

# 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 West Coast region.

In the past five years, 48 people have died in crashes on roads in the West Coast region. In addition, 200 received serious injuries and 567 received minor injuries. There were also 917 non-injury crashes reported. Over the last 10 years, the number of casualties in urban areas of the region has about halved, but the number in the rural areas has increased slightly. Overall, just over three quarters of casualties were sustained in crashes on roads in rural areas.

Almost half of all casualties from road crashes in the region were less than 30 years old. Male road users made up just over half of the total casualties, but represented almost three quarters of fatalities and almost two thirds of serious casualties.

In recent years, significant gains have been made with drink-driving, but speed still represents a serious problem.

## Major road safety issues:

West Coast region

Rural roads

Urban roads

Overseas drivers

Female road users

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

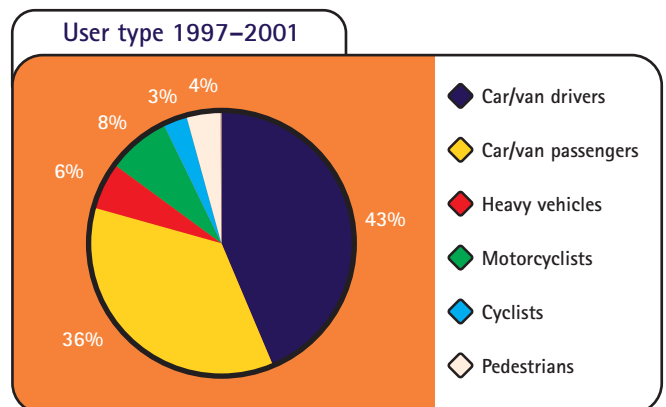
Failure to give way

Restraints

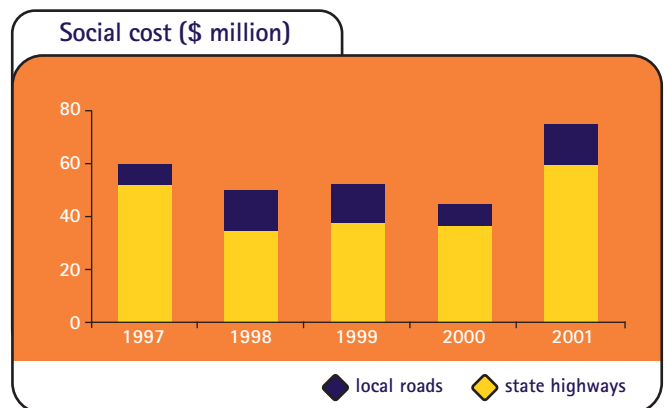
## 2001 road toll for West Coast region

♀	Deaths	18
	Serious casualties	33
	Minor casualties	117
🚗	Fatal crashes	15
	Serious injury crashes	25
	Minor injury crashes	66
	Non-injury crashes	175

## Road user casualties 1997–2001



## Estimated social cost of crashes\*



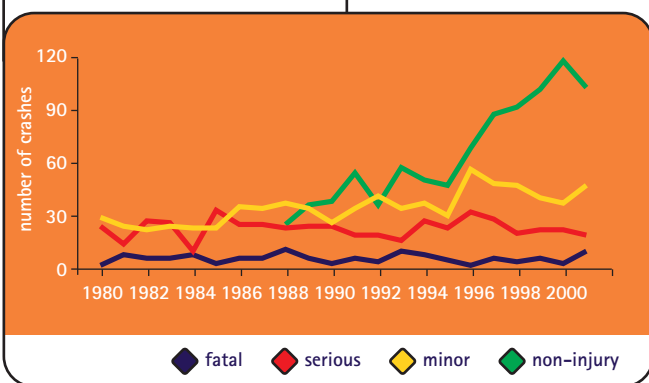
\* The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs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



## Rural roads

Last year 14 people died in crashes on rural roads in the West Coast region. In addition, 27 people received serious injuries and 89 received minor injuries. There were also 103 non-injury crashes reported. Over the last 20 years, the numbers of fatal and serious crashes have stayed reasonably constant. The number of minor injury crashes has almost doubled. Since 1988, when non-injury crash data was first collected, the reported number of these crashes has more than trebled.

Crashes on rural roads



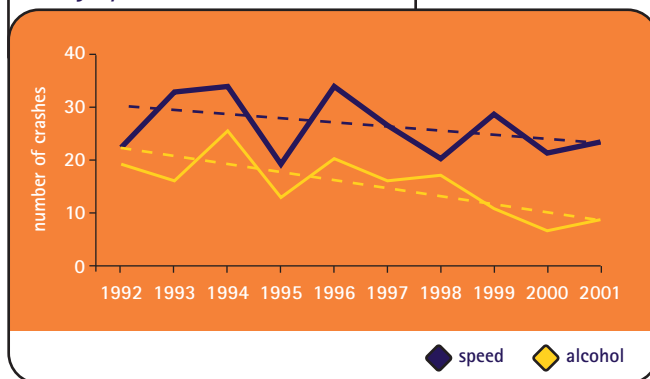
Almost eight of every 10 crashes on rural roads in the region involved loss of control. Three quarters of these crashes were on bends. Road surface condition was the most often reported crash factor for all reported crashes. For injury crashes, speed was the most common cause. Driver control, poor judgement, inexperience, alcohol, failure to keep left and inattention were other commonly reported causes. Over 40 percent of rural crashes occurred on wet roads and about one third happened in darkness.

The reported incidence of both alcohol and speed in injury crashes on rural roads in the West Coast region has reduced over the last 10 years. The number of alcohol-related crashes has about halved. The incidence of speed has reduced only slightly.

The map opposite (Figure 1) shows the location of crashes that involved alcohol or speed on all rural roads.

Figure 2 shows the location of crashes on rural local roads.

Injury crashes on rural roads



Seven of every 10 drivers involved in crashes on rural roads in the West Coast region were male. Those in the 20 to 24, 25 to 29 and 35 to 39 year age groups were most involved in crashes. The female drivers most involved in crashes were in the 20 to 24 and 25 to 29 year age groups.

One fifth of crashes on rural roads in the region occurred on local roads. There was little difference in the severity of crashes on state highways and local roads. Crashes on wet roads were slightly more likely to happen on state highways. Crashes in darkness were slightly more likely on local roads.

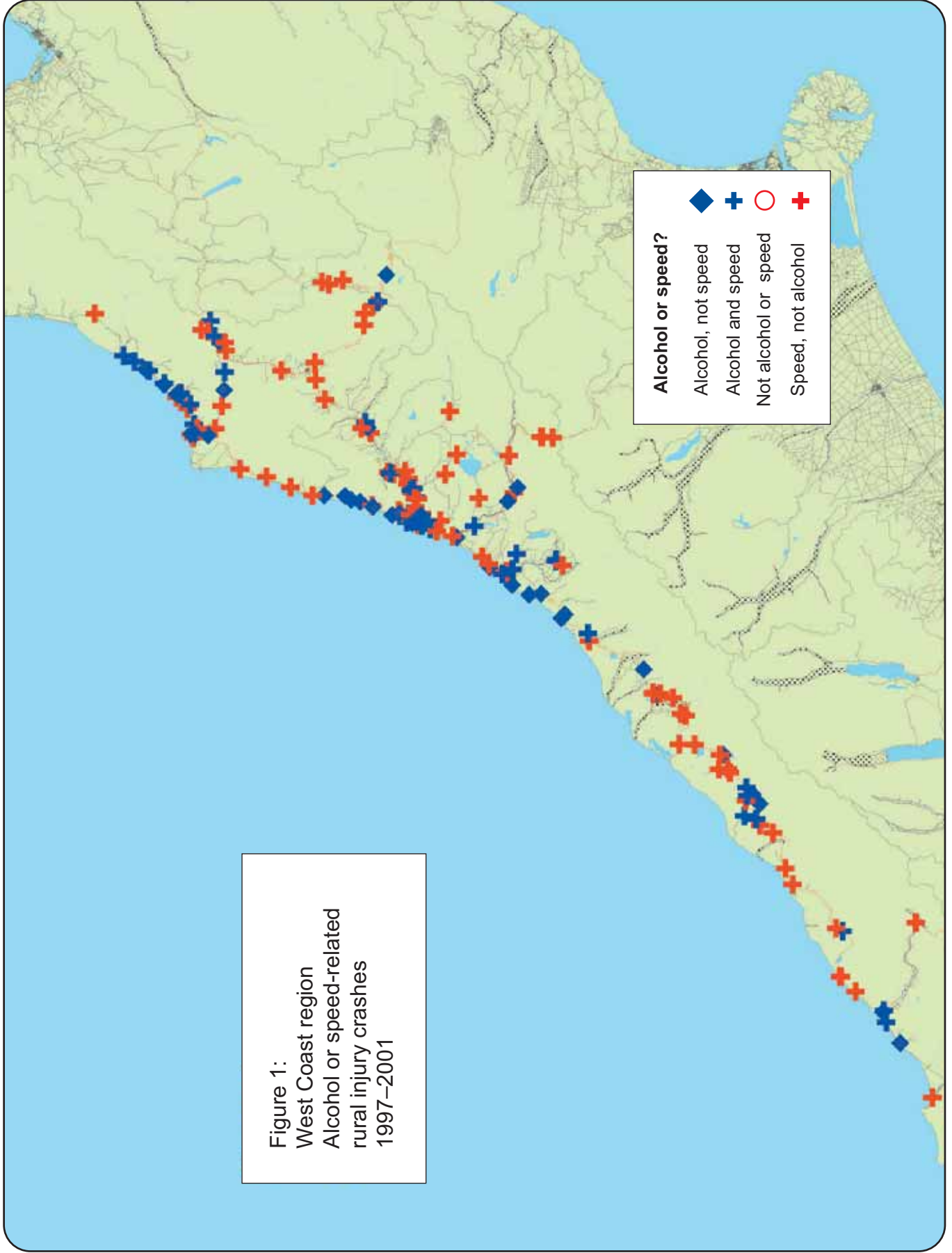
The roadside features most likely to be hit in crashes on rural state highways in the region were upright banks, over edges, ditches and fences. On local rural roads, they were upright banks, ditches and fences.

On rural state highways, fewer than one in three drivers of vehicles involved in injury crashes were female. On local rural roads over one in four were female.

## Recommended actions

- Raise awareness that drivers need to adjust their speed based on the season and the road conditions, including corners and bends.
- Maintain good road surfaces and drainage.
- Support strategic enforcement campaigns targeting driving too fast for conditions and alcohol.
- Support targeted enforcement of at-risk sites.
- Ensure shoulders are kept as clear as practicable of roadside objects.
- Encourage campaigns aimed at rural communities.
- Ensure delineation and advisory signing is to an appropriate standard and well maintained.
- Work with local communities to address local behaviours.

Figure 1:  
West Coast region  
Alcohol or speed-related  
rural injury crashes  
1997–2001



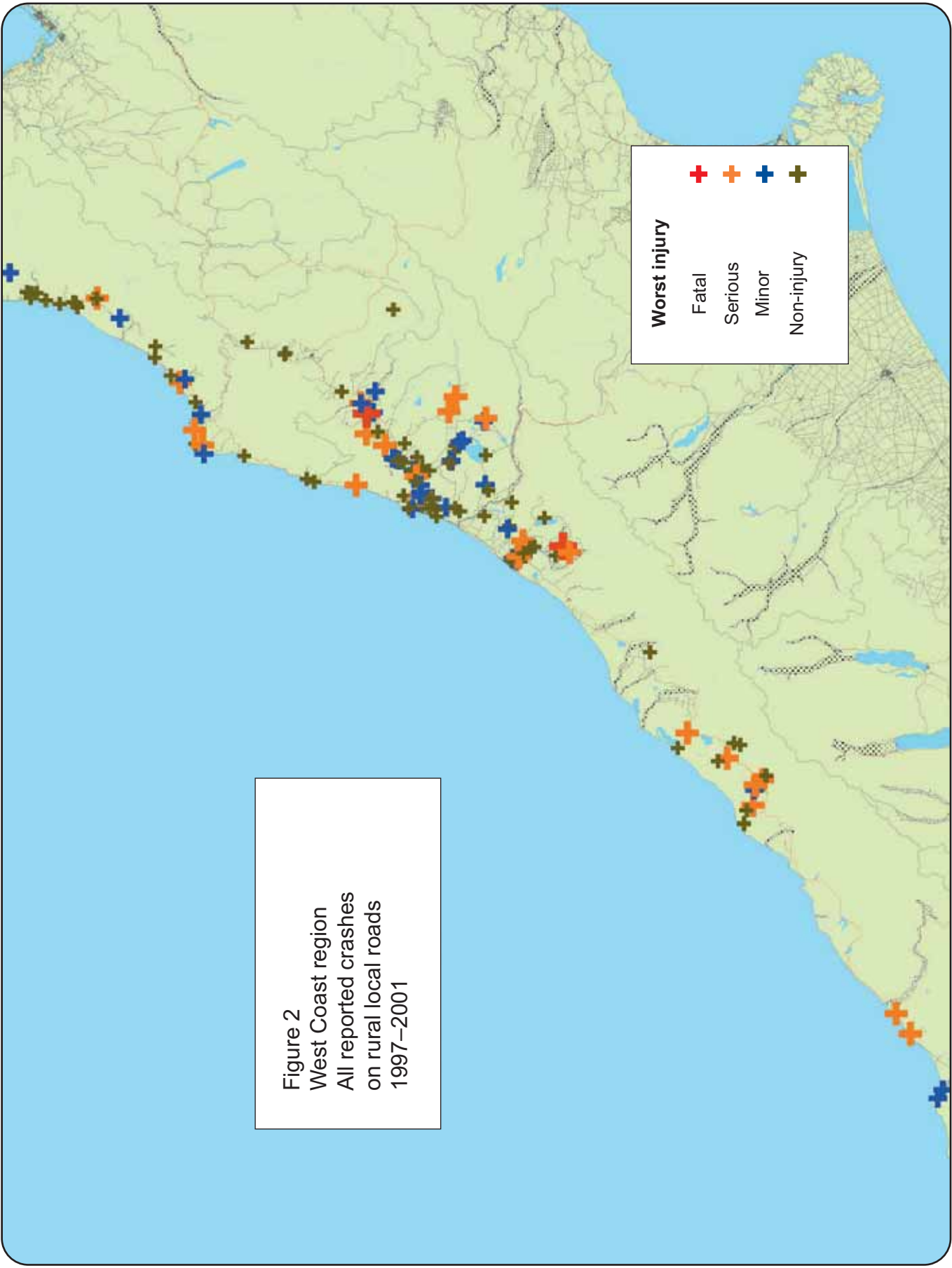


Figure 2  
West Coast region  
All reported crashes  
on rural local roads  
1997–2001

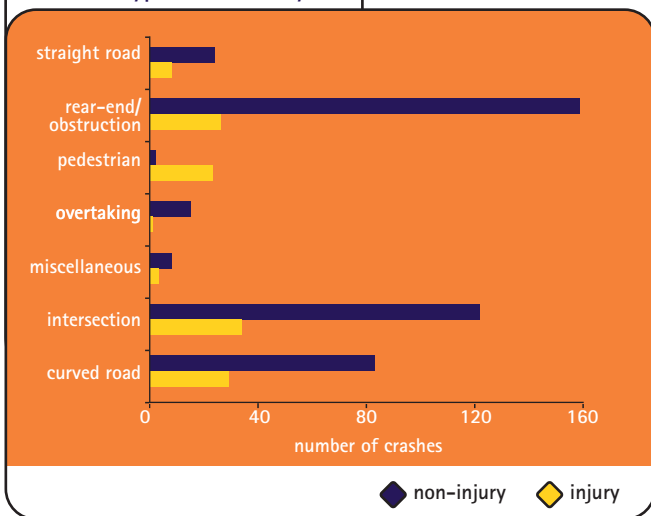
# Urban roads

Almost one quarter of the casualties sustained in crashes on roads within the West Coast region resulted from crashes in urban areas. In the last five years, crashes in urban areas of the region resulted in five deaths, 35 seriously injured people and 143 people with minor injuries. In addition, 413 non-injury crashes were reported to the New Zealand Police.

Over the last 10 years, the number of casualties from crashes in urban areas of the region has about halved. Last year, however, there was an increase over the previous two years.

For injury crashes, the intersection crash was the most common crash type. Other common types were crashes on bends and rear-end or collision with obstruction crashes. For non-injury crashes, the rear-end or collision with obstruction crash was the most often reported crash type, followed by intersection crashes and crashes on bends.

Crash type and severity

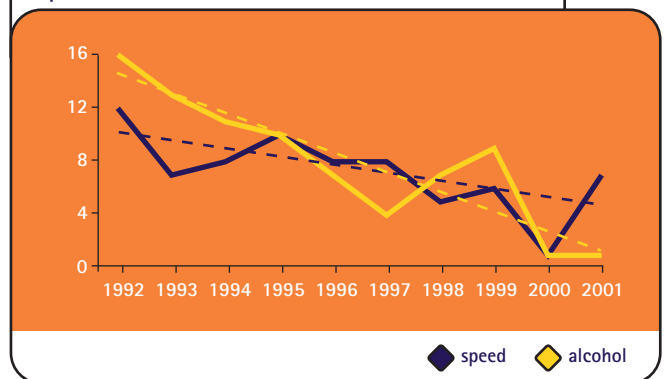


Just under one third of crashes happened in dark conditions and just over one third happened on wet roads. Loss of control crashes were more likely to happen during darkness than in daylight. Intersection crashes and rear-end or collision with obstruction crashes were less likely to happen in darkness than in daylight. Both loss of control and intersection crashes were more likely on wet roads than on dry roads.

Failure to give way was the cause most often reported in crashes on urban roads in the region. Other commonly reported factors included inadequate checking, alcohol, speed, failure to keep left, inattention, misjudging speed or distance, and inexperience.

Over the last 10 years, the incidence of both alcohol-related and speed-related crashes in urban areas of the region has significantly reduced.

Speed and alcohol-related crashes, urban areas



During dark conditions, drivers were more likely to be alcohol impaired, to be speeding, or to fail to keep left. On wet roads, they were more likely to lose control, show off, or consider the surface slippery. Pedestrians crossing the road were also more likely to be hit in wet conditions.

In urban areas, female drivers were more likely to be involved in crashes at intersections, and male drivers in crashes on bends. Female drivers were commonly reported as failing to give way or stop and having paid inadequate attention. For male drivers, alcohol, speed and inexperience were the commonly reported factors. For both males and females, the 15 to 19 year age group was the age group most involved in crashes in urban areas.

## Recommended actions

- Support a high police presence when roads are likely to be busy.
- Support campaigns targeting drivers who fail to give way or stop.
- Support strategic campaigns targeting speed and alcohol.
- Target drivers travelling at speeds inappropriate for the conditions.
- Raise awareness that drivers need to adjust their speed based on the season and the road conditions, including corners and bends.
- Encourage drivers to focus and concentrate on the driving task.



Figure 3  
West Coast region  
Injury crashes involving  
overseas drivers  
1997–2001



## Overseas drivers

Last year, one in every five injuries was sustained in crashes involving overseas drivers. These crashes resulted in three fatalities and 18 other casualties. The number of crashes each year involving these drivers has increased markedly over the last 10 years. The number jumped by one third last year.

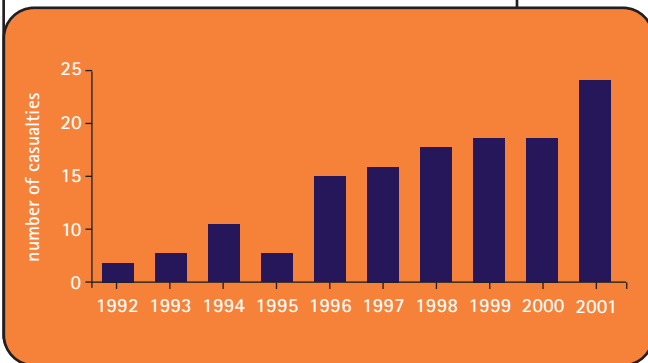
Nearly all crashes involving an overseas driver occurred in rural areas. Most involved a loss of control on bends, with loss of control on straight roads being the next most common crash. These two factors accounted for over three quarters of crashes.

Inexperience with local conditions was the most often reported factor. Other causes commonly reported included speed, not keeping left, driver control and road surface conditions.

Overseas drivers are typically male, driving a car or van. No age group is over-represented.

The map opposite (Figure 3) shows the locations of crashes that involved overseas drivers.

Casualties in crashes involving overseas drivers



### Recommended action

- Target overseas drivers through local campaigns and tourism and visitor support networks.

## Female road users

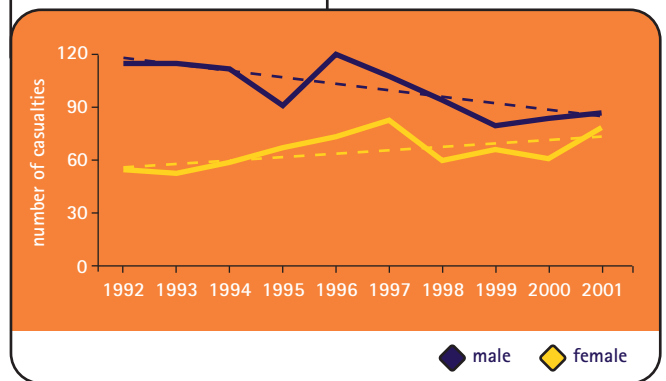
In 1992, the annual number of males who were injured in crashes on roads on the West Coast was about twice the number of females. Last year the number of each was almost the same.

For males, the decrease has been for drivers in both the minor and serious injury categories. For females, the increase has been as both drivers and passengers in the minor injury group.

As drivers, females were more likely than males to be involved in crashes at intersections and less likely to be involved in crashes on bends. As passengers, there was little difference between the sexes.

Female drivers were more likely than males to be reported as inexperienced or losing control, and less likely than males to be reported as speeding or alcohol impaired.

Road user casualties



### Recommended actions

- Encourage enforcement campaigns targeting drivers who fail to give way or stop at intersections.
- Support education and advertising campaigns of right of way rules. These should target female drivers.
- Support education campaigns aimed at improving awareness of appropriate speeds for the driving conditions, particularly at corners and bends.

# 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 Land Transport 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 West Coast region.

Funding for community projects in the three districts in the West Coast region from the NZRSP for the 2002/2003 year has been confirmed as follows:

Project	Funding
Speed	\$10,500
Drive sober	\$20,500
Restraints	\$7,500
Poor observation	\$2,500
Intersections	\$7,500

The West Coast region will also be involved this year in regionally funded projects to target the high-risk issues of speed, alcohol, restraints and pedestrian issues. These projects have been funded as follows:

Project	Funding
Regional road safety co-ordinator	\$38,000
Rural speed	\$30,000
Restraints – education/publicity campaign	\$3,500
Street skills – Bike Wise	\$2,700
Young drivers	\$10,000
Driver fatigue	\$15,200
Kidsafe Week 2002	\$2,700

## Police enforcement

Included in the 19,850 hours to be delivered by the police in the West Coast region as below, is the New Zealand Police support for community projects.

Project	Hours
Strategic – alcohol/drugs, speed, restraint and visible road safety enforcement	15,890
Traffic management including crash attendance, incidents, emergencies and events	3,230
School road safety education	450
Police community services	280

## Road environment

The road controlling authorities in the West Coast region have allocations for minor safety projects in Transfund's National Land Transport Programme 2002–2003.

## Where to get more information

For more specific information relating to road safety in the West Coast region please refer to the 1997 to 2001 Road Safety Data Report or one of the contacts listed below:

Land Transport Safety Authority	Road Safety Co-ordinator
Regional Manager Dennis Robertson Phone 03 363 5661	Malcolm White 39 Albert Mall PO Box 20, Greymouth Phone 03 768 4912 teachu@xtra.co.nz
Regional Education Advisor Bob Clements Phone 03 363 5677	New Zealand Police
Area Road Safety Engineer Geoff Holland Phone 03 363 5645	Hugh Flower Tasman District Headquarters Private Bag 39, Nelson Phone 03 546 3855
Transit New Zealand	Mobile 025 266 7170
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