

road safety issues

July 2002

The Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) has prepared this Road Safety Issues Report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 1997–2001 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues and to identify possible ways to reduce the number of road deaths and injuries in the Kapiti Coast district.

In 2001, reported crashes incurring injuries in the Kapiti Coast district reduced to 61, which is the lowest figure in the last 10 years. Urban crashes increased by three to 34, while rural crashes reduced by six to 27. On the district's local roads (that is, not state highways) the number of reported injury crashes fell by one to 25 which is also the lowest number in the last 10 years.

The number of people injured as a result of the crashes increased by one, to 97 in 2001. This included 10 deaths (an increase of three), 26 serious injuries (an increase of five) and 61 minor injuries (a reduction of seven).

Car and van drivers and passengers dominated the casualty statistics, representing three quarters of the casualties. However, only in urban areas did Kapiti Coast exceed similar authority levels.

Urban cyclists were the only other group of casualties that were over-represented in the statistics compared to similar authorities. This is as a proportion of all casualties.

Closer examination of the statistics suggests that there are problems in the areas of older road users, both as drivers and as pedestrians. Intersection collisions dominate the urban crash scene, but not significantly in relation to similar authorities.

In the rural zones, principally on the highways, the collisions at intersections, rear end/obstruction collisions and loss of control collisions on straight stretches were above similar authority levels. The proportion of crashes reported on Friday afternoon was significantly above similar authority levels.

Major road safety issues:

Kapiti Coast district

Older road users

Rear-end/obstructions

Intersections

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



2001 road toll for Kapiti Coast district



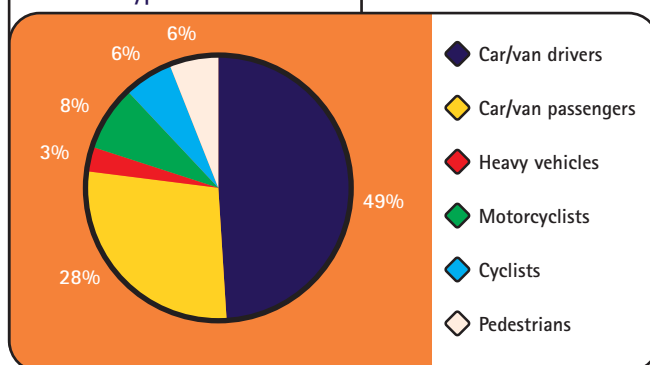
Deaths	10
Serious casualties	26
Minor casualties	61



Fatal crashes	8
Serious injury crashes	16
Minor injury crashes	37
Non-injury crashes	235

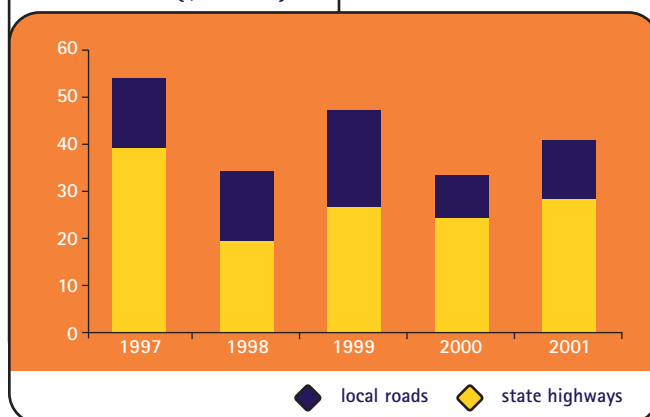
Road user casualties 1997–2001

User type 1997–2001



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)

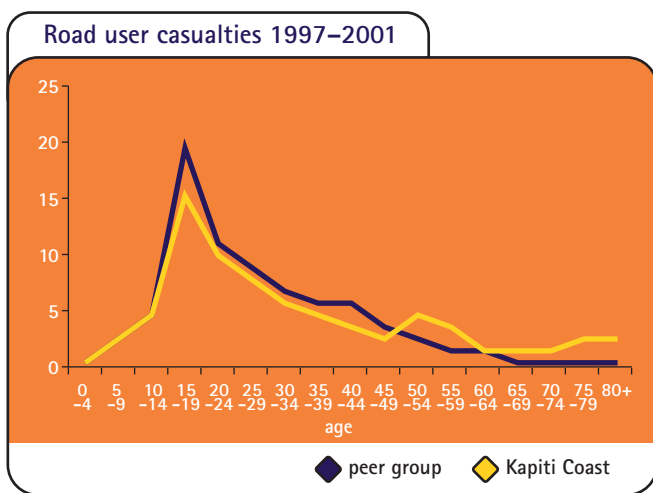


* The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2001 prices.

Older road users

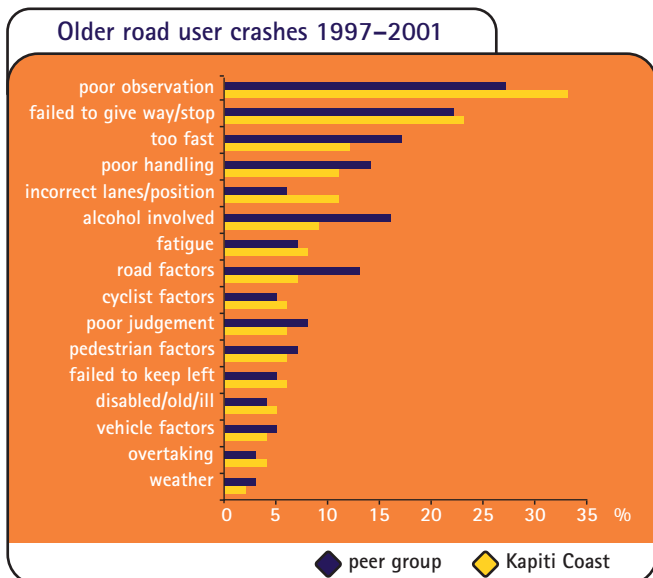
Kapiti Coast has for many years been a retirement area for the Wellington region. This has led to an increasing number of older road users in the district who may become casualties in crashes.

This has indeed been the case, as people aged 50 years and over represented almost 30 percent of the coast's casualties. In similar authorities, only 20 percent of the casualties are expected to be 50 years and over.



It is recognised that an increasing proportion of the population is in the older age group and that the ability of older people to cope with the roading environment reduces with age. Recovery from injury is also slower.

The reduction in ability can result in poor observation – usually failing to notice other traffic, misjudging speed leading to give way problems, poor positioning on the road and being easily fatigued. While the chart of contributing factors applies to all road users, the above elements are significant for the older road users.



Recommended actions

- Conduct education programmes that:
 - encourage drivers to focus and concentrate on the driving task
 - improve driving skills through programmes like Defensive Driving and Safe With Age
 - teach drivers to recognise hazardous road or weather conditions
 - target programmes to the age group of drivers featuring in crash statistics.
- Carry out enforcement programmes that:
 - support a high police presence when roads are likely to be very busy
 - support enforcement emphasising the need for drivers to concentrate
 - support enforcement of compliance with Give Way and Stop signs.
- Design engineering programmes that:
 - ensure drivers don't encounter 'surprises' in the road environment
 - simplify intersection layouts
 - use consistent and appropriate road markings and signs
 - provide good road shoulders and verges
 - review designs in relation to older users' abilities.

Rear-end/obstructions

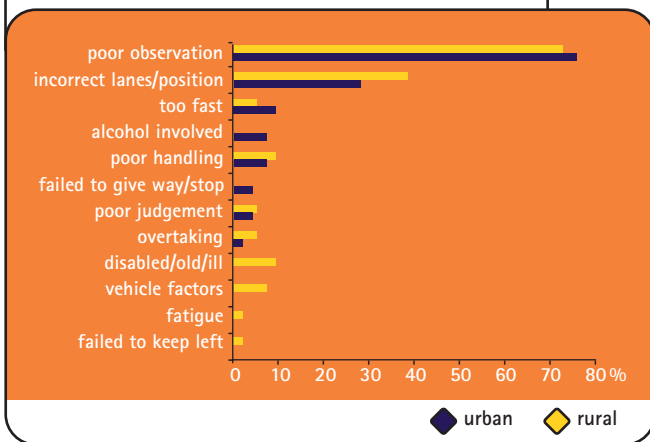
Rear-end collisions or hitting obstructions were the second most common crash type in Kapiti Coast district.

There were 89 of these crashes, representing about 24 percent of the crashes for the period 1997-2001. This crash type was above similar authority levels in both urban and rural situations – seriously so in rural (state highway) areas.

Factors in these crashes were principally poor observation of the traffic ahead associated with incorrect lane or position choices on the road.

The obstructions most often struck were trees, poles and fences.

Rear-end/obstruction factors 1997–2001



Recommended actions

- Conduct education programmes that assist drivers to:
 - be more aware of the risks of following too closely, particularly on arterial routes
 - understand the effects of inattention and fatigue
 - better position themselves according to the marked roadway.
- Carry out enforcement programmes that:
 - enforce safe following distances at high-risk times
 - enforce correct lane use.
- Design engineering programmes that:
 - provide good skid resistant road surfaces at intersections
 - provide good guidance as to positioning on the road
 - progressively improve sight lines
 - improve roadside clear zones.

These programmes should all take account of the aging population in the district.

Intersections

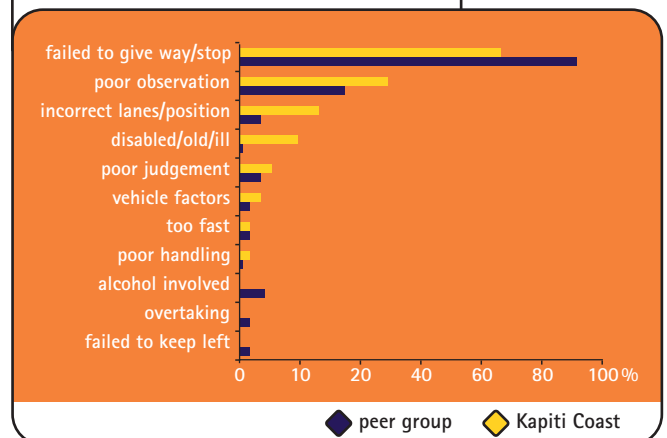
Collisions at intersections were the most frequent type of urban crash in the district, accounting for a third of injury crashes. In rural areas intersection crashes made up 17 percent of injury crashes.

This intersection crash level was above that of similar authorities in both urban and rural situations, and more so in rural areas.

The most frequent contributing factors to intersection crashes in urban areas were failing to give way (93 percent) and poor observation (29 percent), with minor contributions from alcohol, misjudgement and positioning on the road.

Similarly in rural areas, the most frequent contributing factors were failing to give way (72 percent), poor observation (41 percent) and incorrect positioning (22 percent). Travelling too fast for the conditions and misjudgement also contributed, but in 16 percent of rural crashes, age-related factors were indicated.

Intersection factors 1997–2001



Recommended actions

- Conduct education programmes that:
 - show drivers how to use difficult intersections, encouraging signalling
 - increase driver awareness of other traffic, particularly crossing and turning traffic
 - encourage the correct use of lanes and markings
 - encourage the reporting of problem intersections.
- Carry out enforcement programmes that:
 - target compliance with Give Way and Stop signs
 - target compliance with traffic signal
 - target the correct use of lanes and indicators.
- Design engineering programmes that:
 - conduct safety audits/surveys of intersection controls and visibility
 - identify, investigate and remedy intersections with high crash rates
 - improve intersection markings and controls
 - improve visibility at intersections by removal of vegetation and other obstructions
 - investigate reported problem intersections.

These programmes should all take account of the aging population in the district.

New Zealand Road Safety Programme

Reducing trauma involves a multi-pronged approach, which includes education, engineering and enforcement. The New Zealand Road Safety Programme (NZRSP) provides funding to educate road users to change their behaviour through projects delivered by road safety co-ordinators and community groups. The programme also funds the New Zealand Police for their targeted enforcement activities and support of community road safety projects. Transfund New Zealand provides funding to local authorities for roading projects through its National Roding Programme.

Community projects

Community funding of road safety projects aims to encourage local involvement and ownership of issues, and target local resources and effort to local risks. Central to community programmes is the need to develop and motivate local partnerships in road safety to help reduce the number of deaths and injuries in the Kapiti Coast district.

Funding for community projects in the Kapiti Coast district from the NZRSP for the 2002/2003 year has been confirmed as follows:

Project	Funding	Police hours
Road safety co-ordinator	\$27,000	0
Matching speed to conditions	\$14,000	30
Transporting mokopuna safely	\$5,000	0
Negotiating Kapiti intersections safely	\$21,000	40
Young driver awareness course	\$4,000	20
Young driver awareness week	\$25,000	20

Police enforcement

In addition to the 110 police hours to support community projects, a further 34,140 hours will be delivered by police in the Kapiti-Mana Police district as follows:

Project	Police hours
Strategic – alcohol/drugs, speed, restraints and visible road safety enforcement	23,860
Traffic management including crash attendance, incidents, emergencies and events	8,420
Road safety education	1,480
Police community services	380

The LTSA and the Kapiti Coast District Council will liaise with the New Zealand Police to ensure risk targeted patrol plans are implemented.

Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road crashes in the Kapiti Coast district, please refer to the 1997 to 2001 Road Safety Data Report or the Land Transport Safety Authority Accident Investigation System, or contact the people or organisations listed below:

Land Transport Safety Authority

Regional Manager
Demetra Kennedy
Phone 04 382 6421

Regional Educational Advisor
Roy Hitchcock
Phone 04 382 6428

Senior Road Safety Engineer
James King
Phone 04 382 6438

Road Safety Co-ordinator

Sue Johnson
Kapiti Coast District Council
Private Bag 601, Paraparaumu
Phone 04 904 5601

New Zealand Police

Rimu Road, Paraparaumu
Phone 04 296 6800

Kapiti Coast District Council

Operations Manager
Geoff Strand
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Phone 04 904 5700

Transit New Zealand

Stanley Chesterfield
Regional Highways Manager
PO Box 27-477, Wellington
Phone 04 801 2580

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