

## Safety belt wearing by adult front seat occupants: Results of national survey, March / April 2010

The latest annual national survey of safety belt use in New Zealand by adults in the front seats of cars and vans was carried out in March and April 2010. More than 96,000 drivers and adult front seat passengers were observed at 274 sites around the country. As in previous years, each site was surveyed between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. on normal working weekdays during the school term.

In 2010, the safety belt wearing rate for drivers and adult front seat passengers was **95%**. This result indicates that the improvements made in earlier years are being maintained (see Table 1).

The wearing rates for various categories of front seat occupant are shown in Table 1. As observed in previous years, travellers on the open road had a higher wearing rate than those in urban areas (97% and 95%, respectively) and males were less likely to wear their safety belts than females (also see Figure 1). Five percent of male drivers and eight percent of male passengers were not wearing a safety belt, compared to two percent of female drivers and three percent of female passengers. Over the last 10 years, wearing rates have increased significantly, especially for male drivers and passengers.

*Table 1. Safety belt wearing rates for front seat adults by category for the past ten years (%)*

Category	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Urban	90	91	91	93	94	94	94	94	95	95
Open road	93	93	93	95	96	97	96	96	96	97
Drivers	92	92	92	94	95	95	95	95	96	96
Passengers	92	93	92	94	95	96	95	95	95	96
Males	89	90	89	92	93	94	94	94	94	95
Male drivers	89	90	90	92	94	94	94	94	95	95
Male passengers	88	88	88	89	90	93	90	91	90	92
Females	95	95	94	96	96	97	97	97	97	98
Female drivers	95	95	94	96	96	97	97	97	97	98
Female passengers	94	95	94	96	96	97	97	96	97	97
All New Zealand	92	92	92	94	95	95	95	95	95	96

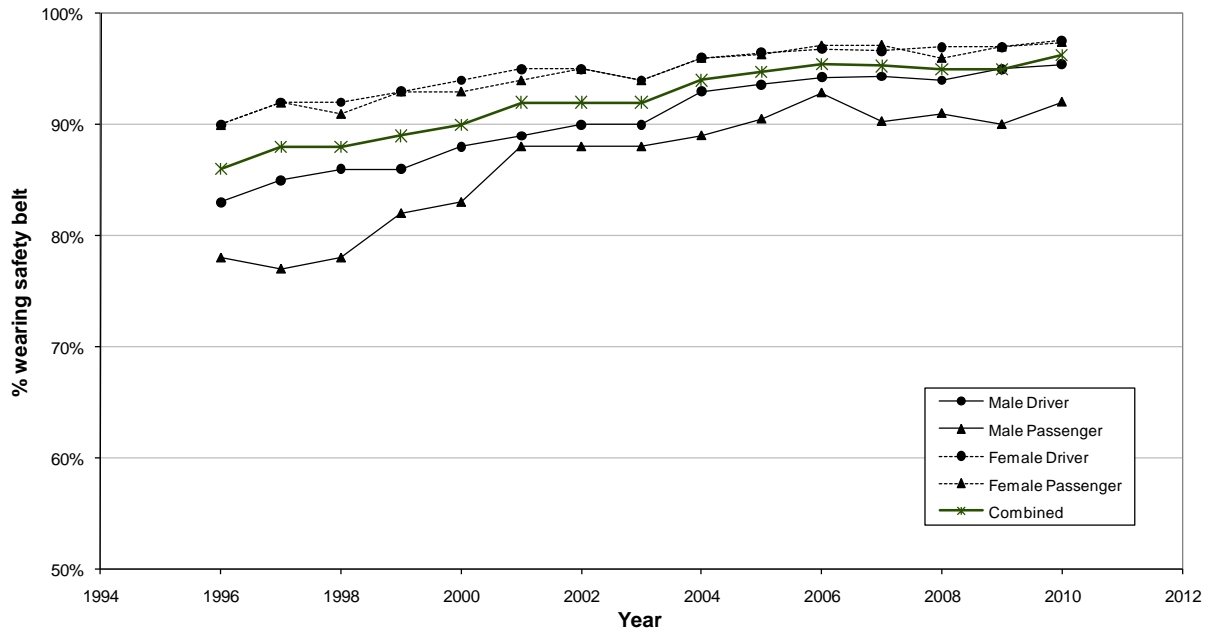


Figure 1. Safety belt wearing rates for front seat adults, 1996-2010

### Regional Wearing Rates

These restraint wearing surveys are designed to provide a consistent measure of safety belt use over time by surveying the same sites in each region each year.

Table 2 shows the safety belt wearing rates in each Local Government region over the last ten years. In 2010, at least 3,500 drivers and front seat occupants were surveyed in each region, except in Gisborne where 1174 occupants were surveyed.

Overall, all regions show generally increasing trends in seatbelt usage since 1998. Seatbelt usage has increased significantly<sup>1</sup> since last year in Northland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Taranaki and West Coast. It has decreased since last year in Otago. Other regions have not changed markedly since last year, and are continuing to follow a similar pattern to the national wearing rate.

<sup>1</sup> Increase/ decreases have been commented on when the change is considered to be statistically significant; that is, the change in the wearing rate observed in the survey is likely to reflect a real change in the wearing rate.

Table 2. Front seat adult safety belt wearing rates by Local Government Region for the past ten years (%)

Local Government Region	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Northland	88	93	90	93	93	98	100	90	87	95
Auckland	94	91	95	96	97	97	96	96	96	97
Waikato	93	94	93	94	96	94	95	97	95	97
Bay of Plenty	94	95	93	95	93	95	94	93	96	97
Gisborne	94	95	96	92	92	96	78	85	86	89
Hawke's Bay	82	90	90	91	91	97	94	89	97	97
Taranaki	93	96	93	92	96	95	95	96	96	98
Manawatu-Wanganui	88	88	88	92	92	96	96	96	95	95
Wellington	94	93	91	94	96	96	95	95	95	95
Nelson/ Marlborough/ Tasman	94	95	96	96	97	97	97	97	98	98
West Coast	94	90	90	93	94	95	95	96	96	97
Canterbury	92	93	92	94	95	94	97	96	96	96
Otago	95	95	92	94	94	95	95	97	97	95
Southland	93	87	93	96	97	95	95	96	96	96
All NZ	92	92	92	94	95	95	95	95	95	96

*Note.* The accuracy of the wearing rates shown here depends on the sample sizes (the number of vehicle occupants observed). If the sample size is small, the data may show large random fluctuations in the observed wearing rate. Gisborne region is most affected, with a sample size of less than 300 occupants in 1999 and 600-900 occupants in 2000-2008. Typically, sample sizes in other regions have been over 1000 occupants prior to 2003 and over 3500 occupants since then.

### Metropolitan Area Wearing Rates

Table 3 shows the wearing rates for selected metropolitan areas over the last ten years. The observed front seat belt wearing rate has increased in Auckland City, Waitakere, Hamilton and Christchurch. North Shore and Wellington have decreased. Wearing rates in the other metropolitan areas are similar to previous years.

Table 3. Front seat adult safety belt wearing rates by Metropolitan area (%)

Metropolitan area	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
North Shore	96	87	98	97	98	96	96	98	99	92
Waitakere	93	92	92	98	98	97	98	92	98	100
Auckland City	99	98	99	96	98	100	98	98	95	99
Manukau	89	83	93	93	97	93	94	96	96	96
Hamilton	96	91	96	96	99	98	95	96	95	97
Wellington City	94	93	96	97	98	98	92	98	99	97
Christchurch	86	94	97	97	97	97	96	95	96	98
Dunedin	96	98	95	92	97	94	97	98	98	99

Note. The accuracy of wearing rates shown here depends on the sample sizes (the number of vehicle occupants observed). If the sample size is small, the data may show large random fluctuations in the observed wearing rate.

### Police District Wearing Rates

National restraint wearing surveys are designed to provide a consistent measure of safety belt use over time, by surveying the same sites in each district each year.

Wearing rates in the Waitemata and Southern Districts have returned to the 2008 level after an improvement in 2009. Seat belt use rates in Northland, Auckland, Counties/Manukau, Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Central have improved since last year.

Table 4 shows the safety belt wearing rates in each Police District over the last ten years.

Table 4: Front seat adult safety belt wearing rates by Police District (%).

Police District	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Northland	88	93	90	93	93	98	99	90	87	95
Waitemata	95	93	96	98	98	98	97	96	98	96
Auckland	99	98	99	96	98	100	98	98	95	99
Counties/Manukau	89	86	93	94	95	95	94	95	96	97
Waikato	91	96	92	94	96	94	95	97	95	97
Bay of Plenty	95	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	95	98
Eastern	84	91	90	91	91	97	91	89	95	95
Central	90	90	90	92	93	96	96	96	95	96
Wellington	94	93	91	94	96	96	95	95	95	95
Tasman	94	92	93	95	95	96	96	96	97	97
Canterbury	92	93	92	94	96	94	97	96	96	96
Southern	94	92	93	95	95	95	95	96	97	95
All NZ	92	92	92	94	95	95	95	95	95	96

## Local Authority Wearing Rates

Front seat safety belt wearing rates at Local Authority level are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Front seat adult safety belt wearing rates by Territorial Local Authority, 2010

Local authority / authorities	N	Wearing rate (%)	Local authority / authorities	N	Wearing rate (%)
<i>Northland</i>			<i>Gisborne</i>		
Far North	1383	93	Gisborne	1174	89
Whangarei	1413	98	<i>Hawke's Bay</i>		
Kaipara	1194	92	Wairoa	1426	91
<i>Auckland</i>			Hastings	1535	97
Rodney	1129	95	Napier	1576	99
North Shore City	1147	92	Central Hawke's Bay	1446	98
Waitakere	1435	100	<i>Manawatu-Whanganui</i>		
Auckland	1524	99	Ruapehu	1096	98
Manukau	1572	96	Whanganui	1144	96
Papakura	1474	97	Rangitikei	968	94
Franklin	1303	98	Manawatu	1250	97
<i>Waikato</i>			Palmerston North	1564	98
Thames-Coromandel	1690	100	Tararua	1134	96
Hauraki	1083	93	Horowhenua	1331	89
Waikato	1521	96	<i>Wellington</i>		
Matamata-Piako	1408	95	Kapiti Coast	1539	94
Hamilton	1562	97	Porirua	1401	96
Waipa	1608	99	Upper Hutt	1469	94
Waitomo/ Otorohanga	1316	97	Hutt City	1495	95
South Waikato	1681	99	Wellington	1477	97
Taupo	1533	98	Masterton	1515	95
<i>Bay of Plenty</i>			South Wairarapa/ Carterton	1209	95
Western Bay of Plenty	1676	99	<i>Nelson/ Marlborough/ Tasman</i>		
Tauranga	1678	98	Tasman	1532	98
Rotorua	1345	97	Nelson	1509	98
Whakatane	1519	98	Marlborough	1576	97
Kawerau / Opotiki	1416	94	Kaikoura	861	97
<i>Taranaki</i>			<i>West Coast</i>		
New Plymouth	1566	99	Buller	1096	97
Stratford	801	98	Grey	1375	97
South Taranaki	1426	97	Westland	1080	96

Local authority / authorities	N	Wearing rate (%)
<i>Canterbury</i>		
Hurunui	1344	96
Waimakariri	1543	97
Christchurch	2883	96
Selwyn	1431	97
Ashburton	1357	99
Timaru	1684	97
Mackenzie	1002	94
Waimate	943	92

Local authority / authorities	N	Wearing rate (%)
<i>Otago</i>		
Waitaki	929	91
Central Otago	1336	95
Queenstown-Lakes	1588	89
Dunedin	1562	99
Clutha	1325	98
<i>Southland</i>		
Southland	1341	94
Gore	1303	96
Invercargill	1537	97

*Note.* N = number of car/van occupants observed.

## Police Area Wearing Rates

Front seat safety belt wearing rates at Police area level are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Front seat adult wearing rates by Police Area, 2010.

Police Area	N	Wearing rate (%)	Police Area	N	Wearing rate (%)
<i>Northland</i>			Palmerston North Rural	3944	94
Far North	1383	93	Palmerston North City	1564	98
Whangarei	2607	96	<i>Wellington</i>		
<i>Waitemata</i>			Kapiti - Mana	2940	95
Rodney	1129	95	Upper Hutt	1469	94
North Shore	1147	92	Lower Hutt	1495	95
Waitakere	1435	100	Wellington	1477	97
<i>Auckland</i>			Wairarapa	2724	95
Auckland City/West	808	99	<i>Tasman</i>		
Auckland East	716	98	Nelson Bays	3041	98
<i>Counties / Manukau</i>			Marlborough	2437	97
Counties-Manukau West	817	96	West Coast	3551	97
Counties-Manukau East	755	96	<i>Canterbury</i>		
Counties-Manukau South	2777	98	Northern Canterbury	2887	96
<i>Waikato</i>			Christchurch Central	1601	98
Waikato East	4181	96	Southern Canterbury	2713	95
Waikato West	4445	97	Mid-South Canterbury	4986	96
Hamilton	1562	97	<i>Southern</i>		
<i>Bay of Plenty</i>			Otago Rural	3853	92
Taupo	3214	99	Dunedin	2887	99
Western Bay of Plenty	3354	98	Southland	4181	96
Rotorua	1345	97	<i>Note. N = number of car/van occupants observed.</i>		
Eastern Bay of Plenty	2935	97			
<i>Eastern</i>					
Gisborne	2600	90			
Hastings	2981	98			
Napier	1576	99			
<i>Central</i>					
New Plymouth	1566	99			
Ruapehu	1500	96			
Rural Taranaki	2227	97			
Whanganui	1479	96			