

# road safety issues

## Upper Hutt City

**Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data and trends for the 2000–2004 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues in Upper Hutt City.**

Upper Hutt City experienced the lowest number of injury crashes and casualties for the past decade in 2004. The 2004 data follows a four-year static trend in crash numbers.

Between 2000 and 2004, two thirds of injury crashes occurred on local roads, with the remaining one third on the state highway. However, the \$91 million total social cost of these crashes over the five-year period was divided equally between the two types of road.

Car drivers made up over half of the casualties between 2000 and 2004. In recent years, drivers on learner and restricted licences have been increasingly involved in crashes. Regardless of driver licence status, the main crash type in Upper Hutt City involved a driver losing control of their vehicle. Such crashes often involved excessive speed, particularly on a bend on rural state highways.

Pedestrian casualties have also been identified as an issue in Upper Hutt City, especially when compared with similar local authorities.

Both local and national road safety issues are identified below. Details of specific issues for Upper Hutt City are considered overleaf, while details of national issues are outlined on the back page.

### Major road safety issues

#### Upper Hutt City

Pedestrians

Novice drivers

Loss of control

#### Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure to give way

Restraints



### 2004 road trauma for Upper Hutt City



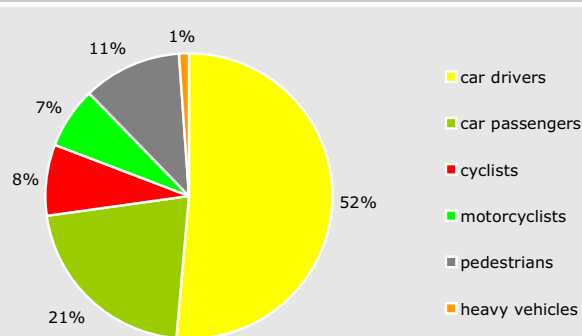
Deaths	2
Serious casualties	6
Minor casualties	46



Fatal crashes	2
Serious injury crashes	6
Minor injury crashes	35
Non-injury crashes	147

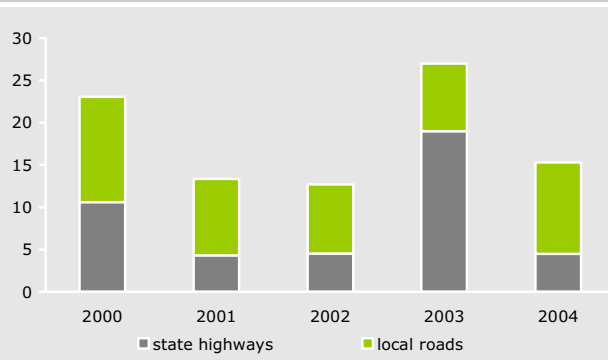
### Road casualties 2000–2004

User type 2000–2004



### Estimated social cost of crashes\*

Social cost (\$ million)

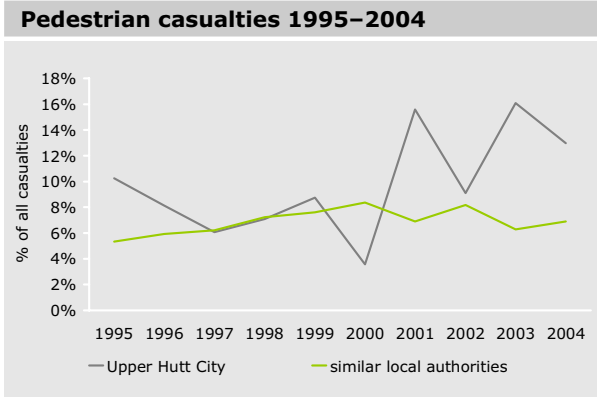


\*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2004 prices.

## Pedestrians

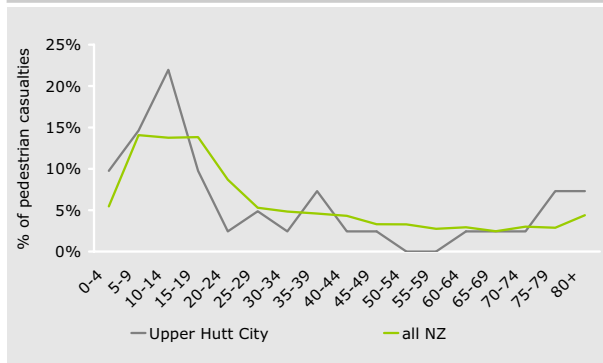
Between 2000 and 2004, pedestrians made up 11 percent of road casualties in Upper Hutt City. For each of the past four years, the proportion of pedestrian casualties in the crash statistics has been greater than that of similar local authorities.

Over the five-year period, there were a total of 35 crashes resulting in 42 pedestrian casualties. Of these, one pedestrian was killed and a further 12 were seriously injured.



Fifty-five percent of pedestrians injured in a crash during this five-year period were children and youths up to the age of 17 years. A further 17 percent were aged 70 years and above, which suggests that it is the very young and very old that experience difficulties as pedestrians.

**Pedestrian casualties by age 2000–2004**

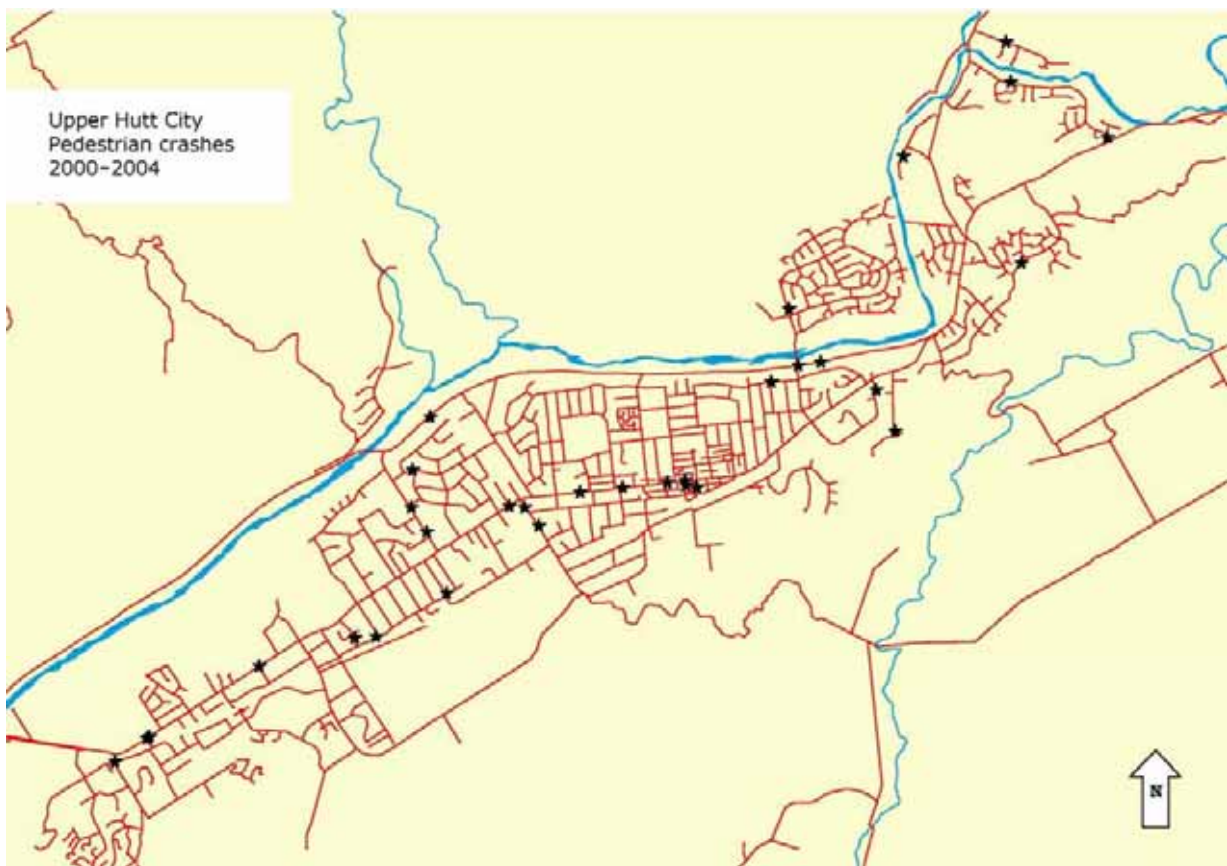


Half of the school-aged pedestrians were injured on weekdays in the hours either immediately before or after school and crashes typically occurred in the vicinity of a school.

Elderly pedestrians tended to be involved in crashes close to the main shopping areas in Upper Hutt City.

Pedestrians were often injured crossing the road at locations away from formal facilities such as pedestrian crossings or raised islands.

Four pedestrians were injured while drunk.



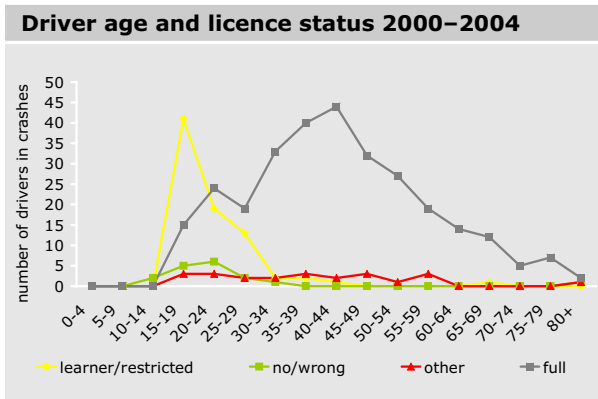
## Novice drivers

Age and inexperience play a major role in the high crash risk among young drivers: age because of lifestyle factors and the propensity to take chances; inexperience through failure to respond appropriately to traffic situations.

Between 1995 and 1999, 12 percent of all drivers involved in injury crashes in Upper Hutt City held learner or restricted driver licences. For the five-year period from 2000, this figure rose to 17 percent.

Overall, between 2000 and 2004, 27 percent of all injury crashes in Upper Hutt City had at least one learner and/or restricted licence holder involved in the crash.

Fifty-two percent of learner and restricted driver licence holders involved in crashes were aged between 15 and 19 years while a further 24 percent were between 20 and 24 years old.



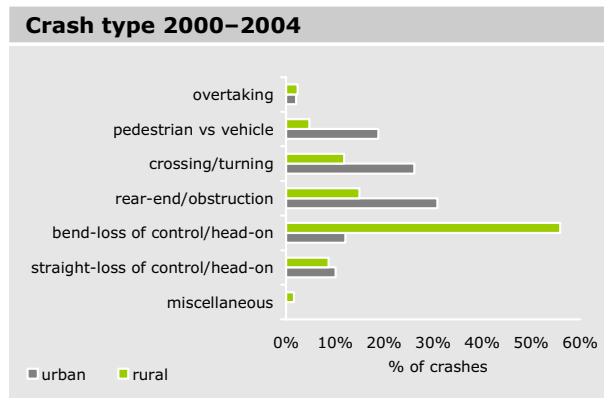
The dominant factors for crashes involving novice drivers included driving too fast for the conditions, poor handling skills leading to loss of control of the vehicle, and poor observational skills. Thirty-five percent of crashes in Upper Hutt City involving learner/restricted drivers occurred at intersections.

Three quarters of learner and restricted licence holders involved in these crashes resided in Upper Hutt City, with 71 percent of crashes involving these drivers occurring on local roads, typically in urban areas.

## Loss of control

The most common type of crash in Upper Hutt City between 2000 and 2004 involved a driver losing control of their vehicle, either on a bend or straight section of road. Over this five-year period, there were a total of 115 crashes resulting in 40 deaths or serious injuries, and a further 123 minor injuries.

Fifty-three loss of control crashes (46 percent) occurred on rural state highways while 60 (52 percent) took place on local roads. Local road loss of control crashes were evenly divided between rural and urban roads.



Loss of control crashes can result in either a head-on collision with another vehicle or the vehicle leaving the road, potentially colliding with a roadside object. Such an occurrence may increase the severity of a crash. While vehicles often hit cliffs and fences when leaving the road, they also hit stand-alone objects such as posts, poles and trees.

Compared with all reported injury crashes in Upper Hutt City, a higher percentage of loss of control crashes occurred in the dark or on wet and icy road surfaces.

Excessive speed was a contributory factor in 35 percent of loss of control injury crashes between 2000 and 2004. Other significant factors included poor handling skills, failure to keep left, poor driver observation and alcohol.

## Speed

The faster drivers go, the more likely they are to crash and the greater the risk of serious injury or death. Thirty-two percent of crashes involving speed in Upper Hutt City between 2000 and 2004 resulted in a death or serious injury.

During this period, travelling too fast for the conditions was a factor in 17 percent of injury crashes. However, this percentage has been increasing over the past three years. Primarily a rural road issue, speed-related crashes during the hours of darkness are over-represented in Upper Hutt City.

## Alcohol

Alcohol has a big effect on the way people drive. People who 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 2000 and 2004, alcohol was identified as a factor in 29 crashes in Upper Hutt City. These typically occurred on urban local roads and rural state highways. Half of all alcohol-related crashes occurred at the weekend; 72 percent during the hours of darkness.

## Failure to give way

While most failure to give way crashes result in non-injury or minor injury crashes, failing to give way at an intersection can have severe consequences. Eight out of the 53 crashes where a driver failed to give way in Upper Hutt City between 2000 and 2004 resulted in a serious crash.

Intersection crashes in Upper Hutt City tend to occur on local urban roads and rural state highways. A 2005 local survey indicated that 66 percent of vehicles failed to come to a complete halt at Stop-controlled intersections.

## Restraints

Wearing a safety belt reduces the chance of death or serious injury in a crash by 40 percent. Whether in the front or the back seat, the risk of serious or fatal injury if not wearing a safety belt is virtually the same.

Results from the 2004 national restraint wearing survey showed that the front seat safety belt wearing rate for Upper Hutt City was 95 percent, compared with the national average of 94 percent. However, the 2003 rear seat belt wearing rate was 67 percent compared with the New Zealand average of 81 percent. A 2005 local survey indicated a rear seat belt wearing rate of 79 percent.

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