

road safety issues

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

Road crashes in the Southland District over the five-year period have killed 52 people and injured nearly 800. There were more than 750 reported non-injury crashes during the same period.

After a significant increase in reported crashes in 2001, numbers have started to gradually fall. The number of urban injury crashes increased slightly to 20 in 2003. The majority of injury crashes occurred on rural roads where 154 were reported last year.

One measure used to gauge road safety performance is the number of crashes per 10,000 population. In the Southland District in 2003 the figure was 59, down from a high of 65 in 2001. Across all of New Zealand this figure was 27 and in a peer group of similar local authorities used for comparison, the figure was 39. This difference can be partly explained by the improved crash reporting rate in the Southern Police District.

The proportion of different road users injured over the last five years is shown to the right and is detailed overleaf.

Major road safety issues

Nationally

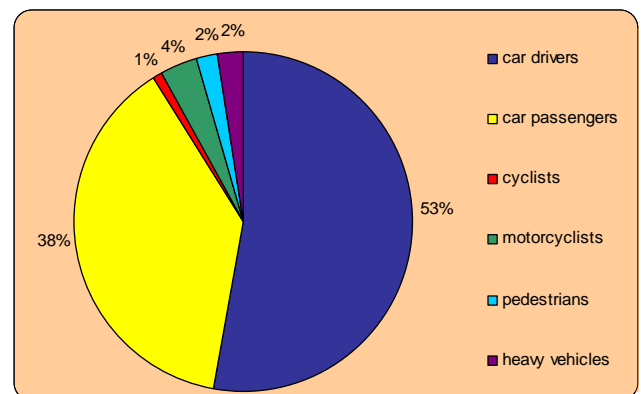
Speed
Alcohol
Failure to give way
Restraints

2003 road trauma for Southland District

Deaths	10
Serious casualties	67
Minor casualties	200
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Fatal crashes	8
Serious injury crashes	56
Minor injury crashes	110
Non-injury crashes	134

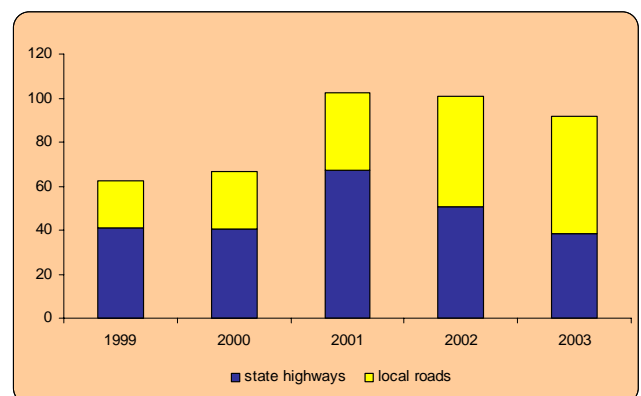
Road casualties 1999–2003

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.

Rural crashes

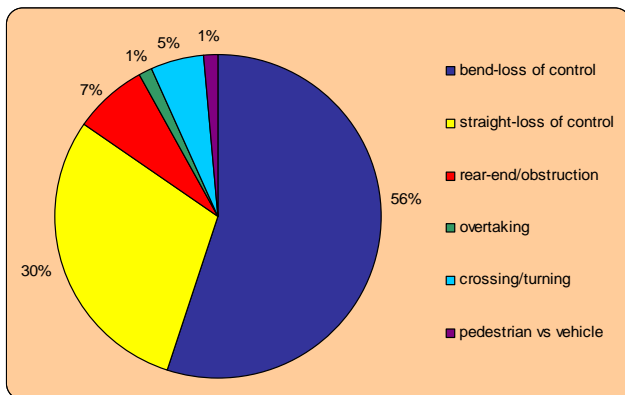
As in previous years, nine out of 10 injury crashes in the district occurred on the open road. In total nine people died, 64 received serious injuries and 178 people received minor injuries on rural roads in the Southland District last year.

Open road crashes are generally more severe due to the higher speeds involved. In the Southland District last year, a crash on the open road was twice as likely to result in a serious injury as in an urban area.

Three quarters of all rural crashes last year were single vehicles either losing control on a bend or leaving the road on a straight, with 74 and 41 injury crashes reported respectively.

Road conditions can and do play a part in loss of control type crashes. One quarter of all rural crashes last year took place on wet roads. Ice and/or snow was a factor in 11 crashes. July was the most common month for an injury crash in the district. The graph below shows the types of crashes that occurred on rural roads in 2003.

Rural crash movement 2003



Seventeen of the rural crashes last year involved alcohol which was slightly below the rate found elsewhere in the country. At just over 10 percent, this was the lowest rate of alcohol-related crashes in more than 10 years.

Speed involvement in crashes fell slightly last year. A quarter of rural crashes occurred when a vehicle was travelling too fast for the conditions.

Just over half the rural crashes occurred on the state highway network, with one third of those being on State Highway 94. The proportion of crashes on non-state highways has increased in each of the last four years. This can be partly explained by the increase in crashes on unsealed roads. In 2003 the number jumped to a new high of 24, accounting for over 15 percent of rural crashes.

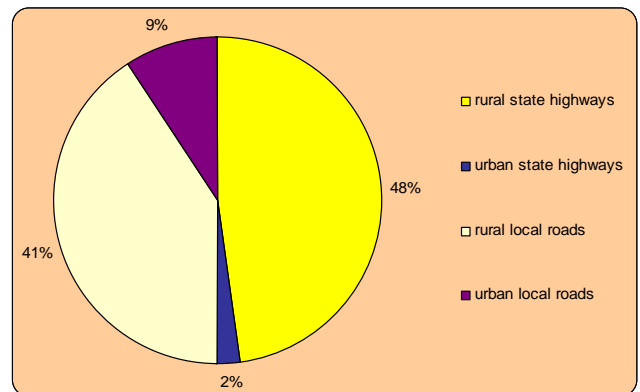
General

Close to 40 percent of injury crashes in urban areas of the Southland District in 2003 were alcohol-related. Although the numbers are relatively low, this was the highest total since 1995. The proportion of alcohol-related crashes had dropped each year since 1998, but this increase took it back to pre-2000 levels. In 2002 there were no alcohol-related crashes in urban areas.

Two pedestrians were injured on Southland roads in 2003, the lowest number since 1994. Both of these incidents occurred on rural roads in the early hours of a Sunday morning. One cyclist was injured last year.

Twenty percent of drivers involved in injury crashes on the open road last year held an overseas licence, an increase on previous years. Drivers from the UK were most commonly involved, followed by the USA and Australia. In urban areas of the district, less than half of the drivers involved in injury crashes held a full licence. Over 20 percent of drivers held either a learner or restricted licence.

Location of injury crashes 2003



The graph above shows the location of all injury crashes within the Southland District last year.

This report is a brief summary of crashes that took place in the Southland District in 2003. For more detailed information contact the LTSA at the address below.

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