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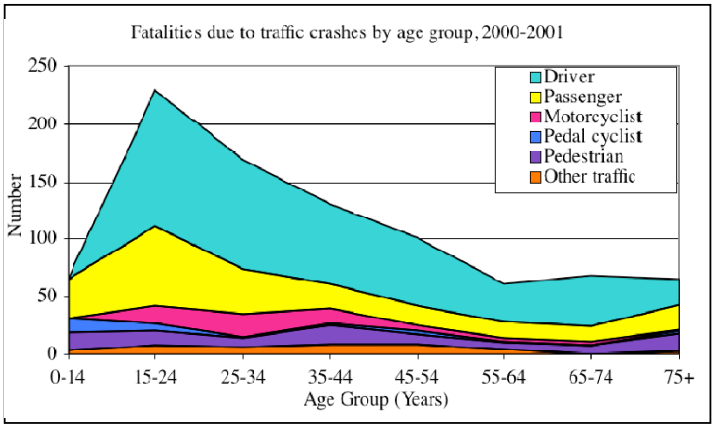
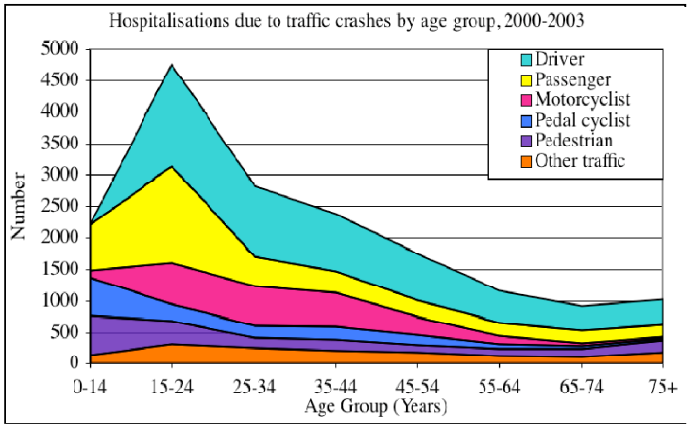
A 'Snapshot' of Traffic Crash Injuries

The following information provides a 'snapshot' of traffic crash injuries in the first few years of the 21st century in New Zealand. Traffic crashes are transport crashes that occur on public roads. The numbers of people killed or hospitalised as a result of these crashes are shown in the first two graphs. The subsequent graphs present rates of fatalities and hospitalisations with respect to exposure to travel and by population. Fatality data are from 2000 to 2001 inclusive (2 years), while hospitalisation data are from 2000 to 2003 inclusive (4 years).

Numbers of Traffic Crash Injuries



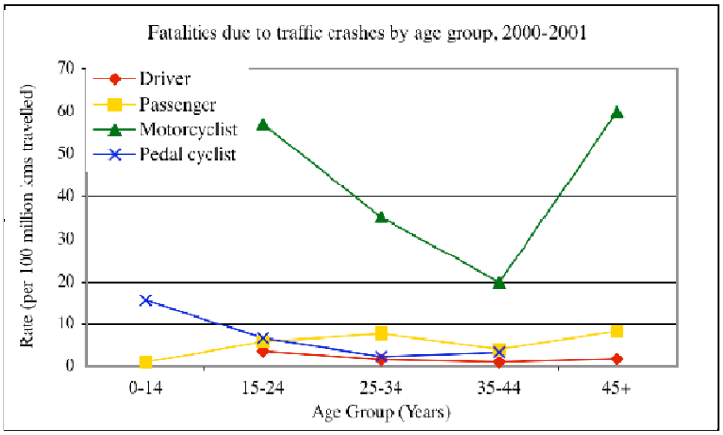


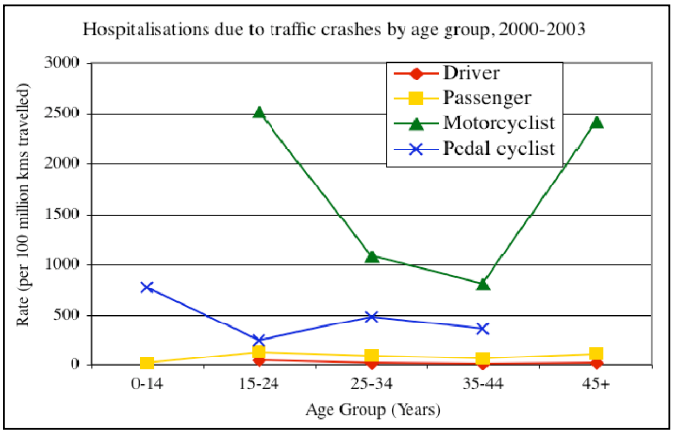
- Those aged between 15 and 24 years had the greatest number of traffic crash fatalities and hospitalisations.
- For all ages except the 0-14 year olds, drivers* contributed the greatest number of traffic crash fatalities and hospitalisations.
- Fatalities among 0-14 year olds were mostly passengers. Hospitalised 0-14 year olds were mainly passengers, pedestrians or pedal cyclists.
- Amongst those aged 75 years and over, drivers, passengers and pedestrians accounted for almost all of the fatalities and hospitalisations.

* 'Driver' and 'Passenger' refer to the drivers and passengers of cars, pick-up trucks and vans, but exclude heavy transport vehicles. 'Other traffic' includes unspecified occupants of vehicles, injuries occurring while boarding and alighting vehicles, and drivers or passengers of any other vehicle that crashed on public roads, for example, special agricultural vehicles.

Fatalities and Hospitalisations in Relation to Distance Travelled

These graphs compare the risk of traffic crash injury for drivers, passengers, motorcyclists and pedal cyclists based on travel exposure# (distance driven or ridden).



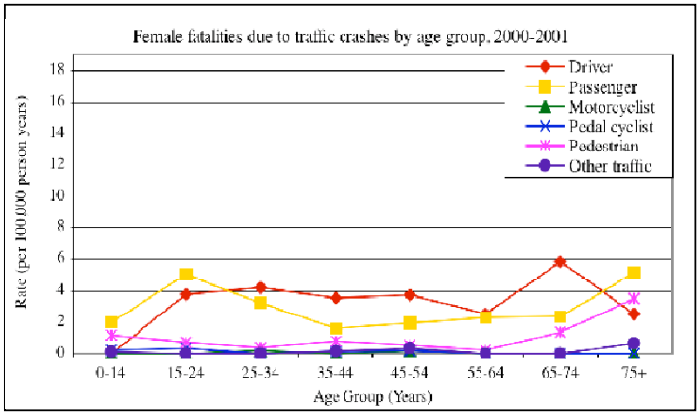


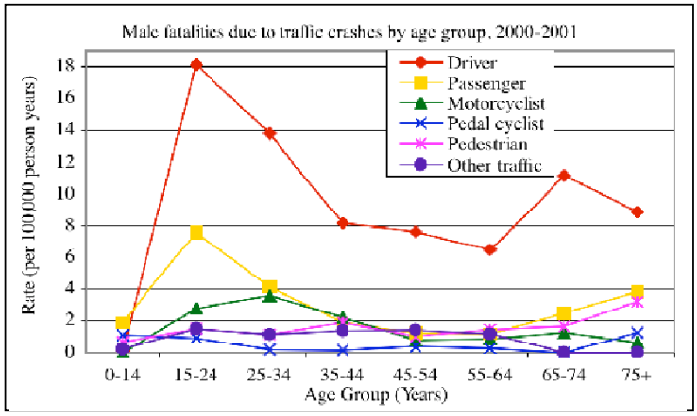
- These graphs illustrate the relatively high risk of traffic crash injury for motorcyclists, particularly for those aged 15-24 years and 45 years and over.
- For pedal cyclists, the risk of injury was higher among riders aged 0-14 years than those aged 15 years or over.

Travel exposure data used here came from the 1997/98 New Zealand Household Travel Survey in which participants estimated the distance they travelled by various modes of transport in the previous year. While the accuracy of these estimates may not have been verified we have no reason to believe that accuracy should differ substantially by type of road user and therefore these are suitable for the purposes of comparing road users as given above. The above graphs cannot be presented by gender as data for male and female motorcyclists was unavailable.

Fatality and Hospitalisation Rates in Relation to Population

Fatalities





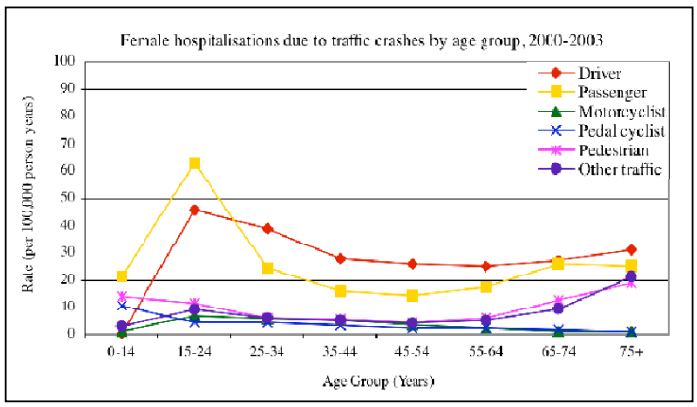
For Females:

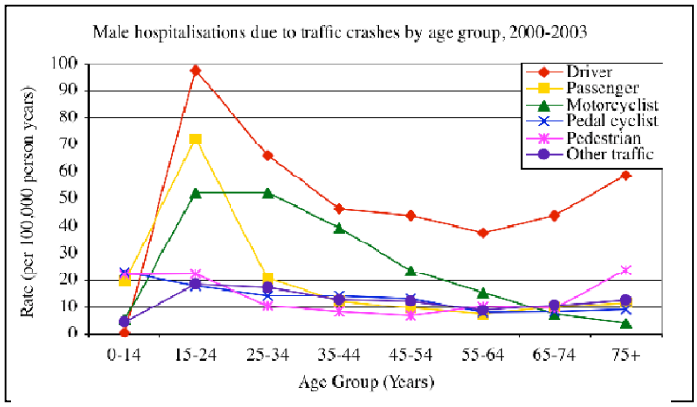
- The rates for female driver fatalities were considerably lower than for male drivers for all age groups.
- Female driver and passenger traffic fatalities were quite evenly distributed across all age groups (excluding those aged 0 to 14 years).
- The rate for pedestrian fatalities was highest among those aged 65-74 and 75+ (1.4 and 3.5 per 100,000 person years respectively) and 0 to 14 years (1.2 per 100,000 person years).
- The fatality rates for female motorcyclists and pedal cyclists were very low.

For Males:

- Male drivers aged 15 to 24 years had a much higher traffic crash fatality rate (18.1 per 100,000 person years) than drivers of any other age group.
- Across all age groups, male drivers had the highest risk of traffic crash injuries that resulted in fatality (excluding those aged 0 to 14 years).
- Male passengers aged 15 to 24 years had a higher crash fatality rate (7.6 per 100,000 person years) than passengers of other age groups.
- The male motorcyclist fatality rate was higher for those aged between 15 and 44 years than in other age groups.

Hospitalisations





For Females:

- Female drivers and passengers had the highest rates for hospitalisation for all age groups, except 0-14 year old drivers.
- The rates of injury for both female drivers and passengers were highest for 15-24 year olds, (reaching 46.0 and 62.9 per 100,000 person years respectively), dropped during the middle adult years, and rose after age 65 years.
- Rates of female pedestrian and other traffic incidents were relatively stable until 65 years, where they both began to increase.

For Males:

- Male drivers had the highest rate of traffic injury hospitalisation for all age groups (97.8 per 100,000 person years), except 0-14 year old drivers.
- Male motorcyclists had the second highest rate of traffic injury hospitalisations across age groups from 25-64 years.
- The highest hospitalisation rates across all male road users were for those aged 15 to 24 years and 75 years and over.
- There is a higher risk of pedestrian injury to males 0-24 years of age and 75 years and over.

Data Source: Morbidity Data (2000-2003), Mortality Data (2000-2001), New Zealand Health Information Service, Ministry of Health, Wellington.
Traffic crashes were identified using the International Classification of Disease External Cause Codes, 10th edition.
For further details on injury data visit our website: http://www.otago.ac.nz/ipru/Stats/

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