Safer Travel - a Road Safety Strategy

Matamata-Piako District Council's primary road safety goal is to reduce the incidence and severity of crashes in the Matamata-Piako area.

Updated May 2012
Trim 1089447

Introduction

Matamata-Piako District Council wants to reduce road casualities and trauma within the district by increasing safety for all road users.
To achieve this, Council in association with other key stakeholders will undertake actions in engineering, education and enforcement to address the issues that arise in an integrated, affordable and sustainable way.

This Road Safety Strategy gives the direction Council and other stakeholders will take in addressing the road safety issues within the District so that it achieves one of the community outcomes of having “Safe and Healthy Communities” as outlined in the Long Term Council Community Plan.

Road Safety depends on the commitment and efforts of central and local government, communities, organizations, families and individuals throughout New Zealand. Everyone has a part to play in advancing this strategy and I commend it to you.

Hugh Vercoe
Mayor

1.00 Background

1.01 Road Trauma

Matamata-Piako District Council operated as part of a local and national road safety structure aimed at reducing the level of deaths and injuries on our roads.

Although the road toll has fallen steadily since 1988 when 800 people died on New Zealand roads to 2008 when 385 people died on New Zealand roads.

Also in 2008, 2793 people had serious injuries. However, as a percentage the road toll has risen from 25% to 35% from 2005-2008.

The data from NZTA shows, in Group D – being similar Councils,
per 100 million vehicle km is:
Crashes are 32 – group 27
Fatalities are 44 – group 40

1.02 Issues

Where are all the crashes occurring?

New Zealand	Waikato	
37%	55%	on State Highways
63%	45%	on local roads
52%	71%	on open roads >50kphr
48%	29%	on urban roads >70kphr
31%	23%	at intersections

Factors Contributing:

23%	25%	Speed
22%	23%	Alcohol
12%	12%	Fatigue
37%	44%	Loss of control on bends and/or head-ons
45%	46%	Road side objects

The recurring road safety issues for the Matamata-Piako District include:

Speed	Alcohol
Loss of control	Failure to give way
Roadside objects	

1.03 Community Acceptance

Speed and alcohol are widely acknowledged as major road safety problems. The once commonly held attitude that speeding and drink driving are not risky, as long as the driver is careful, has gradually lost currency over recent years.

Public support for alcohol, speed and seatbelt enforcement continues to be high. “Reduce the Risk” campaigning has also help gain community acceptance.

There is, however, a change in the profile of drink drivers. Increasing numbers of Women are being apprehended and the rise in binge drinking may have implications for the future.

Data from the 2009-2012 Regional Road Safety Strategy for the Waikato region published by Waikato Regional Council.

2.00 Risk Management

2.01 Change of Government

The strategy has a 3 year lifetime but sets a longer direction in terms of vision and targets. A change in Government may alter the environment in which this strategy operates.

2.02 Funding

Significant reductions in levels of government funding could result in a decrease of the safety of the roading network.

2.03 Economic Conditions

The continuing recession may result in a decline in vehicle use, thereby reduce the income from the tax on fuel and also further decline in the standard of maintenance of the vehicles on our roads. The conditions may also increase the number of uninsured vehicles on our roads.

2.04 Oil Prices

The New Zealand dollar is reasonably high and the price of oil is low in comparison. It can be expected that both conditions will alter during the next three years.

2.05 Carbon Tax

The impact on the roading sector will be significant and may well flow to affect road safety and crash prevention work.

2.06 Legislation

There are a number of initiatives being undertaken by Parliament which contain many safety initiatives and power to police. One of these is a Ministry of Transport document called ‘Safer Journeys’ being a Road Safety Strategy 2010-2020. There are also changes proposed to the law regarding right turn priority. The degree to which this initiative is passed into law will greatly affect the safety outcomes in the district over the medium to long term.

2.07 Alcohol Review

Alcohol is a major contributor to road trauma. Of all accidents, alcohol is responsible for 22% nationwide, 23% for the Waikato region and 25% for Matamata-Piako District

2.08 Age

The aging population is an increasing proportion of the population and this causes a shift in the road trauma statistics.

3.00 Alcohol and other impairing drugs

3.01 Objective

To reduce road trauma.

3.02 Background

The misuse of alcohol and drugs is one of the chief causes of serious road trauma in New Zealand.

For every 100 alcohol impaired drivers killed in road crashes, on average 54 of their passengers and 42 sober road users die with them.

Despite such efforts such as SADD, there is a rise in youth, particularly female binge drinking.

3.03 Method

Education

- continue programmes such as “Reduce the Risk” and “Plan B4 U Party”.

Engineering

- install and maintain road detours when crashes block transport routes.

Enforcement

- support targeted enforcement by Police.

4.00 Goals

4.01 National goals

Road Safety to 2020

The Safer Journeys strategy, aims to reduce the number of road deaths and hospitalisations. This goal will be achieved through a balanced approach using initiatives that are built around the three E's-engineering, education and enforcement.

This strategy sets out the performance sought in terms of the immediate outcomes in the priority areas of speed management, drink driving and the use of restraints and sets out user group outcomes for pedestrians, and cyclists. It also sets out regional outcomes to provide a focus for regional land transport strategies, and to gauge the effectiveness of regional and local road safety work.

4.02 Waikato Regional Council's road safety goals

Waikato Regional Council fulfils a coordinating role in road safety for the Waikato Region. An annual Road Safety Report assist's Waikato's Regional Council's Road Safety Plan. The regional Road Safety goal is:

- By 2040 there will be a 50% reduction in road related deaths compared with the annual five year average (2004-2008) of 79 deaths – a reduction of 40 less deaths.
- By 2040 there will be a 25% reduction in road related serious injuries compared with the annual five year average (2004-2008) of 229 serious injuries.

This is the equivalent of 74 less serious injuries.

4.03 Matamata-Piako's District Council's road safety goals

Matamata-Piako District Council's goals are;

- to reduce the incidence and severity of crashes in the Matamata-Piako area
- to achieve the targets set for road crash reduction and road user behaviour
- to foster good road safety attitudes, skills, and behaviour among all road users – drivers, passengers, motorcyclists, cyclists, and pedestrians
- to promote and develop a safer roading environment
- to work with key road safety partners (Environment Waikato, New Zealand Transport Agency, Police, ACC, and Neighbouring Road Controlling Authorities).

5.00 Speed

5.01 Objective

To decrease the number of speed related crashes by changing attitudes and reducing speeds.

5.02 Background

Speed includes not only exceeding the speed limit but also driving too fast for the condition of the road. No matter how good drivers think they are, speeding significantly increases the chances of crashing and serious injury or death.

In the Matamata-Piako District, speed was a factor in 17% of injury crashes in 2005, rising to 32% in 2007 and falling to 18% in 2009.

Drivers travelling at excessive speed accounted for around 45% of open road crashes. Most roads in Waikato region were built for 80km/hr speeds and cannot be driven at the open road maximum of 100km/hr.

5.03 Method

Engineering

- ensure that the road network environment is consistent to ensure that appropriate decisions can be made by drivers to enable them to drive to the condition of the road
- improve the quality of the road network, so that drivers can travel at the environmental speed safely
- crash reduction studies, setting speed limits, and remedial works aimed at areas with speed related crash problems in accordance with the Safety Management Systems.

Education

- continue education programmes and media strategies.
- continue to state the fact that the speed limit is a limit and not a target.

Enforcement

- support targeted enforcement by Police in areas with speed related crash problems.

6.00 Failure to Give Way

6.01 Objective

To reduce the number of failure to give way crashes by changing attitudes and ensuring consistently well-designed intersections.

6.02 Background

Failure to give way can occur at a number of locations including:

- at controlled and uncontrolled intersections
- at zebra and operating kea crossings
- when entering or exiting the roadway from a driveway or parking area.

In the Matamata-Piako District, intersection crashes have fluctuated over the recent years, and make up 37% of all crashes in the District in 2009.

This is a rise from 28% in 2008, 27% in 2007 and 20% in 2006. These were typically turning and crossing type conflicts.

The main factors associated with urban intersection crashes in the Matamata-Piako District were failure to give way or stop and not looking for or seeing another road user until too late.

6.03 Method

Engineering

- ensure that adequate sight distances are present with consistent use of intersection controls
- crash reduction studies, revising speed limits, and remedial works aimed at intersections, and pedestrian crossings with a history of crashes in accordance with the Safety Management Systems.

Education

- continue education programmes and media strategies.

Enforcement

- support targeted enforcement by Police at intersections with a known crash problem.

7.00 Loss of control

7.01 Objective

To reduce the number of loss of control crashes by changing attitudes and ensuring consistently well-designed roads.

7.02 Background

Loss of control comes from:

- inattention or failing to notice, e.g. failing to notice traffic signs while driving home on “autopilot” and thinking about what to cook for tea
- attention being diverted, e.g. being distracted by children in the back seat
- not seeing or looking for another road user until too late, e.g. not checking behind when changing lanes, or experiencing near misses at intersections
- loss of control can also result in head-on crashes.

In the Matamata-Piako District, loss of control was a factor in 48% of crashes in 2007, 42% in 2008 and 37% in 2009. This is the reverse of the national trend.

Loss of Control was predominantly a rural issue in the Matamata-Piako District. This was a factor in 42% of the injury crashes in 2008 reducing to 36% in 2009 but still above the national average.

In the Urban area, loss of control was a factor of 27% of the injury crashes in 2008 falling to 16% in 2009.

7.03 Method

Engineering

- ensure that adequate sight distances are present where possible and provide consistent use of intersection controls

- work towards a roading network that contains no surprises for the inattentive driver

- crash reduction studies, setting speed limits, and remedial works aimed at locations with a history of crashes in accordance with the Safety Management Systems.

Education

- continue education programmes and media strategies aimed at encouraging drivers to stop being complacent and looking without seeing
- raise awareness of rural driving conditions. The speed limit is a limit and not a target

Enforcement

- support Police in addressing this issue.

8.00 Roadside objects

8.01 Objective

To reduce the number of crashes with roadside objects

8.02 Background

In the urban area, crashes with objects varied from 5 in 2000 to 7 in 2009. These crashes account for 30% of all urban crashes.

In the rural area, crashes with objects varied from 36 in 2000 to 48 in 2009. These crashes account for 60% of all rural crashes.

The main type of objects struck are poles in the urban area and fences/buildings, ditches and banks in the rural area.

8.03 Method

Education

- the posted speed limit is not a target.

Engineering

- promote the design of safety zones along-side roads by locating water table drains away from the road.
- promote the undergrounding of power at urban intersections
- promote the use of traverse bars on the wing walls of large culverts and the extension of smaller culverts.
- continue with Crash Reduction Studies to identify problems for scheduling on the Deficiency Database.

The way forward

The core road safety priorities will continue to revolve around how safely the road is engineered, how effectively we educate road users, and how well we enforce unsafe driving behaviour.

Over time, each significant improvement in road safety will be more difficult to achieve.
Road safety agencies will need to continue to look across the spectrum for new ways to reduce deaths and hospitalisations as a result of road crashes on our roads.

To ensure the most accurate information is available to road safety advocators, Matamata-Piako District Council want the public to help by reporting of all crashes to the Police or alternatively to Council. This will result in a more comprehensive picture of crash information that can be used by Council and other Road Controlling Authorities who work within the district to identify the causes and plan any necessary road improvements.

This strategy shall be reviewed every three years.

For further information, contact

Susanne Kampshof
Asset Manager, Strategy and Policy

Road safety action plan

Action		Review interval	By who
Safety Deficiency database		Six monthly	Assets
Safety Audits		As required	Consultant
Black spot report		Annually	Assets
Crash reduction studies		Annually	Consultant
NZTA Annual Road Safety		Annually	NZTA
Pedestrian Crossing Audit		As required	Assets
Kea Crossing Audit		As required	Assets
District Plan Review		10 yearly	Planning
Safety Inspection Reports		As required	Assets/KC
To include	Road geometry including safety zones		
	Sign location		
	Speed zone change		
	Markings		
	Clear sightlines		
	Intersections		
	Vegetation		
	Delineation		
	Barriers		
	Bridge markers		
	Road surface		
	Culvert entry and outlet structures		