

5. CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR TRAFFIC SAFETY

Officer responsible City Streets Manager	Author Susan Cambridge, DDI 332-2722
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The purpose of this report is to provide information from the last meeting of the Traffic Safety Co-ordinating Committee including recent education and awareness campaigns.

POLES

The Issue

The Co-ordinating Committee for Traffic Safety has been concerned about the number of crashes involving vehicles colliding with poles. Poles make up a greater proportion of objects struck in crashes in Christchurch than in other similar cities in the country. In the five years from 1996-2000 there were 15 crashes involving poles which resulted in fatalities.

Last month the Network Manager from Orion came to talk to the committee. Orion is required to contribute 21% of the funding for undergrounding requested by the Council. Orion is happy to contribute their share to a reasonable programme for undergrounding transmission lines if requested by the Council. The Network Manager would also like to see more consistency or forward planning in the undergrounding process. There is currently no process for prioritising undergrounding on the basis of risk of collision with poles. The segments of road with the highest risk of collision are not being identified in the Council process.

This report asks the City Services Committee to consider a prioritisation process for the undergrounding of transmission lines on the basis of safety.

Study on Collisions with Poles

A study of motor vehicle collisions in Christchurch involving poles was carried out by Dick Huntington of City Streets in 1995. The report on this survey won the Bitumix/Transit New Zealand Award for the best New Zealand paper in 1996 at the IPENZ Annual Conference. It was published in March 1997 in Road and Transport Research.

The study examined reported crashes over five years from 1990 to 1994. It was found that 6.2% of all reported crashes involved poles or posts. In those years 22 crashes involving utility poles resulted in 26 fatalities. Crashes which involved poles were three times as likely to result in a fatality as other crashes.

When undergrounding takes place the power poles are replaced by lighting poles. These lighting poles can be set back at the boundary usually at least three metres from the kerb or can be made frangible so that they bend when struck and result in less damage to vehicles and their occupants.

Dick Huntington's paper uses data on crash reduction researched in Australia and accepted by the Hazardous Pole Program Development Committee of New South Wales. He estimates that moving poles to 3 metres away from the carriageway would result in a crash reduction rate of up to 80%, making an annual saving of up to \$23 million per year in Christchurch based on the 1994 crash records.

"Black" Sections of Road

The study found that it was possible to identify "black" sections of road with large numbers of pole crashes. About 45% of collisions with poles were reported to be at or within 20 metres of an intersection. Many of the intersections with pole crashes were adjacent to "black" sections of road.

Two thirds of the pole collisions reported mid-block occurred along 101 identifiable segments of road, all of which are major or minor arterials. If the intersections are included then nearly half the pole collisions were reported along these routes. Taken together these segments of road total some 74.5 kilometres, less than 20% of the total arterial roads in the City and only 4.8% of the roading network.

Benefit/Cost

The report says that over 70 segments of road in Christchurch which would attract a benefit/cost ratio of over 5 have been identified.

The report concludes a policy should be established to:

- Include the undergrounding of power and telecommunications reticulation, for a minimum distance of 40 metres from the intersection, as part of any new roundabout or traffic signal design. Non-frangible poles should be replaced with frangible poles placed at the road boundary.
- Underground all power and telecommunications reticulation at the intersection of two or more arterial roads and to replace non-frangible poles with frangible lighting and service poles placed at the road boundary.
- Take remedial action by undergrounding all power and telecommunications transmission lines along arterial routes where a rate of impact exceeds 1 injury collision per year per kilometre.

INTERSECTION CAMPAIGN

Further flights of the "Love's Sweet Madness" radio advertisement will be played on radio through May. The results of the evaluation of the campaign will be available later in June.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CAMPAIGN

The Pedestrian Safety Group has given a brief to UMC to design resource material for a campaign to be aired in the next financial year. The funding for the development of the campaign is Land Transport Safety Authority regional funding through Environment Canterbury. The campaign will be designed to work in Timaru and Ashburton as well as in Christchurch.

SPEED CAMPAIGN

A questionnaire has been developed to evaluate the speed campaign and has been used as part of the Opinions Market Research quarterly monitor being run in May. Information from this evaluation will be available later in June to help with the planning of next year's campaign.

RESPONSIBLE DRIVING

'Now TV' has designed a campaign on responsible driving which included television and radio advertising as well as talk back and news items. The issues targeted were:

- Turning into the correct lane at intersections,
- Merging or changing lanes,
- Safe distance between cars,
- Safe driving using cell phones, changing CDs, tapes, etc.

OLDER DRIVERS

The older road user group is investigating ways to take a variety of road safety information to groups of older adults in a fun and interesting way.

WINTER DRIVING CAMPAIGN

The Regional Co-ordinators are planning a joint campaign focusing on winter driving issues for June.

CAAP CAMPAIGN

A report from the CAAP Co-ordinator is attached.

- Recommendation:**
1. That City Streets identify sections of road showing a high risk of collisions with poles and use this information to prioritise the undergrounding of transmission lines on a road safety basis.
 2. That the information be received

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the City Streets Manager report on the current undergrounding prioritisation methodology and on options to include traffic safety considerations as suggested in this report.