



New Zealand Government

briefing notes - road safety issues

Whakatane District

New Zealand Transport Agency has prepared this eleventh road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2005-2009 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and be a resource to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in Whakatane District.

All the material unless otherwise stated in this report applies to both local roads and state highways. Local roads are all non state highway roads in Whakatane District.

In March the Government released Safer Journeys the road safety strategy for the next ten years. The two following pages contain a brief introduction to the strategy and a link to find more information.

The issues chosen for this report are drawn from either the most common crash types, those that appear over-represented when Whakatane District is compared to similar local bodies or those with high social cost (high numbers of fatal and serious crashes mainly).

We have included a brief overview of crashes in Whakatane District and we encourage safety engaged staff at Whakatane District Council to use their free access to the Ministry of Transport's Crash Analysis System (CAS) to delve deeper into the highlighted issues. All data and maps in this note are from CAS.

Major road safety issues

Whakatane District

Alcohol
Speed
Young drivers

2009 road trauma

Casualties

Whakatane District

Deaths	8
Serious casualties	21
Minor casualties	97

National priorities from Road Safety 2020— Safer Journeys

Speed
Alcohol / drugs
Young drivers
Roads and roadsides
Motorcyclists

Crashes

Whakatane District

Fatal crashes	7
Serious injury crashes	18
Minor injury crashes	62
Non-injury crashes	175

Safer Journeys

For the past decade road safety in New Zealand has been directed by the Road Safety 2010 strategy.

This strategy was introduced in 2003 and aimed to reduce deaths and casualties from road crashes.

In March 2010 the Government released a new strategy, "Safer Journeys", to build on the gains made under the Road Safety to 2010.

Under the new strategy, road safety will be looked at from a system wide approach rather than focusing so strongly on the road user.

The emphasis will be on improving all the parts of the road transport system that impact on safety; the road, the vehicle, travel speeds and the road user.

Under the 2020 strategy a number of priority areas have been chosen as the areas of focus.

These areas were assigned a priority, based on research that shows five major areas of concern, six areas of lesser concern, and two areas where continued focus is needed, or concern is emerging.

These divisions are shown in "Table 3" opposite. This table is a direct extract from page 12 of the Safer Journeys document which can be found at: <http://www.transport.govt.nz/saferjourneys/Documents/SaferJourneyStrategy.pdf>

To reflect the new strategy, changes to the wording and the way data is presented in these briefing notes to reflect and emphasise the connections to the new strategy. In particular, we have included more tables showing age distribution as problems with the safety of young drivers as a particular focus of Safer Journeys.

However, as these reports are based on crash data, particularly fatal and serious crashes, the actual "issues" identified by our analysis remain as before, fact based. It would be irresponsible of us to ignore an area of high social cost in a particular local body or region just because it wasn't a national priority.

We have prepared a table on the following page which shows the areas of "high concern" under Safer Journeys 2020 strategy.

This table allows some relative comparison of Safer Journeys priorities across the local bodies in the area covered by the Hamilton NZTA Office.

Table 3 – Safer Journeys' areas of concern and the Safe System

AREAS OF CONCERN WE WILL ADDRESS	WHERE WE WILL TAKE ACTION ACROSS THE SAFE SYSTEM			
	SAFE ROADS AND ROAD-SIDES	SAFE SPEEDS	SAFE VEHICLES	SAFE ROAD USE
Areas of high concern				
Reducing alcohol/drug impaired driving			✓	✓
Increasing the safety of young drivers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Safe roads and roadsides	✓			
Safe speeds	✓	✓	✓	
Increasing the safety of motorcycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
Areas of medium concern				
Improving the safety of the light vehicle fleet			✓	✓
Safe walking and cycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
Improving the safety of heavy vehicles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reducing the impact of fatigue	✓	✓	✓	✓
Addressing distraction	✓		✓	✓
Reducing the impact of high risk drivers		✓	✓	✓
Areas of continued and emerging focus				
Increasing the level of restraint use			✓	✓
Increasing the safety of older New Zealanders	✓	✓	✓	✓

For some priorities (eg motorcycling), complementary action will be taken across all four areas of the Safe System. For others (eg reducing the impact of drink driving or safe roads), more effort would be focussed on one or two of the four Safe System areas.

Table source: Ministry of Transport 2020 Safer Journeys

Status of the areas of “high concern” from Safer Journeys 2020 for the Bay of Plenty Region 2005-2009

(table below refers only to fatal and serious crashes on both local roads and state highways for the years 2005–2009 except for the “intersection” columns which also include minor crashes for reasons of sample size)

Safer Journeys area of concern	Reducing alcohol and drug impaired driving	Increase the safety of young drivers	Safer roads and roadsides			Safe speeds	Increasing the safety of motorcycling
			Percentage of fatal and serious crashes with an object struck	Number of urban intersections with three or more injury crashes in the last five years	Number of rural intersections with three or more injury crashes in the last five years		
Measure	Percentage of fatal and serious crashes with this factor	Percentage of fatal and serious crashes with at fault drivers aged 24 years or less	Percentage of fatal and serious crashes with an object struck	Number of urban intersections with three or more injury crashes in the last five years	Number of rural intersections with three or more injury crashes in the last five years	Percentage of fatal and serious crashes where speed was a factor	Percentage of fatal and serious crashes involving a motorcyclist
Western BOP District	32	31	48	1*	9	25	15*
Tauranga City	25	28	29	36	1*	20	26
Rotorua District	27	31	42	24	4	33	14
Whakatane District	32	36	49	2	3	32	17*
Opotiki District	37*	37*	68	0**	0***	41*	19**
Kawerau District	56***	56***	89***	0***	0****	33***	22***
BOP Region	29	32	43	63	16	28	18
New Zealand	23	34	45	1938	320	23	18

Note:

- * Sample size of 30 crashes or less
- ** Sample size of 20 crashes or less
- *** Sample size of 10 crashes or less
- **** No crashes in sample

Whakatane District overview

In 2009 on local roads in Whakatane District there were 56 injury crashes and 119 non-injury crashes. In addition on state highways in Whakatane District there were 31 injury crashes and 56 non-injury crashes. The tables below show the number of injuries resulting from the 87 injury crashes by rural or urban areas for local roads and state highways (rural is defined as an area with a speed limit of 80km/h or more).

Casualties by urban / rural 2009				
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Rural	6	12	67	85
Urban	2	9	30	41
Total	8	21	97	126

Casualties by state highway / local road 2009				
	Fatalities	Serious injuries	Minor injuries	Total
Local road	4	12	58	74
State highway	4	9	39	52
Total	8	21	97	126

Crash trends in Whakatane District				
Year	Fatal crashes	Serious crashes	Minor crashes	Total crashes
2000	6	9	28	43
2001	6	17	34	57
2002	10	18	59	87
2003	7	18	57	82
2004	5	23	59	87
2005	7	24	55	86
2006	7	19	53	79
2007	9	27	62	98
2008	6	25	67	98
2009	7	18	62	87

Crash characteristics (all roads)		
Crash type or contributory cause 2005 to 2009	Percentage fatal and serious crashes of this type or contributory cause	Percentage all injury crashes of this type or contributory cause
Alcohol	32	20
Speed	32	26
Younger drivers	44	40
Bends	40	45
Poor handling	26	30

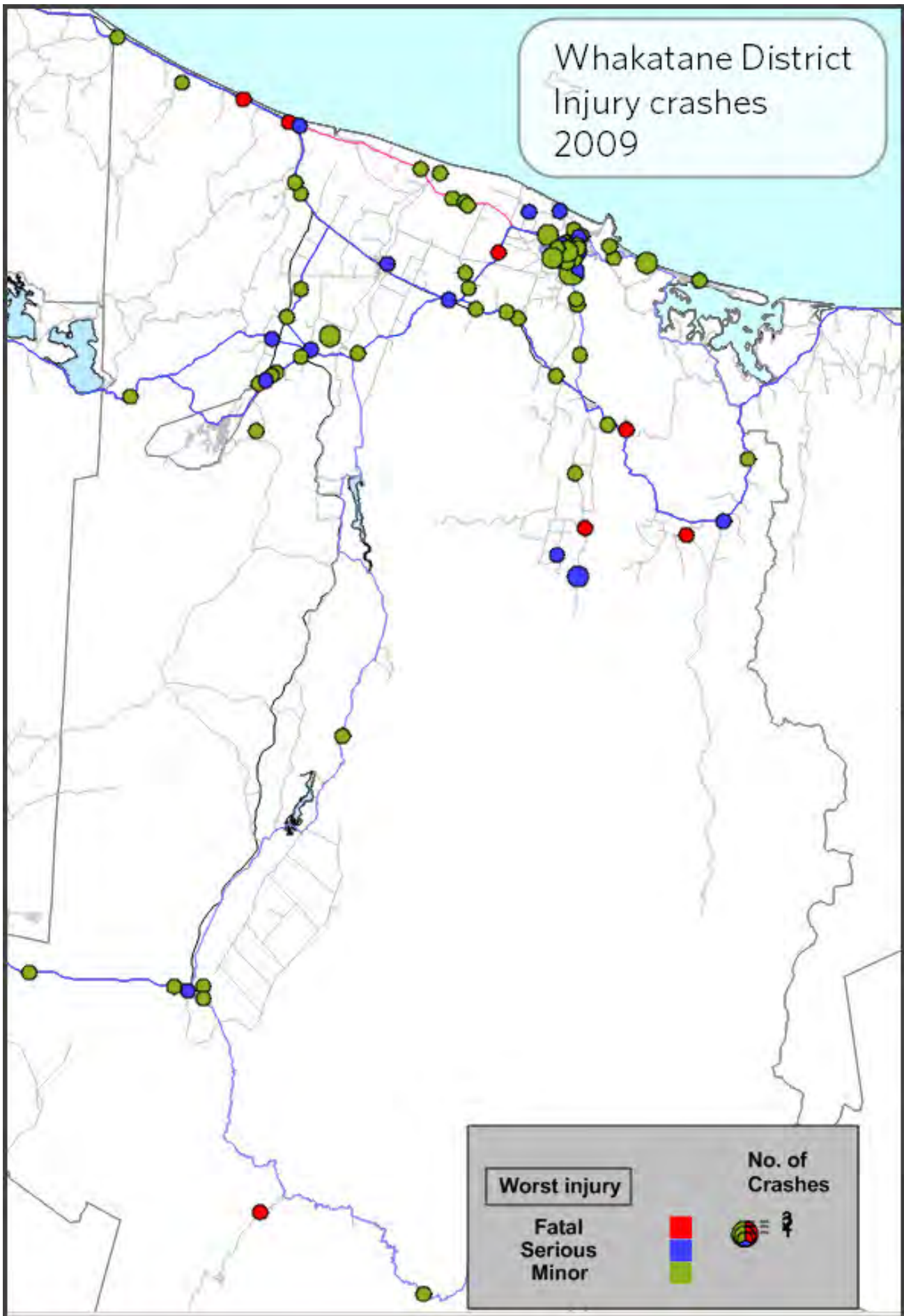
Further information about the 284 injury and 560 non-injury crashes on **local roads** in Whakatane District 2005 to 2009:

- 21 deaths, 85 serious and 328 minor injuries
- Worst month December, best March
- Worst day Friday, best Tuesday
- 23 percent on wet roads
- 32 percent at night
- 29 percent at intersections
- 574 roadside objects struck *
- Most represented five year age group in 'at fault' drivers in injury crashes: 15 to 19 years (25 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$32m

Further information about the 164 injury and 232 non-injury crashes on **state highways** in Whakatane District 2005 to 2009:

- 18 deaths, 64 serious and 179 minor injuries
- Worst month May, best January, July and August (equal)
- Worst day Tuesday, best Thursday
- 24 percent on wet roads
- 36 percent at night
- 26 percent at intersections
- 315 roadside objects struck *
- Most represented five year age group in 'at fault' drivers in injury crashes: 15 to 19 years (17 percent of at fault drivers)
- Social cost of crashes in 2009 \$28m

* It needs to be noted that if a vehicle hits the same type of object more than once it is only counted in CAS once.



Alcohol

Alcohol affects the way people drive. Studies show that the risk of being involved in a crash increases rapidly as a driver's blood alcohol level rises.

A driver over the legal limit (80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood) is 16 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than a sober driver.

In Whakatane District, alcohol was a factor in 32 percent of fatal and serious crashes and 20 percent of injury crashes.

Number of alcohol related injury crashes			
Crash year	Open road	Urban road	Total
2005	20	5	25
2006	9	2	11
2007	12	7	19
2008	13	4	17
2009	11	8	19
Total	65	26	91

(Open road is classified as any area with a speed limit of 80km/hr or more)

Age group of at fault drivers in alcohol related injury crashes 2005 to 2009 and 25 years ago (prior to lowering the drinking age)		
Age group	Percentage drivers in this age band 2005 to 2009	Percentage drivers in this age band 1980 to 1984
15-19	24	23
20-24	16	33
25-29	7	15
30-34	23	9
35-39	8	8
40-44	10	3
45-49	4	3
50-54	2	3
55-59	2	2
60-64	3	0
65-69	1	1
70-74	0	0
75+	0	0

It is interesting to note the changing age patterns of those choosing to drink and crash.

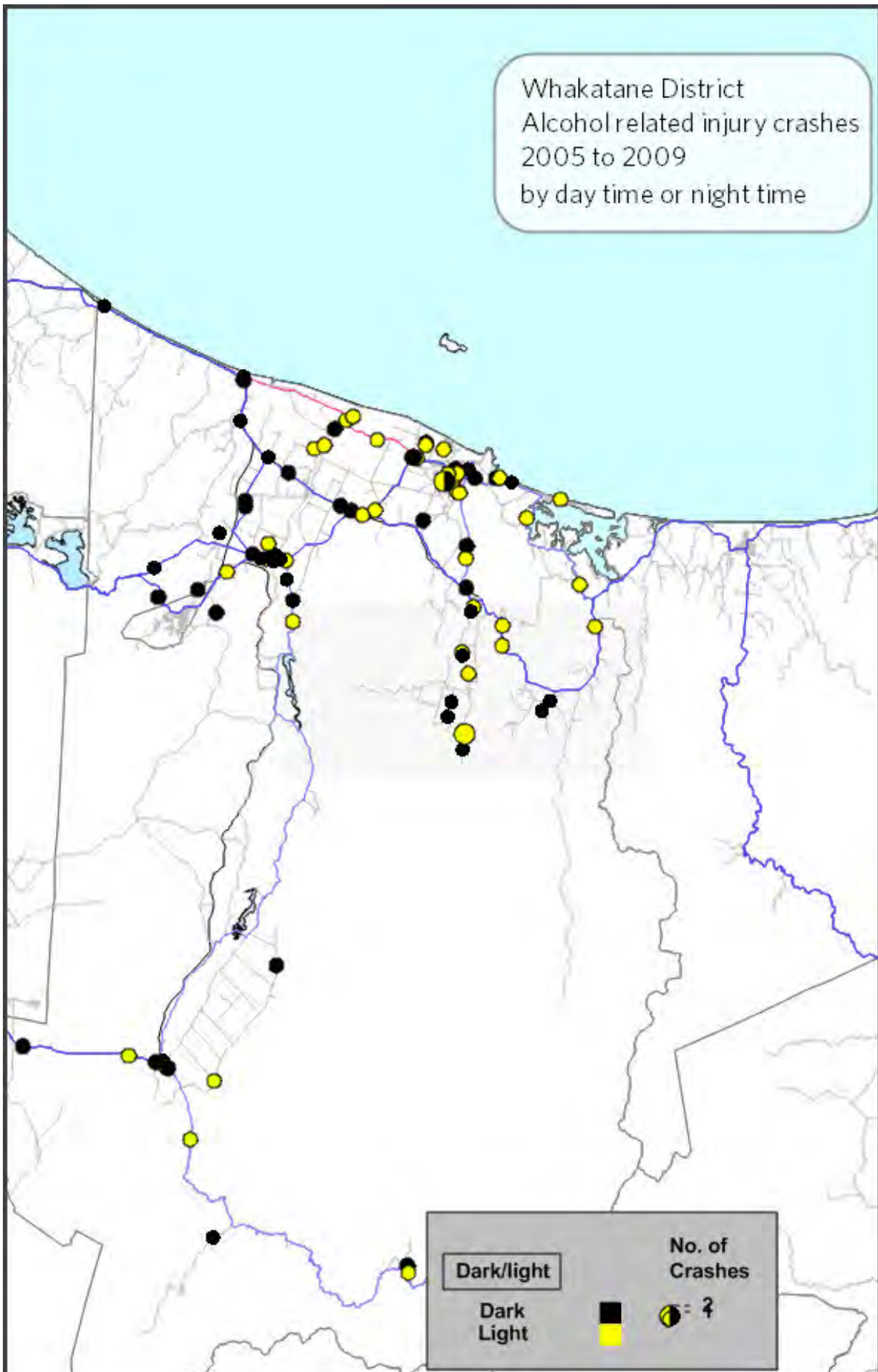
In Whakatane District, for 15 to 19 year old at fault drivers, levels have been steady when compared now (2005-2009) to 25 years ago (1980-1984). For 20 to 24 year old at fault drivers, levels compared now have been halved compared to 25 years ago. However, there has been a significant rise of more than two times the levels of 25 years ago in the 30 to 34 year old age group and more than three times for the 40 to 44 year old age group as well. This could be attributed to a changing shift or a broadening of age spread, or if not, a developing concern.

Further information about the 61 alcohol related injury crashes on **local roads** in Whakatane District 2005 to 2009:

- 10 deaths, 31 serious and 57 minor injuries
- 79 percent of at fault drivers were male
- Most common crash type " lost control turning right" (22 crashes)
- 18 percent at intersections
- 52 percent night time
- Worst three hour time period, 9pm to midnight
- Worst month November, best May and June (equal)
- Worst day Saturday, best Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday (equal)
- Number of roadside objects struck, 76
- Most common object struck, fence

Further information about the 31 alcohol related injury crashes on **state highways** in Whakatane District 2005 to 2009:

- 4 deaths, 18 serious and 27 minor injuries
- 88 percent of at fault drivers were male
- 16 percent at intersections
- 65 percent night time
- Worst three hour time period, 9pm to midnight
- Worst month December, best May and July (equal)
- Worst day Friday, best Monday
- Number of roadside objects struck, 26
- Most common object struck , cliff or bank and fence (equal)



Speed

Nationally, speed is one of the major contributing factors to road crashes. Appropriate speeds are an important road safety goal for road safety strategy 2020 as it was for 2010.

Excessive speed increases the likelihood of a crash occurring by reducing the time available for drivers to respond to situations and it leads to more serious injuries.

Between 2005 and 2009, 26 percent of injury crashes in Whakatane District involved travelling too fast for the conditions.

Speed related injury crashes					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Rural	13	21	23	19	18
Urban	5	3	4	3	10
Total	18	24	27	22	28

The other main causes contributing to speed related crashes were:

- Handling errors
- Alcohol
- General errors of judgement

Speed related crashes in CAS are not necessarily crashes where the driver was exceeding the posted speed limit (although that may also be the case) but are crashes where in the opinion of the reporting Police Officer the driver was travelling too fast for the prevailing conditions.

Certainly getting the message through that the posted speed limit is a maximum, but not necessarily a safe speed for every bend, crest, dip or isolated development (or driver) is the key to lowering the injury rate.

Local authorities and highway managers can do their part by ensuring speed limits, including temporary speed limits at road work sites are appropriate, comply with the Speed Limits Rule and are adequately signposted. When inappropriate speed limits are used there is a poor level of speed compliance by motorists and require a higher level of police enforcement.

Age group and gender of at fault drivers in speed related injury crashes 2005 to 2009

* note age ranges are not equal

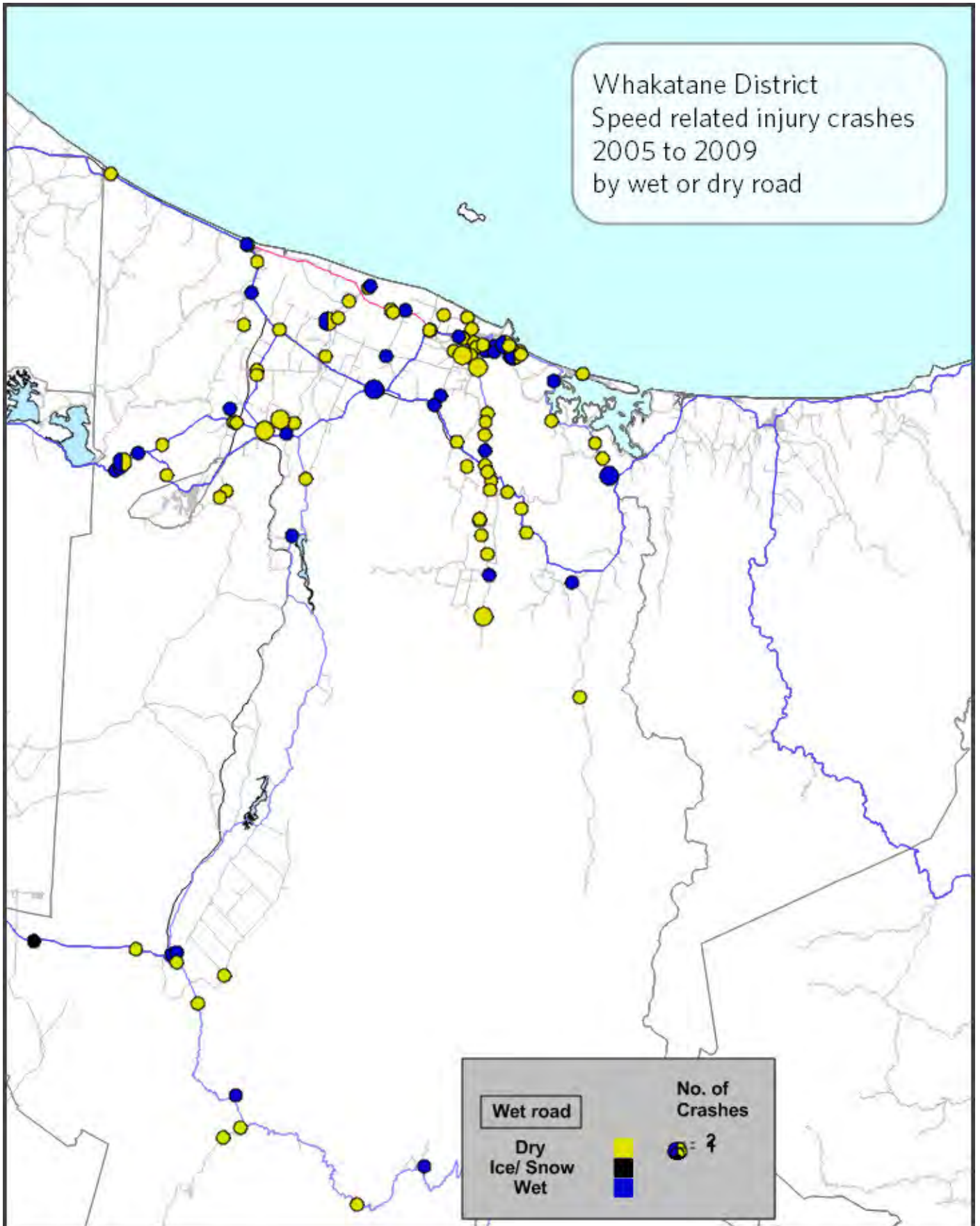
Drivers age	Male	Female	Total
15-19 years *	27	10	37
20 - 24	17	6	23
25 - 29	10	3	13
30 - 39	18	4	22
40 - 49	10	3	13
50 - 59	5	0	5
60 - 69	0	1	1
70+	1	1	2
Total	88	28	116

Further information about the 82 speed related injury crashes on **local roads** in Whakatane District 2005 to 2009:

- 7 deaths, 33 serious and 98 minor injuries
- Most common crash type "lost control turning right" (39 crashes)
- 32 percent wet road
- 39 percent night time
- 41 percent include alcohol as a factor
- Worst day Saturday, best Tuesday
- Worst three hour time period, 6pm to 9pm

Further information about the 37 speed related injury crashes on **state highways** in Whakatane District 2005 to 2009:

- 9 deaths, 22 serious and 36 minor injuries
- Most common crash type "lost control turning right" (11 crashes)
- 27 percent wet road
- 51 percent night time
- 27 percent include alcohol as a factor
- Worst day Friday and Sunday (equal), best Monday and Saturday (equal)
- Worst three hour time period midday to 3pm and 9pm to midnight (equal)



Young drivers

Young drivers are those aged less than 25 years.

In Whakatane District between 2005 and 2009, 40 percent of injury crashes involved young drivers.

The total number of injury crashes involving young drivers reduced in 2008 from the high of 47 in 2006. There is no obvious trend in the annual number of crashes involving young drivers.

Casualties from crashes involving young drivers Whakatane District				
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total
2005	3	12	41	56
2006	3	14	45	62
2007	5	25	57	87
2008	4	9	36	49
2009	2	14	41	57
Total	17	74	220	311

For the year 2009, this was lowest number of recorded fatalities for the past five years. Both serious and minor casualties were about average for the same period. More than half of the 189 young drivers in these crashes had a learner or restricted licence. Nearly two thirds of them were males and 42 percent were 15-19 year olds. 118 drivers were under 20 years old.

Young drivers at fault in injury crashes Whakatane District 2005 - 2009			
Licence type	Female	Male	Total
Full	16	38	54
Learner	12	22	34
Restricted	19	31	50
Never licensed	9	12	21
Disqualified	1	2	3
Overseas	0	2	2
Expired	0	1	1
Other (unknown, wrong class)	2	11	13
Total	59	119	178

Injury crashes involving young drivers Whakatane District 2005 - 2009 (percentage of injury crashes)

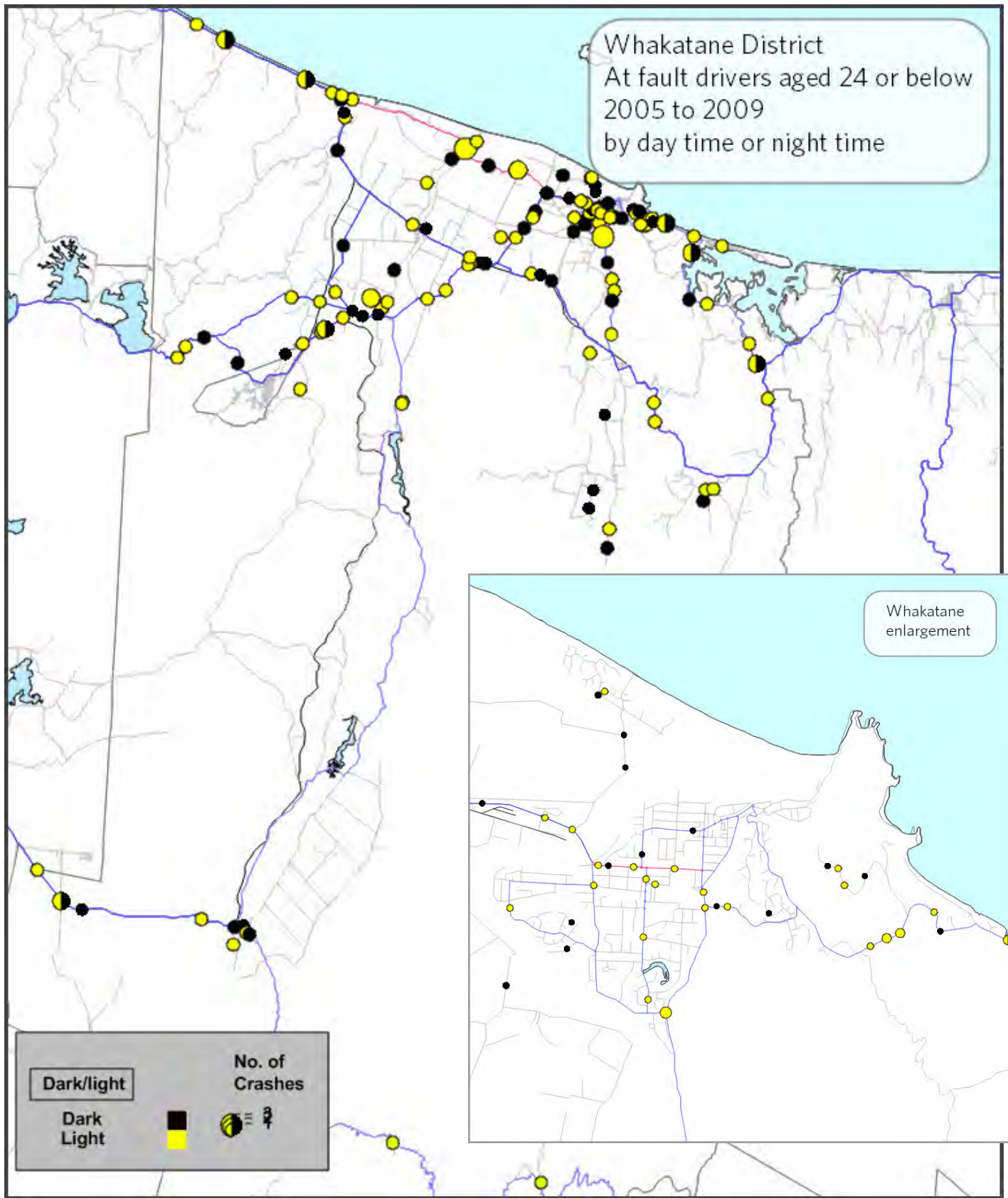
Crash type or contributory cause	Urban roads	Rural roads
Alcohol	15	25
Speed	14	47
Failed to stop/Give way	12	15
Poor handling	10	51
Poor observation	22	25
Lost control/Head on - straight road	8	18
Lost control/Head on - bend	18	67
Rear end / obstruction	11	13
Crossing / turning	11	13

Further information about the 115 injury crashes involving young drivers on **local roads** in Whakatane District 2005 to 2009:

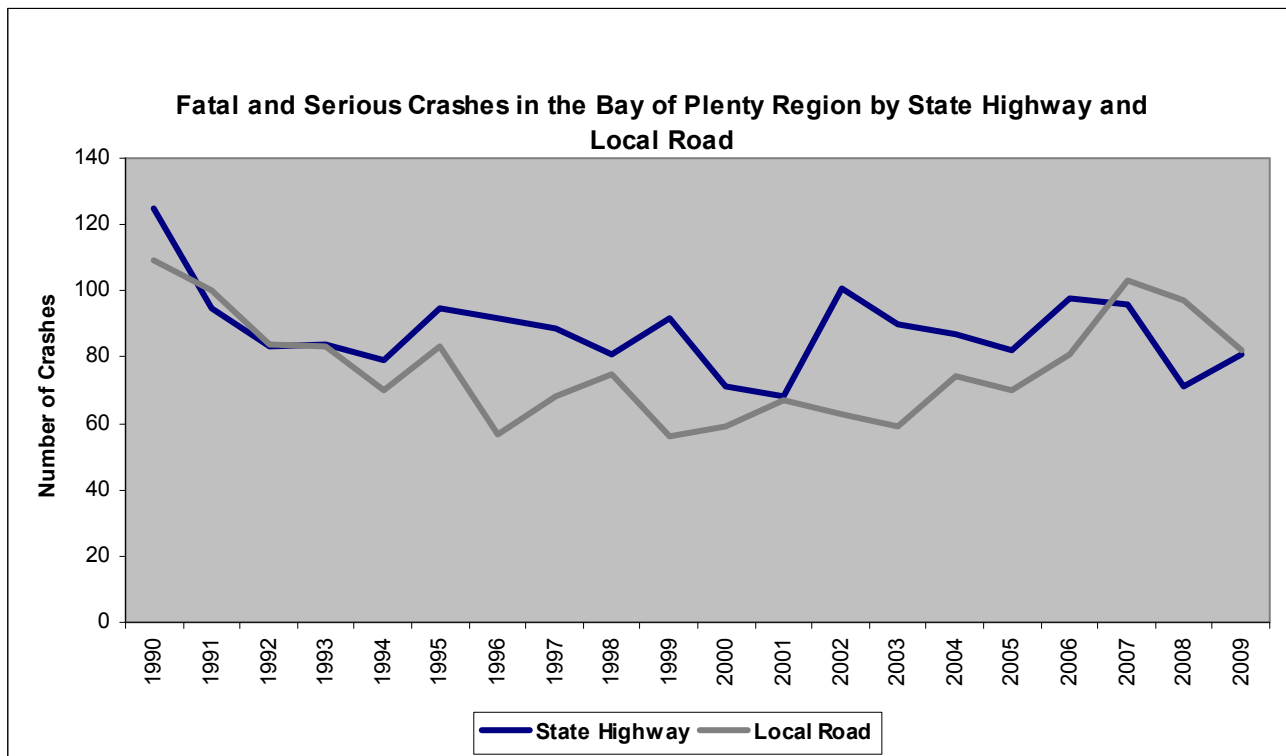
- 11 deaths, 44 serious and 145 minor injuries
- 58 percent were single vehicle crashes
- 43 percent were on urban roads
- 23 percent at intersections
- 36 percent at night
- 24 percent wet or icy roads
- Worst month December, best November
- Worst day of week Thursday and Saturday (equal)
- Worst time 3pm to 6pm

Further information about the 64 injury crashes involving young drivers on **state highways** in Whakatane District 2005 to 2009:

- 6 deaths, 30 serious and 75 minor injuries
- 55 percent were single vehicle crashes
- 9 percent were on urban roads
- 22 percent at intersections
- 42 percent at night
- 25 percent on wet or icy roads
- Worst month December, best July
- Worst day of week Saturday, best Monday
- Worst time 3pm to 6pm



Looking back—the last two decades ...



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