

STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman and Members, Engineering Services Committee

FROM: Road Safety Coordinator, Kirsty Barr

REFERENCE: R878

DATE: 22 February 2005

SUBJECT: Road Safety Coordinator's Report

PURPOSE

To update the committee on work carried out by the Road Safety Coordinator (RSC), including the delivery of activities under the Community Road Safety Programme. To seek feedback on planned road safety events for 2005/6 financial year.

BACKGROUND

The Road Safety Coordinator Role:

I have been in the role since July 2004, based in the Engineering Department at the Richmond office at Tasman District Council. I have very much enjoyed joining the team, getting to know people in engineering and other departments, as well as meeting many of the former/present members of the Engineering Services Committee.

Each year the TDC/Road Safety Coordinator applies for funding from Land Transport NZ (formerly LTSA) to deliver projects under LTNZ's Community Road Safety Programme. In the 2004/2005 financial year, both TDC and LTNZ contributed funds towards two major road safety projects ("Driver Reviver" fatigue project and the Golden Bay Cycling Project). LTNZ also contributes funds towards the RSC role itself and the services it provides.

Links with Other Organisations

The RSC works closely with a number of other organisations/groups such as the Police, ACC, LTNZ, Transit, Public Health, volunteer groups, road safety advocates, Maori trusts etc. Much of 2004 was spent meeting key personnel from these organisations throughout the district and attending regular meetings where these groups come together. Working with such diverse agencies illustrates the breadth of the road safety brief and its intention to work together implementing the three 'E's (education, engineering and enforcement).

While road engineering is very much concerned with safety, it is often the Road Safety Coordinator whose role is solely focussed on road safety. Links with other road safety providers and RSCs around the country therefore provides vital support. Information about different activities and projects are shared amongst RSCs and can be tailored to meet local needs and issues. I have attended road safety conferences in 2004 that have greatly helped me to establish and strengthen these networks.

It has also been of great benefit to work alongside Nelson City Council's RSC (Margaret Parfitt) on regional activities such as mobility scooter forums and kidsafe week (car restraints). In order to

organise projects like these with the community behind you, it has been necessary to create networks with a range of people and groups (eg age concern, youth councils, car enthusiast clubs). This, together with having a joint road safety presence at events such as Ecofest and the A & P show, has helped to create a public profile with people of the Tasman District. NCC and TDC will continue to pool resources during 2005 where practical, especially for urban based activities such as "Drive Time" for restricted license holders and a stopping distances project in Richmond, Motueka and beyond. At the same time, there is a strong emphasis on building relationships with people/groups in rural areas and developing activities which meet the specific needs of those living in the more remote parts of the Tasman district.

Links with the Public

Having a RSC based within Council enables TDC to provide 'one point of contact' for the public and advice on how specific issues may be furthered. My initial contact with individuals has involved functioning as a 'bridge' between the public and road controlling authorities with the aim of having concerns aired and supporting the relationship between organisations and the end user. It is also possible to feed any public concerns back at regional meetings where a range of agencies gather. These meetings are an opportunity to discuss issues with road safety partners (eg police, ACC, health promotion) and combine the approaches of education, enforcement and engineering. Some of the forums where TDC Road Safety is represented include Road Safe Nelson Bays meetings, cycle forums, community boards/council meetings, community whanau group meetings and health promotion meetings.

Statistics: An Overview

Tasman District: <i>Urban & Rural</i>								
Crash Type	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Total	% of overall crashes	Group D* %
Fatal	4	4	8	6	7	29	5	8
Serious	28	36	37	36	39	176	31	26
Minor	66	65	59	83	92	365	64	67
Total crashes	98	105	104	125	138	570	100	100

Tasman District: <i>Urban Only</i>								
Crash Type	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Total	% of overall crashes	Group D* %
Fatal	0	1	2	1	0	4	3	3
Serious	7	5	7	5	8	32	25	21
Minor	15	13	18	26	18	90	71	75
Total crashes	22	19	27	32	26	126	100	100

Tasman District: <i>Rural Only</i>								
Crash Type	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Total	% of overall crashes	Group D* %
Fatal	4	3	6	5	7	25	6	9
Serious	21	31	30	31	31	144	32	27
Minor	51	52	41	57	74	275	62	64
Total crashes	76	86	77	93	112	444	100	100

* Group D = Similar Authorities: Peer group where figures represent averages from 22 districts similar to Tasman

Rural

- The risks on rural roads are much greater (more than double) than that of urban roads. In the Tasman District over the period 1999-2003 there were a total of 123 crashes. Despite Nelson and Tasman having very similar population figures over this period, Nelson recorded just 48 crashes.
- 2003 Road Trauma statistics for Nelson City shows 1 death and 19 serious injuries compared with Tasman District's 7 deaths and 61 casualties. There are a number of reasons why statistics are much greater in rural areas such as conflict between different road user types but many stem from vehicles operating in much higher speed environments.

Loss of Control: Speed, Alcohol and Fatigue:

“Loss of control” is a term comprising any number of contributing factors such as speed (including travelling too fast for conditions), tiredness and alcohol. Over half of the injury crashes on rural roads in the Tasman District over the 1999-2003 period can be attributed to loss of control on bends (57% of these occurred on state highways).

SPEED: Thirty five percent of injuries for loss of control on bends had speed as the major contributing factor. Also speed was identified as a factor in 19% of all injury crashes in the Tasman District, *slightly higher* than the proportion for New Zealand as a whole (17% for all of NZ and 20% for similar authorities).

ALCOHOL: Alcohol was a factor in 12% of all injury crashes in Tasman between 1999-2003, *slightly lower* than the 14% reported for all of NZ and 17% for similar authorities.

FATIGUE: Between 2000 and 2002, driver fatigue was identified as a contributing factor in 132 fatal crashes *nationwide* and 1,486 injury crashes (ie approximately 12 percent of fatal crashes and 6% of injury crashes each year).

Young People

Young people (particularly 15-19 yr olds) are still the largest age group represented in crash statistics. Fifteen – 19 yr olds make up around 20% of reported casualties.

But, there is also good news ... It is reported that if young people invest just 120 hours of supervised driving (that is 2 hrs practice a week over a year), then they are 30% less likely to crash when starting to drive alone. The introduction of “drive time” in schools in early 2005 aims to progress this idea and promote supervised driving for young drivers.

Vulnerable Road Users:

The crash rate for motorcyclists in the Tasman District is higher than that for the rest of New Zealand or for similar authorities.

Cyclist casualties are higher in the Tasman District than that for the rest of New Zealand or similar authorities.

Pedestrian casualties are similar or higher than that in other authorities and lower than that of the rest of New Zealand.

Community Development:

As these statistics above show, while issues such as speeding, alcohol and fatigue are big contributors to most crashes on a national level, there are local factors at play which need the community behind it to make a change. The *Community Road Safety Programme* was established 14 years ago via Land Transport Safety Authority to address issues around road trauma on a regional basis in New Zealand. It focuses on a community development approach by contributing funds (together with councils) at a local level to support grass roots type initiatives that aim to address specific road safety concerns.

The mobility scooter forums, which aimed to inform older people on personal and road safety around their use, are a great example of such an initiative. This year we had some overwhelming support from councillors and Engineering Services Committee members at both the Richmond and Motueka events. Mayor John Hurley, Councillors Eileen Wilkins, Jack Inglis, Trevor Norriss, Richard Kempthorne, Gordon Currie, as well as Peter Thomson and Senior Sergeant John Price took to the streets to get a first hand experience of our roads and footpaths from a scooter rider's perspective. Their feedback helps to inform and direct maintenance work to make easier and safer for elders. Everyone was happy to have their photo taken for the local papers and I thank them for their involvement which was crucial in raising awareness around some of the everyday difficulties older people can face. Of course I think it dawned on some of the participants that it was a good opportunity to test drive some of the models with their futures in mind ... although I think Richard and Trevor hoped for slightly faster models for when their time comes... !

Summary of Activities in the Community:

Some of the activities/projects for 04/05 financial year have/will include:

- Mobility Scooter Forums (Richmond, Motueka)
- Meetings re 'Boy Racer' activity
- Cycling and Walking Strategy Working group
- Getting familiar with LTNZ's set programmes such as the 'Safe with Age' (for older drivers)
- Addressing young people taking 'Street Talk' driver licensing course for young drivers (first time offenders and those on restricted licenses).
- Car seat checking clinics during Safe Kids week
- Progressing the Golden Bay Cycling Project (billboard campaign promoting 'share the road')
- Driver Reviver Fatigue stop (scheduled for Easter)
- 'Show & Shine' event in Motueka (for car enthusiasts)
- Bikewise week (in conjunction with Community Services Department)
- Active Transport meetings
- Road safety conferences

Planned activities for 05/06 financial period include:

- Motorcycle Training Day (working with Ulysses Club, ACC)
- Intersection Campaign – Richmond, Motueka (in conjunction with NCC)
- 'Drive Time' – Richmond, Motueka, Golden Bay, Murchison (programme in schools – targeting those on learners/restricted licenses).
- 'Stopping Distances' project (all areas), targeting speed, school zones, pedestrians and children

- 'Don't Burst their Bubble' Campaign (for vulnerable road users in rural areas - promoting the theme of 'sharing the road' for mothers with prams, joggers, children walking to school, cyclists, pedestrians etc).
- Cycle Safety programme (including development of 'Skid Lids' website targeting most vulnerable age group amongst cyclists: 9-14yrs, 're-cycling' course for returning to ride people, bikewise activities, visibility campaign, 0800 cycle crash facility)
- Safe with Age programme – cater specifically for Murchison and Golden Bay (regular courses for Richmond and Motueka are ongoing in Stoke area)
- Child Restraint programmes – Car Seat Coordinator to visit local kindergartens and early childhood centres to promote *correct* use of car seats (evaluations indicate while there is high compliance, incorrect fitting or use is common).
- Mobility Scooter Forum (Final in the series for Golden Bay)

RECOMMENDATION:

That this report be received.

Kirsty Barr
Road Safety Coordinator