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Corporate Plan Output: Road Safety page 9.6 text 8	

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate the effectiveness of the road safety education and awareness campaigns funded by the Council.

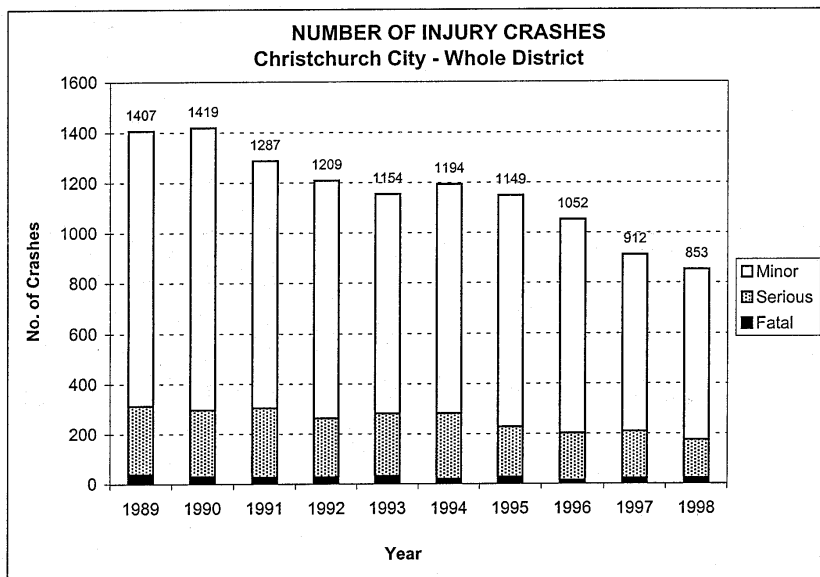
**INTRODUCTION**

The Christchurch City Council has gradually increased the resources for road safety promotion and education over the last ten years. The present level of funding has been available for the last three years.

**REDUCTION IN CRASHES**

Reported crashes in Christchurch have been reducing steadily since 1989 except for a slight rise in 1994. Since 1995 the downward trend has accelerated. There were 1,149 reported crashes in 1995 and 853 in 1998.

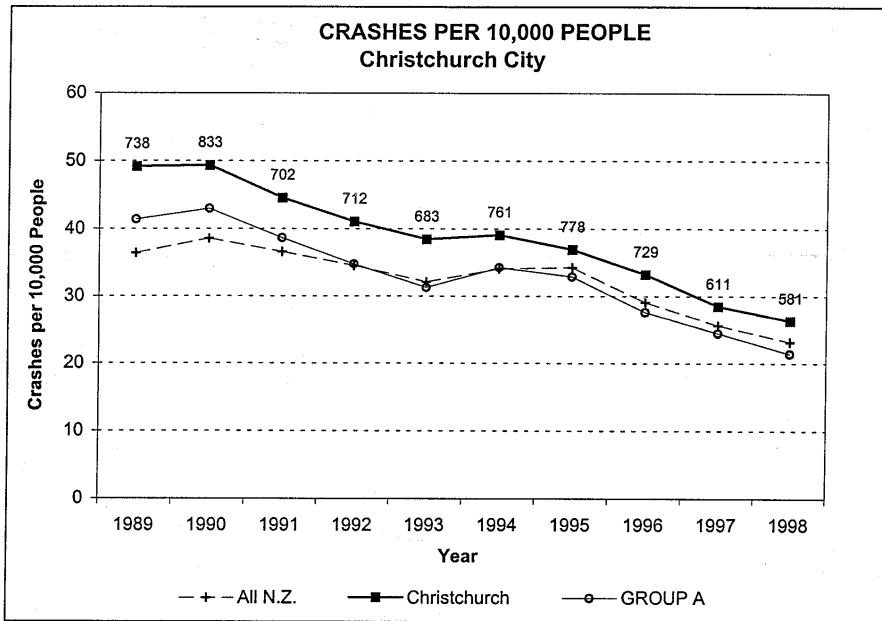
**Figure 1**



When Christchurch is compared with other cities in New Zealand and with the rest of New Zealand, Christchurch has more crashes per 10,000 population than other centres. Since 1994 however, the gap has closed, bringing Christchurch closer to the other centres in the years between 1995 and 1998.

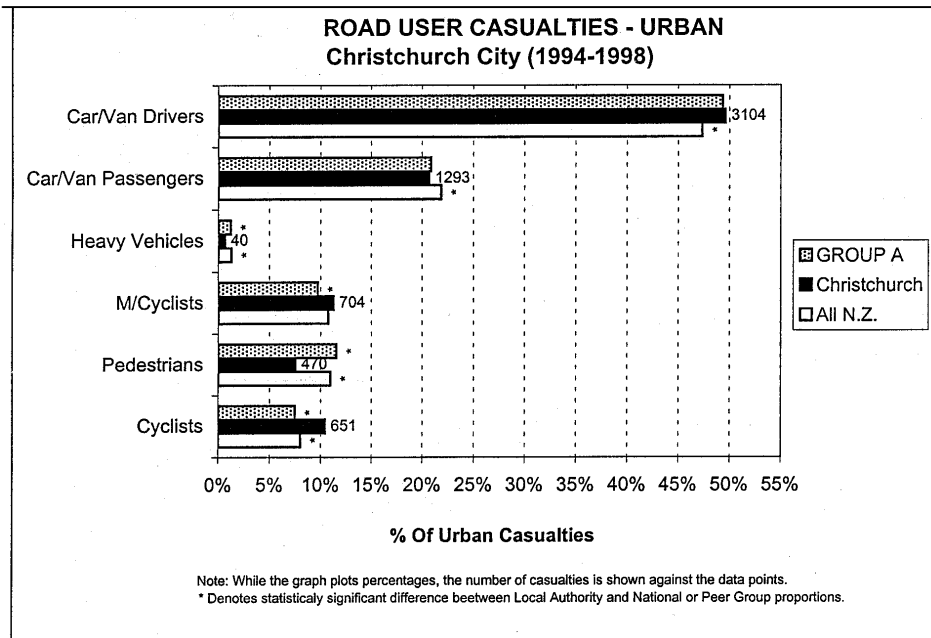
The reported crashes for the first six months of this year, 1999 show a very marked reduction in deaths and serious injury crashes. This may be the start of a stronger downward trend in the crash rate in Christchurch.

**Figure 2**



The road user casualties in Christchurch that are higher than other areas are cyclists and motorcyclists. This is a function of the greater numbers of these vulnerable road users in Christchurch than in other centres.

**Figure 3**

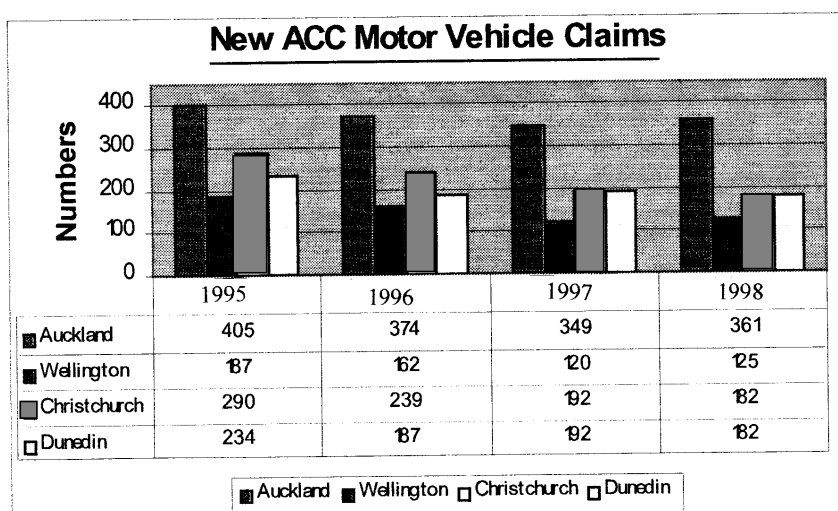




## REDUCTION IN ACC CLAIMS

The new claims for ACC show a similar steady reduction for both Christchurch and Canterbury. The figures for Riccarton and Papanui include the rural Canterbury claims. When Christchurch is compared with the other four main centres it may be seen that while Christchurch has declined steadily each of the other centres had an increase in 1997 or 1998. The reduction in new claims in Christchurch since 1995 has been greater than in the other cities. Note that this information has not been adjusted for population numbers.

Figure 4



## EDUCATION, ENGINEERING AND ENFORCEMENT

The road safety education and awareness programmes are part of a wider picture of road safety. It is not possible to show whether reductions in crashes are caused by education, engineering improvements or enforcement campaigns. All three work together to produce results and they have more effect when they are co-ordinated than each does on its own. In Christchurch there has been good co-ordination of the three road safety elements. They cannot be evaluated separately.

## CHANGE MODEL

The Land Transport Safety Authority bases their advertising on a model of behaviour change. This transtheoretical model of change, comes from addictive behaviour and psychotherapy. The model has 5 stages: pre-contemplation, contemplation, action, maintenance, and relapse (Prochaska et al, 1992). This can be viewed as a 'readiness to change continuum'.

The theory proposes that people will not change their behaviour until they are at the 'action' stage. They have to work through the 'contemplation' stage first.

In other words the community needs to start with the process of becoming aware of the problem and accepting that something needs to be done about it. Only when they have gone through this process will people start to move into the stage of changing their behaviour.

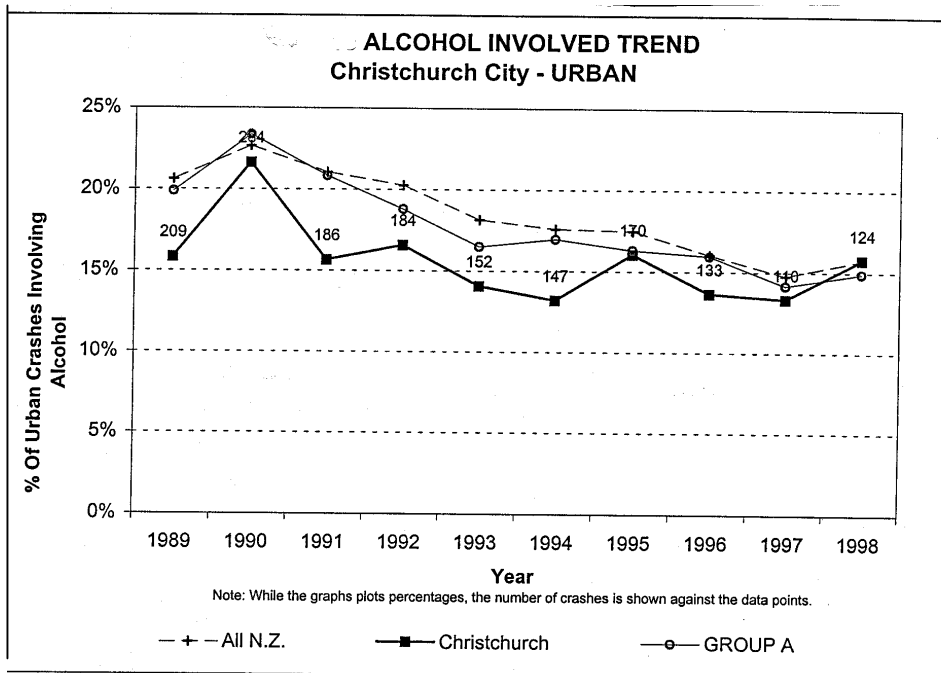
## ALCOHOL INVOLVED CRASHES

In the area of drinking and driving a large proportion of the community has worked through the contemplation stage and reached the action stage. Promotions have been carried out in this area for twenty years or more. We are able to show that drops in the rate of alcohol involved crashes correspond to promotional and enforcement activity. When there is a reduction in this activity the rate rises. Significant gains have been made in this area in recent years in Christchurch especially among young people who have been targeted in campaigns and education.

It is noticeable that when the level of promotion and enforcement is reduced the crash rate tends to increase. Once a proportion of the population is moved into the 'action' stage, gains in the form of a reduction in the crash rate should be achieved faster than in areas where most of the population is still at the 'contemplation' stage. It is therefore very cost effective to direct resources to address these issues. Maintenance and reinforcement are necessary for those who have begun to change their behaviour.

In Christchurch a lot of resources have been put into the drink driving issue. This is reflected in the downward trend of alcohol involved crashes and the fact that Christchurch has generally had a lower rate of alcohol involved crashes over the last eight years than other similar cities in New Zealand.

**Figure 5**



# Percent Involving Alcohol Christchurch City

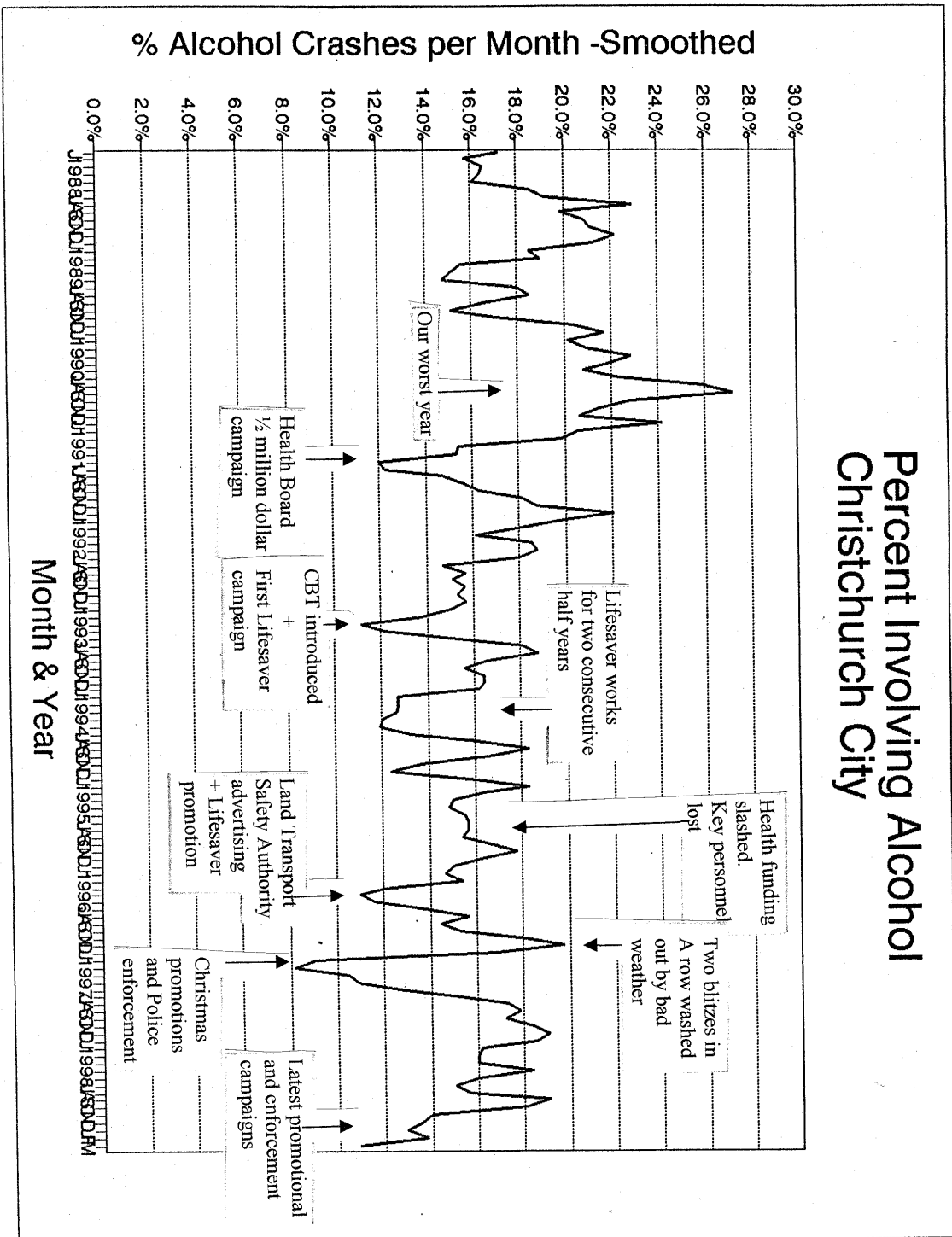


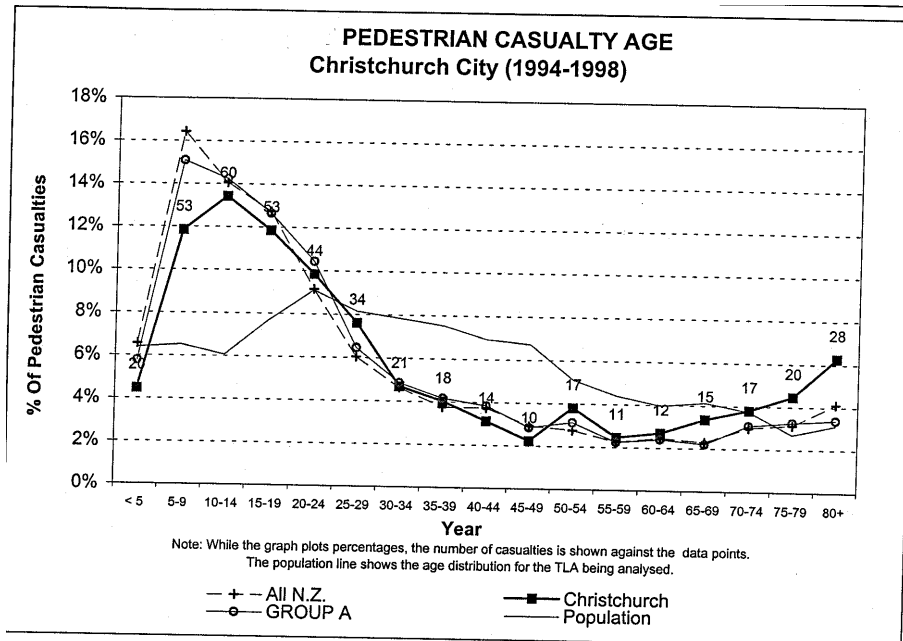
Figure 6

## OTHER ROAD SAFETY ISSUES

In the last two to three years the Christchurch City Council has put funding into promoting road safety education in the areas of speed, pedestrians, cyclists and intersections. In these areas most of the community is still at the 'pre-contemplation' stage. We are trying to move them into the 'contemplation' stage. A small proportion of the community is aware of the issues and the need to change. Promotion and education campaigns currently try to move these people towards the 'action' stage. Given the example of the drink driving campaigns it may take some years to do this.

In one area, however, Christchurch is doing very well. Speed measurements outside schools show that the majority of drivers slow as they pass schools at the time children are arriving and leaving. Crashes in relation to children aged 5-14 are much lower in Christchurch than in similar cities. This is an area which has received a lot of promotion in Christchurch in recent years.

Figure 7



## MEASURING CHANGES IN ATTITUDE

To show that promotional campaigns are achieving the desired attitude changes, evaluations have been carried out on some campaigns. These measure attitude change and set benchmarks in attitudes against which change in the future can be measured. Significant changes in attitude and self reported behaviour were found after the first red light running campaign. Benchmarks have been set up against which to measure changes in attitudes to pedestrians. A survey has measured attitudes to cycling, cyclists and cycle safety. A survey and focus groups on speed show that there is an understanding of the need to slow down outside schools.

## **CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVING SAFETY CULTURE IN NEW ZEALAND**

Resources given to road safety in Christchurch have a flow on benefit to other parts of the country. Television and radio advertising reaches audiences in Canterbury and also in the wider South Island. National resources such as the “No Thanks I’m Driving” kit have been developed by the NZ Roadshow Trust and distributed on a request basis to two thirds of secondary schools in New Zealand. Resources designed and produced in Christchurch are reprinted or copied and used by other road safety co-ordinators around the country. The extent of road safety activity in Christchurch and the commitment to road safety by the Christchurch City Council acts as an example and motivating influence for the rest of the country.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the two areas where the most resources have been contributed in Christchurch over the last eight years, those of alcohol involved crashes and child pedestrians, there has been a reduction in reported crashes and a better result than similar cities in New Zealand.

In other areas where resources have recently been contributed there have been changes in attitude. Following other models, a change in crash rates will follow over the next few years as the community moves from a change in attitude to a change in behaviour. This will only happen if the promotion, education and enforcement in these areas continues.

Christchurch has had a steady downward trend in crash rates. The downward trend in fatalities and reported serious injury crashes has accelerated in the first half of this year 1999. To ensure the continuation of this trend, resources should target areas where attitudes are changing and the community is moving from awareness of the issue towards the stage where people take action and change their behaviour.

Crash reductions are brought about by a holistic system. The contribution of road safety education programmes to improvements in road safety cannot be isolated from the effects of engineering improvements and enforcement campaigns. All these elements are needed to achieve a road safety outcome.

**Recommendation:** That the allocation of resources to the Council’s road safety education and awareness programme should continue at least at present levels to achieve further gains.

### **Chairman’s**

**Recommendation:**

1. That the above recommendation be adopted.
2. That the Council be advised where any additional resources would best be directed to accelerate the process towards a better road safety culture in Christchurch and that a range of increased resource options and reallocations be forwarded for the Council to consider in due course