bends where drivers lost control. Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive and accordingly, poor handling skills were reported as a factor in 35 percent of the alcohol-related injury crashes. Thirty-six percent of alcohol-affected drivers were driving too fast.

### Alcohol-related crashes by age 1999–2003



Over the last five years, alcohol-related crashes in the South Taranaki District were, on average, five percent higher than in similar local authorities and New Zealand as a whole. There was a significant increase in both urban and rural injury crashes where alcohol was involved. Seventy-eight percent of all alcohol-related crashes took place between 6 pm and 6 am.

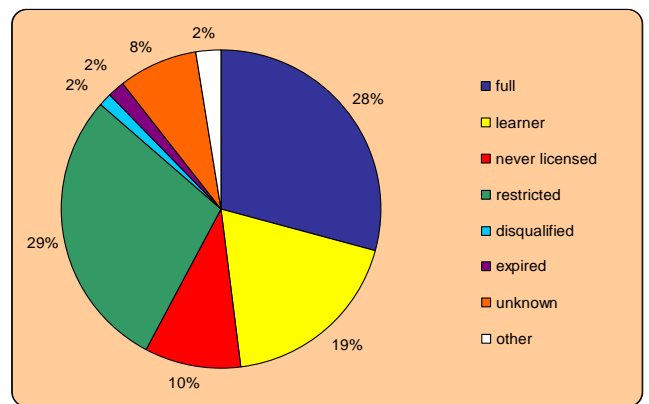
### Alcohol-related crashes by time of day 1999–2003



## Younger road users

Younger road users, especially those in the 15 to 19 year age group, have the highest casualty numbers in the district. This is not only applicable to the South Taranaki District, but to New Zealand as a whole. On average over the last five years, the proportion of casualties in this age group was higher than for both similar local authorities and for all of New Zealand. In addition, the proportion of female casualties in the 15 to 19 year age group was significantly higher than in similar local authorities and New Zealand as a whole.

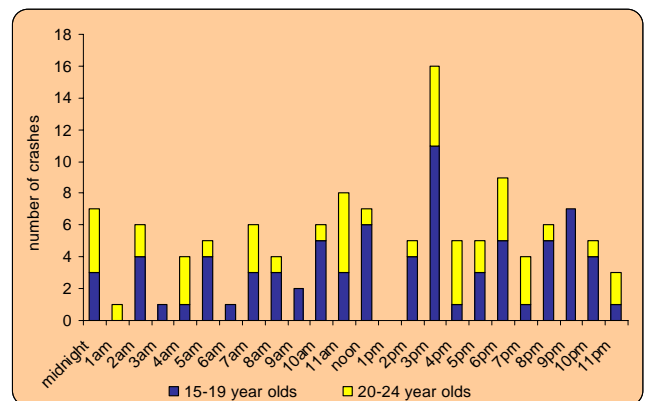
### Licence status of drivers aged 15 to 24 involved in crashes 1999–2003



In 2003, road users in the 15 to 24 year age group, were involved in 33 percent of crashes in the South Taranaki District. Male drivers in that age group made up 20 percent of all casualties and female drivers, 13 percent.

Inexperience was the most common factor in crashes involving young people, along with losing control of the vehicle as a result of poor handling, poor observation and driving too fast for the conditions.

### Time of crashes involving younger road users 1999–2003





## Contacts

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