

1 How many people visit New Zealand each year?

More than three million international tourists visit New Zealand each year. That's more than half our entire population arriving over 12 months, although most visit between November and March. There are 1.7 million people expected between November and March in 2015/16.

2 How many crashes do overseas drivers have?

In 2014 overseas drivers were 'involved' in (but not necessarily 'at-fault' in¹) 16 fatal crashes and 536 injury crashes. In the same year there were 268 fatal crashes on New Zealand roads in total, and over 8600 injury crashes.

3 Do visiting drivers have higher crash rates than local drivers?

Over the last five years (2010-2014), there have been an average of 13.6 fatal crashes per year where an overseas licence holder was 'at fault'. Over the same period the average number of fatal crashes in total on our roads per year was 274.

It's not known exactly how much driving international visitors do while they are here, which would allow a calculation of crash rates per kilometre driven, but overseas licence holders have been 'involved' in 5.7 percent of fatal and injury crashes on our roads from 2010-2014.

4 Has there been an increase in crashes involving visitors in recent times?

No. The numbers of crashes 'involving' overseas licence holders has stayed relatively constant or decreased over the last 10 years. At the same time the number of international visitors coming to New Zealand has increased by about 30 percent.

From 2005-2009 the average number of fatal crashes where an overseas driver was 'at fault' was 13.8 per year. From 2010-2014 the average was 13.6.

From 2005-2009 the average number of injury crashes where an overseas driver was 'at fault' was 428.6 per year. From 2010-2014 the average number of injury crashes was 402.6.

¹ 'At fault' means the driver was considered to have the primary responsibility for the crash based on the information in the Crash Analysis System and is not necessarily related to the outcome of any subsequent court case. 'Involved' means the driver was involved in a crash but was not necessarily 'at fault'.

5 Are the crash rates the same all over the country?

Generally regions with high tourist numbers and smaller local populations have greater proportions of crashes 'involving' overseas licence holders. Auckland has by far the highest number of crashes 'involving' overseas licence holders but they only make up five percent of crashes in the region overall. In contrast, between 21-38 percent of all crashes in the Westland, Mackenzie, Queenstown-Lakes, Southland and Kaikoura regions 'involve' an overseas licence holder.

6 What countries have the most visitors involved in crashes?

In 2014 the six countries that had the most visitors 'involved' in crashes were (in order from most to least): Australia, Germany, UK, China, India, and the USA. A large proportion of our visitors come from these countries.

Over the last ten years, Australian and UK visitors have been the groups 'involved' in the greatest number of crashes annually, so while driving on a different side of the road may be a factor in some crashes, it is clearly not the only factor.

7 Are all the overseas licence holders involved in crashes tourists?

The majority are, but about 22 percent of the overseas licence holders 'involved' in a crash are immigrants or students still legally using a licence from their home country. Drivers from many other nations can drive in New Zealand for up to a year before needing to convert to a New Zealand licence.

8 What types of crashes are overseas licence holders most involved in?

About a third of 'at fault' overseas licence holders in crashes failed to adapt to New Zealand conditions or rules.

Crashes will often have multiple factors involved in them and the four other most common factors for 'at fault' overseas licence holders are losing control and running off the road (35 percent), failing to give way or stop (29 percent), not seeing another party (19 percent), and inattention or distraction (17 percent). Failing to keep left was a factor for five percent of 'at fault' overseas licence holders.

Crashes 'involving' local drivers have the same four most common factors, with losing control (28 percent), failing to give way or stop (25 percent), inattention or distraction (22 percent) and not seeing another party (21 percent).

For more information go to www.saferjourneys.govt.nz/action-plans/signature-programme/visiting-drivers-project

9 Where do the crashes happen?

58 percent of crashes 'involving' overseas licence holders are on the open road but the pattern varies markedly between regions.

For the West Coast and Southern regions about 90 percent of crashes are on the open road. The figure for Wellington and Auckland is 34 percent.

- » **2014 fatal crashes 'involved':** New Zealanders (268), overseas licence holders (16).
- » **2014 injury crashes 'involved':** New Zealanders (8600), overseas licence holders (536).
- » **Number of overseas drivers 'involved' in crashes** fell from 597 in 2004 to 564 in 2014.
- » **Westland has the highest proportion of crashes** 'involving' overseas drivers (38%), then MacKenzie District (27%) and Queenstown Lakes (25%).
- » **Licence holders from Australia** were the overseas drivers most commonly 'involved' in crashes from 2010 to 2014 (353), then Germany (285), UK (271), China (226), India (215), and the USA (193).

Background to the statistics

- » All these statistics relate to overseas licence holders - for further information see question 7.
- » Source: Overseas Drivers in Crashes Factsheet from Ministry of Transport www.transport.govt.nz/research/crashfacts/overseasdriversincrashes/
- » This statistical information comes from the Crash Analysis System (CAS). Information is entered into CAS when a police officer has attended a crash and provided a report to the NZ Transport Agency.
- » The system records whether a driver involved in a crash had an overseas licence. It does not capture how long the driver had been in New Zealand at the time of the crash, so these figures may include non-tourist drivers, for example those on valid immigration permits still using their overseas licence.
- » The 'overseas drivers involved in fatal/injury crashes' statistics reflect drivers involved in crashes - some crashes may be single car crashes, which don't involve another driver, however in multiple car crashes, there may be more than one overseas driver involved.
- » The term 'open road' refers to a road with a speed limit higher than 70km/h.