

# road safety issues

**T**he 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 Queenstown Lakes District.

Road crashes in the Queenstown Lakes District over the five-year period killed 15 people and injured more than 550. There were more than 1,000 reported non-injury crashes during the same period.

After a yearly rise in injury crash numbers since a low of 45 in 1997, last year saw the number fall slightly to 98. There was a fall in reported rural crash numbers but an increase of nearly 20 percent in urban areas of the district. There were still twice as many injury crashes occurring on higher speed rural roads than on urban roads.

One measure used to gauge road safety performance is the number of crashes per 10,000 population. In 2003 in the Queenstown Lakes District the figure was 47, down from a high of 58 in 2002. Across all of New Zealand this figure was 27 and in a peer group of similar local authorities used for comparison, the figure was 40. 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. The number of pedestrians and cyclists injured both increased to new highs in 2003, as detailed overleaf.

## Major road safety issues

Nationally

Speed
Alcohol
Failure to give way
Restraints



## 2003 road trauma for Queenstown Lakes District



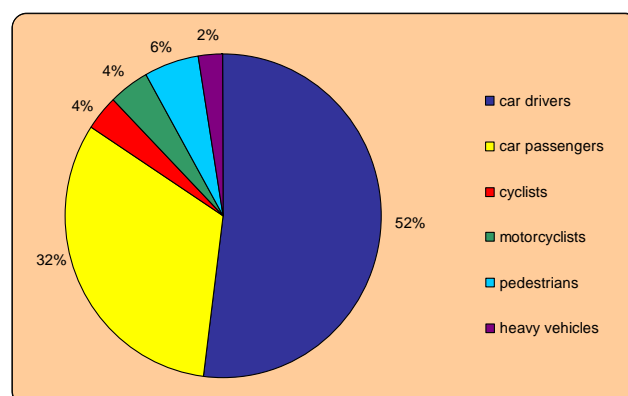
Deaths	2
Serious casualties	41
Minor casualties	96



Fatal crashes	2
Serious injury crashes	35
Minor injury crashes	61
Non-injury crashes	211

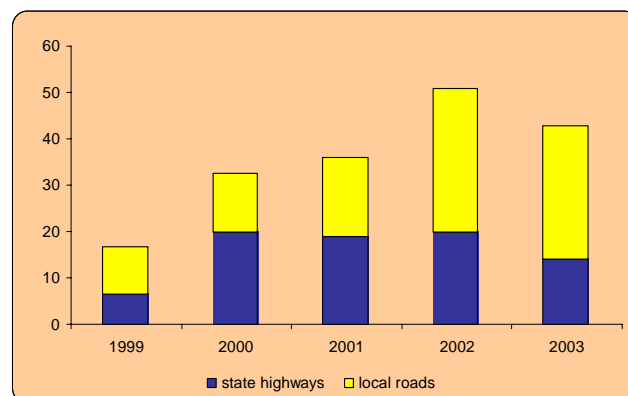
## Road casualties 1999–2003

User type 1999–2003



## Estimated social cost of crashes\*

Social cost (\$ million)



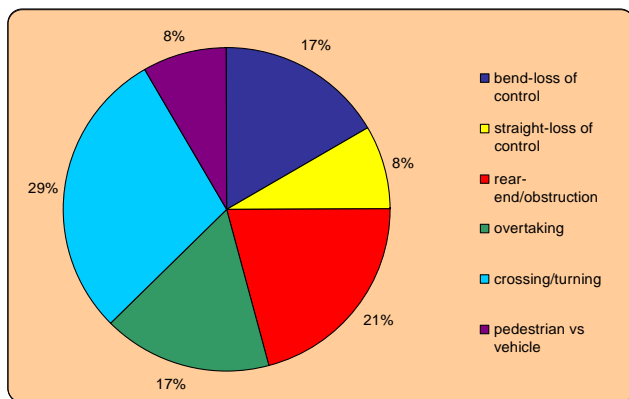
\*The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2002 prices.

## Rural crashes

As in previous years, two thirds of injury crashes in the district occurred on the open road – there were 61 in 2003. Open road crashes are generally more severe due to the higher speeds involved. Two people died, 28 received serious injuries and 68 people received minor injuries on rural roads in the district last year.

The majority of rural crashes are single vehicles losing control and leaving the road. In 2003, one quarter of these crashes took place on ice or snow although the majority were on dry roads during daylight hours. Ten percent of rural crashes occurred on unsealed roads.

### Rural crash movement 2003



Four of the rural crashes last year involved alcohol which was less than half the rate found elsewhere in the country.

Eleven crashes involved vehicles travelling too fast for the conditions. This is half the number that took place in 2002. As in previous years, the LTSA believes that fatigue is under-reported in these types of crashes with only two crashes being attributed to the cause in 2003.

## Urban crashes

While the number of crashes in urban areas was less than those on rural roads in 2003, the number reached a new high – 37 injury and 130 non-injury crashes were reported. Six of the injury crashes involved alcohol. While the number was relatively low, at 16 percent it is above the level found nationally.

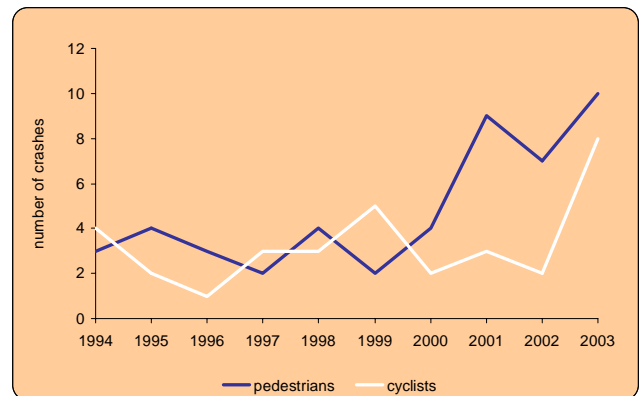
One reason for more crashes in urban areas is that traffic volumes in Queenstown have been constantly increasing. Frankton Road has shown an increase of over 10 percent in traffic volumes over the last 12 months.

Over the last five years the intersection of State Highway 6 and Frankton Road has had more crashes than any other intersection in the district. Only one crash has been reported since the roundabout was constructed.

## General

Ten pedestrians were injured on Queenstown Lakes District roads in 2003, the highest number on record. One third were in Wanaka and the same in Queenstown itself. At seven percent of all casualties the rate is more than double that found in comparable areas of the country. One third of pedestrians injured over the last five years were under the age of 10. The number of cyclists injured also increased, to a new high of seven.

### Pedestrian and cyclist crashes



Twenty percent of drivers involved in injury crashes last year held an overseas licence. Although a slight drop on the previous year, the number may well increase as more visitors come into the area.

There are two distinct peaks in the year for injury crashes. Proportionately more crashes occur in July and December than any other month, pointing to the seasonal nature of activities in the district.

The age of those injured in the Queenstown Lakes District also points to a younger group of drivers than elsewhere. Those aged 20 to 35 years old are over-represented when compared with the rest of New Zealand.

This report is a brief summary of crashes that took place in the Queenstown Lakes District last year. For further information contact the LTSA at the address below.

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