

Progress Report on Community Outcomes 2006-2009





Prepared by the Buller, Grey, Westland District Councils, and the West Coast Regional Council, June 2009.

Cover image by M Trayes, West Coast Regional Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report uses a set of indicators to monitor trends and progress towards the achievement of the six community outcomes identified for the West Coast region.

In October 2005 and March 2008 the four West Coast Councils agreed to the same 'high level' Community Outcomes in their Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCP's). The four West Coast Councils also agreed to jointly prepare this monitoring report to avoid duplication by each Council.

A set of indicators was selected in 2008 to monitor trends for the Outcomes. Four-six indicators were selected for each Outcome. Below is a summary of the main findings from the data available:

- In 2003, the West Coast had fewer active GP's per population than the national ratio.
- Between 2002-2008, the average life expectancy of West Coast women was on par with the national average, while West Coast men's life expectancy was just below the national average.
- For most periods since 2003/04 the West Coast economy has experienced year on year growth at a greater rate than the national economy.
- The West Coast has similar levels of employment to national figures, although average incomes are still below the national average.
- Visitor satisfaction surveys done in 2007 and 2008 at iconic West Coast national features indicated a 90-93% level of visitor satisfaction.
- Between 1996-2008 West Coast rivers, streams, and bathing beaches have generally shown good to excellent quality on most measures and comparisons.
- Between 2006 and 2007 there was a 29% increase in the number of school leavers with NCEA Level 2 qualifications, compared with the national average of a 10% increase.
- The percentage of enrolments at Early Childhood Centres is similar to the national average.
- Between 2002-2008 the West Coast had a higher crime resolution rate than the national average.
- Buller is on par with the average number of motor vehicle crashed for small rural areas, Grey is below it, and Westland is above the average.
- Adult participation in sport or active recreation activities on the West Coast is on par with national figures.
- The percentage of West Coasters doing voluntary work for an organisation or group was higher between 2001-2006 than the national average.

SUMMARY OF THE INDICATORS

Table 1: Community Outcomes and associated indicators

<p>Health Outcome</p> <p><i>Healthy community with access to quality facilities and services</i></p> <p>Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GP ratio to population 2. Numbers requiring and receiving surgical treatment 3. Access to health programmes 4. Average life expectancy at birth 	<p>Economy Outcome</p> <p><i>A thriving, resilient and innovative economy creating opportunities for growth and employment</i></p> <p>Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overall state of regional economy 2. Overall state of district economies 3. Building consents issued 4. Employment 5. Income 	<p>Environment Outcome</p> <p><i>The distinctive character of the environment is appreciated and retained</i></p> <p>Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visitor level of appreciation 2. Access to natural features 3. Water quality – fresh water and coastal 4. Reduction in waste on roadsides 5. Level of visitor waste minimisation activity
<p>Education Outcome</p> <p><i>A region that values and supports learning with accessible, relevant education and training opportunities</i></p> <p>Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level of qualification 2. Number of educational institutions 3. Participation in Early Childhood Education (ECE) 4. Apprenticeships 	<p>Safety Outcome</p> <p><i>A region that is a safe place to live</i></p> <p>Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recorded crime and resolution rates 2. Youth offending rates 3. Number of motor vehicle accidents 4. Improvements in preparedness for natural hazard events 5. Progress towards identifying hazard areas where greater management is required 6. Improved safety in public places 	<p>Identity Outcome</p> <p><i>A "happening" region with a strong community spirit and distinctive lifestyle</i></p> <p>Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community events and activities 2. Community amenity facilities 3. Number of people involved in cultural, artistic, recreational, sporting and volunteer activities 4. Voter turnout at local body and general elections

INTRODUCTION

This report uses a set of indicators to monitor trends and progress towards the achievement of the six community outcomes identified for the West Coast region.

Community Outcomes

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) requires councils to identify community outcomes through a process of consulting with the local community. The community outcomes are intended to reflect what is important to members of the community in terms of social, economic, environmental, and cultural issues.

The four West Coast Councils undertook individual and joint consultation with their respective communities between 2003 and 2005 to identify a set of community outcomes. In October 2005 the Buller and Westland District Councils and the West Coast Regional Council agreed to the same 'high level' Community Outcomes in their Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCP's), to offer ratepayers consistency throughout the region. In March 2008 the Grey District Council also adopted the same six Outcomes. They are:

Economy: A thriving, resilient and innovative economy creating opportunities for growth and employment.

Environment: The distinctive character of the environment is appreciated and retained.

Health: Healthy communities with access to quality facilities and services.

Education: A region that values and supports learning with accessible, relevant education and training opportunities.

Identity: A "happening" region with a strong community spirit and distinctive lifestyle.

Safety: A region that is a safe place to live.

These Outcomes are incorporated into each Council's LTCCP.

Monitoring and Reporting

In addition to identifying community outcomes, the Act also requires councils to:

"monitor and, not less than once every 3 years, report on the progress made by the community of its district or region in achieving the community outcomes for the district or region."

The four West Coast Councils have agreed to jointly prepare this report on progress towards achieving the Community Outcomes. This is an efficient way of monitoring and reporting, and avoids duplication by each Council.

A set of indicators was selected in 2008 to monitor trends for the Outcomes. The indicators were chosen according to the following factors:

- The data is currently available and accessible, and the agency collecting the data is likely to build a long-term data set so that a meaningful picture of trends can be seen over time.
- They are measures commonly being used by other councils around the country;
- They meet the SMART criteria, that is, they are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timebound.
- They relate to issues raised in community outcomes consultation.

This is the first report of this type for the West Coast region under the LGA requirements. The report gives a brief summary of the main data or information for each indicator, and a general comment on any observable trends over the last 3-6 years, which is the approximate timeframe of the first LTCCP's.

In some cases it has not been possible to identify trends or compare the data as there is no previous data to compare it with. When we next monitor the Outcomes in three years, we will be able to compare what has happened since with this report.

Information sources are listed at the start of each Community Outcome section. Further detail can be obtained from the relevant agency or Statistics New Zealand.

The following sections outline the region's progress towards achieving the community outcomes as measured by the indicators.

INDICATORS FOR HEALTH OUTCOME

Healthy community with access to quality facilities and services

Indicators

Four indicators are used in this section. These indicators are intended to provide an insight into key aspects of health in the West Coast region.

Data Sources

Statistics New Zealand, Ministry of Social Development Social Report 2008, New Zealand Health Information Service, West Coast District Health Board, West Coast Primary Health Organisation, Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils.

Indicator 1: GP ratio to population

General Practitioners (GPs) are one of our first points of contact in the health system. They play an important role in both the treatment and prevention of poor health.

The ratio of GPs per head of population is an indication of our access to health care. The higher the ratio, the greater our level of access. A lower ratio can result in difficulty accessing primary health care.

Current levels and trends

In 2003, the West Coast region had 55.3 active general practitioners per 100,000 population.

The national ratio of active general practitioners per 100,000 population for the same period was 75.

This is the most current data available on the ratio of GPs to population.

Indicator 2: Numbers requiring and receiving surgical treatment

Looking at the number of West Coast residents who require surgical treatment and comparing this with the number of surgical treatments provided in the region will give an indication of the capacity of the community to meet the health needs of its people.

Current levels and trends

The following table shows the number of residents in the West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB) area who received publicly funded surgical treatment in the 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 years, across a range of surgical services. It also shows the number of people who received publicly funded surgical treatment from the WCDHB.

Measuring the number of residents within the WCDHB area who receive services over time will show if our community is requiring more or less surgical service, giving an indication of our overall health.

Measuring the number of services provided by the WCDHB over time will show whether the level of service delivered by our DHB is increasing or decreasing.

Comparing the number of residents in our region who required such surgical treatment with the number of people who received surgical treatment from the WCDHB gives an indication of the proportion of people who receive treatment locally versus the proportion who travel out of the area to receive treatment.

Residents of WCDHB area requiring surgical treatment and number of patients treated in the WCDHB area, 2006-2008

Surgical service	Annual totals					
	Patient numbers 2006/2007			Patient numbers 2007/2008		
	Residents of WCDHB area	Treated in WCDHB area	% of residents requiring treatment who were treated in WCDHB area	Residents of WCDHB area	Treated in WCDHB area	% of residents requiring treatment who were treated in WCDHB area
Cardiothoracic	31	0	-	26	0	-
Ear, nose and throat	150	0	-	153	0	-
General surgery	1075	1015	94.4	1007	905	89.9
Gynaecology	306	248	81.1	321	285	88.8
Neurosurgery	41	0	-	36	0	-
Ophthalmology	143	102	71.3	198	151	76.3
Orthopaedics	615	572	93.0	587	556	94.7
Paediatric surgical	68	48	70.6	44	20	45.5
Plastic and burns	94	37	39.4	149	87	58.4
Urology	131	83	63.4	128	79	61.7
Vascular surgery	0	0	-	0	0	-
Total	2654	2105	79.3	2649	2083	78.6

Source: Surgical Activity Data tables, New Zealand Health Information Service, <http://www.nzhis.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesns/49> accessed 16/04/2009

The number of people who received treatment in the WCDHB area as a percentage of those resident in the WCDHB area who required treatment decreased slightly from 79.3% in 2006/2007 to 78.6% in 2007/2008.

This suggests that we have the capacity on the West Coast to provide around 80% of the surgical services required by our residents.

Limitations of the data

It should be noted that this data only includes those who required and received publicly funded surgical treatment. It does not include those who received private surgical treatment.

The data on those treated in the WCDHB area does not distinguish between those who were residents of the area at the time they were treated and those who were not. This data may include patients who do not live in the WCDHB area but who were treated by the WCDHB, for example, tourists. Care must be taken when drawing conclusions from the data.

The data was drawn from a dynamic database which is subject to change as it is updated by District Health Boards (DHBs). This data was accessed on 16 April 2009 and was the most current information available at the time of writing.

Interpretation of this data should not be made without reference to the notes provided by the New Zealand Health Information Service at <http://www.nzhis.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesns/49>.

Indicator 3: Access to health programmes

Health programmes contribute to keeping our community healthy.

Access to information and services can help promote and support healthy lifestyles for members of our community, which contribute to our overall health and wellbeing.

Monitoring the number and types of these programmes available will indicate how well the community is performing at proactively trying to improve its health. If we can at least maintain the health programmes currently offered, or better still increase the number and types of programmes and their availability, we will be making progress on providing for our own health.

Current levels and trends

There are a number of groups and organisations providing programmes, information and services to encourage West Coasters to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Two key organisations with responsibilities in this field are the West Coast District Health Board and the West Coast Primary Health Organisation.

The West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB) currently provides programmes and services in a number of health areas including:

- Healthy Eating, Healthy Action (HEHA)

HEHA is the Ministry of Health's strategic approach to improving nutrition, increasing physical activity and achieving healthy weight for all New Zealanders.

Having begun in 2007, the West Coast HEHA was greatly expanded in 2008.

The priorities for the West Coast HEHA Programme include breastfeeding, schools and early childhood centres, workforce capacity and capability, children, youth and whanau, lower socio economic groups. A primary focus for 2009 is implementing the Māori Obesity Action Project.

- Community funding

WCDHB administers community funding for health promotion projects. Funding was administered across the following programmes in 2008:

- Breastfeeding Grant Fund
- Community Action Projects Grant Fund
- Feeding our Futures Community Partnerships
- Māori Community Action Projects Fund
- Nutrition Fund

- Baby's Health

Provides support and information through the Buller Breastfeeding Support Group, based in Westport and 'Babes in Arms' - Babies and Breastfeeding Education and Support in Greymouth and Hokitika.

- Become Smokefree for a better life

Provides support and information for people wanting to quit smoking.

Source: West Coast District Health Board website, <http://www.westcoastdhb.org.nz> accessed 23/04/2009

The West Coast Primary Health Organisation (WCPHO) currently provides the following programmes for health:

- First level services

WCPHO pays its contracted medical practices for every person who is enrolled with each practice, whether or not they visit the practice. All practices on the West Coast are termed "Very Low Cost Access". This means that patient co-payments are the lowest possible.

- Health promotion

The following programmes promote health ways for the people of the West Coast to live:

- Men's Health Forums – these forums, which achieve a high turn out, highlight and provide information on diseases which affect predominately men.
- Green Prescription (GRx) – a GRx from a Doctor or Practice Nurse gives inactive patients access to support with increasing their physical activity levels. The programme involves a face-to-face initial consultation with the GRx Coordinator followed by monthly visits and continued support.
- Breastfeeding Initiative – International Board Certified Lactation Consultants and Registered Nurses are available, at no charge to the user, to provide one-on-one breastfeeding assistance to women, assistance to workplaces to be breastfeeding friendly, education to health and social workers, training and managing

Mum4Mums, a peer counselor programme where mums support other mums with breastfeeding.

- Contraception and Sexual Health – WCPHO funds free contraception for under 22 year olds through General Practitioner practices and pharmacies coast-wide.
- Healthy Lifestyles and Self Management – programmes run from Westport, Greymouth and Hokitika to teach people how to live a healthier life and to self-manage chronic conditions.

- Managing chronic conditions

A full time WCPHO Clinical Manager teaches and supports practice staff with the PHO's chronic conditions programme. This programme is designed to assist people with chronic conditions to manage their conditions. The practice team ensures sicker patients have regular reviews including:

- Diabetes annual reviews
- Cardiovascular annual reviews
- Mobile retinal screening – visits different locations around the West Coast every three months

- Cancer navigations and support

A team of cancer navigators are available to guide and support people with their cancer journey on the West Coast (from Karamea to Haast). Funding is also available for palliative care for patients with terminal illnesses.

- Primary mental health

A team of five provides support to primary practices to improve health outcomes for enrolled patients with mental health needs. Brief Intervention Counselling, which involves up to six free counseling sessions, is available for some patients. Services are also provided for Work and Income clients who have mild to moderate mental health issues and who are motivated to seek employment.

- Services specifically for Māori

A Kaiawhina navigator is employed in the Buller district to engage Māori and whanau in primary health care by encouraging them to enroll in their local GP

practice and take advantage of the prevention and care programmes available through enrollment. WCPHO also holds hui in various locations, in partnership with other health organisations, to promote healthy living, active lifestyles and highlight additional supports for Māori with chronic conditions. The Cancer Navigation team has a dedicated Kaihautu (Navigator) for Māori with cancer.

Source: West Coast Primary Health Organisation website, <http://www.westcoastpho.org.nz/programmes-for-health.shtml> accessed 10/06/2009

Note: the above is a general description of the health programmes currently offered by these organisations. This indicator measures the programmes *available* to our community, rather than the community's use of those programmes. Future Community Outcomes progress reports will be able to assess changes in the number and types of health programmes our community has access to, and compare this to previous years to measure whether or not progress has been made on the accessibility of health programmes.

Indicator 4: Average life expectancy at birth

Life expectancy is an indication of the general health of the community.

Life expectancy at birth is defined by the Ministry of Social Development Social Report 2008 as the "total number of years a person could expect to live, based on the mortality rates of the population at each age in a given year or period".

Improvements in overall life expectancy reflect improvements in social and economic conditions, lifestyle, access to health services, and medical advances.

Current levels and trends

Life expectancy at birth in the West Coast region for the period 2000-2002 was 81.4 years for females and 74.2 years for males.

Nationally, life expectancy for the same period was 81.4 years for females and 76.5 years for males.

This is the most current data available.

INDICATORS FOR ECONOMIC OUTCOME

A thriving, resilient and innovative economy creating opportunities for growth and employment

Indicators

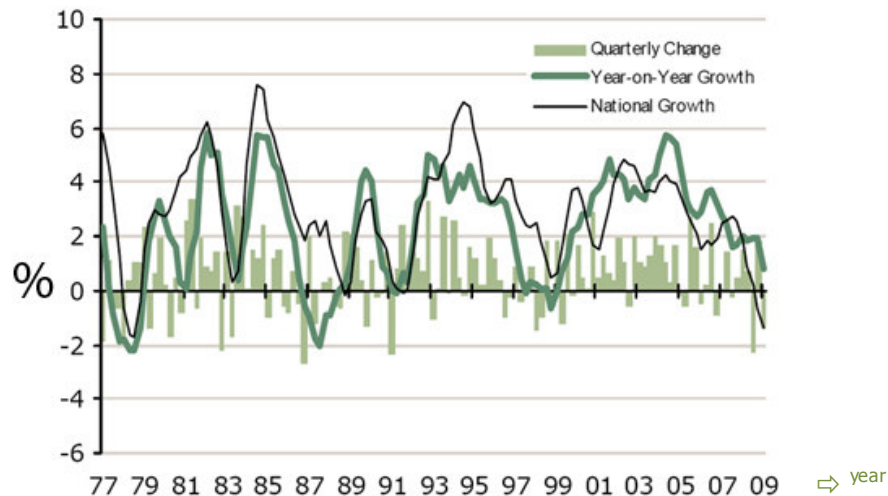
Five indicators are used in this section. These indicators are intended to provide an insight into key aspects of the economy of the West Coast region and districts therein.

Data Sources

National Bank: Regional Trends, BERL Regional Performance Indicators, Statistics New Zealand.

Indicator 1: Overall state of regional economy

This indicator measures overall economic activity as a combination of employment, business growth and business confidence. This provides a comparative measure of how the West Coast economy is performing compared to the national economy.



- The green bar is the result for the respective quarter for the West Coast
- The green line is the annual result, compared to the same quarter in the previous year for the West Coast
- The black line is the annual result, compared to the same quarter in the previous year for the Entire Country

The graph indicates that for most periods since 2003/2004 The West Coast economy has experienced year on year growth at a greater rate than the national economy

Source: National Bank Regional Trend Report, May 2009

Indicator 2: Overall state of district economies

The BERL Regional Performance Indicators rank the performance of 72 New Zealand territorial local authority (TLA) economies. The following are the 2008 results for the West Coast territorial authorities for a number of measures, compared against the national result. This measures the performance for the relevant indicators over the preceding 12 months.

Terminology

Year

Numbers are for the twelve months to March of the stated year

TLA

Territorial Local Authority (i.e. District Council)

Value Added (or the TLA GDP)

Value added measures the total value contributed by the activities of all businesses and organisations in the region. In theory it is equal to the value of the output of business (ie sales or turnover) less its purchases from other businesses of goods and services used in production (that latter are sometimes termed intermediate inputs).

In practice value added is akin to the sum of wages, salaries, profits and operating surplus arising from all economic activity in the industry and/or region. The total

value added for a region is equivalent to its contribution to national GDP (Gross Domestic Product).

Employment (FTEs)

Measured as the number of employed persons - but in terms of full-time equivalents (FTEs), such that two part-time employed persons is counted as one full-time person.

Productivity

Measured as the value added (or GDP) of the TLA divided by the number of FTEs.

Business units and size

This provides the number of business operating units within the TLA. Business size is defined as the average number of FTEs for each operating unit and indicates whether businesses in the TLA are on average growing or shrinking.

Key

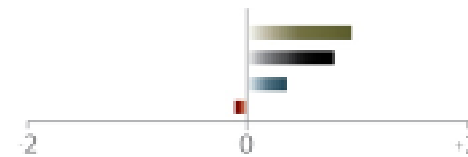
The key for the graphs is as follows:



The following graphs are the results for a 12 month period only (year ending March 2008). They do not reflect a medium to long term result, however it is planned to use these results as the baseline data for further monitoring reports.

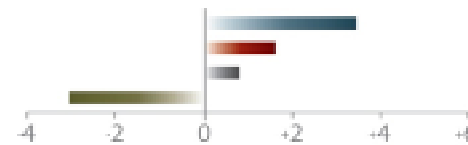
population growth 2008

% change on previous year



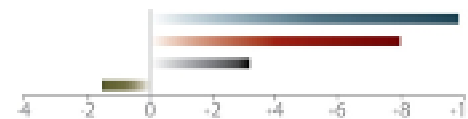
employment FTE growth 2008

% change on previous year



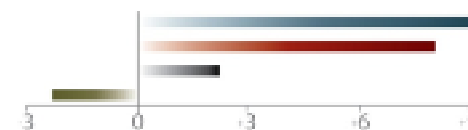
real value added (GDP) growth 2008

% change on previous year



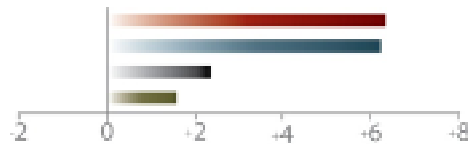
real GDP per capita growth 2008

% change on previous year



productivity growth 2008

labour productivity (GDP per FTE)
% change on previous year



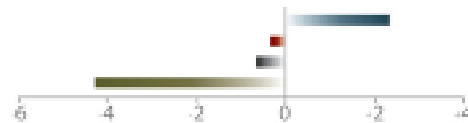
business units growth 2008

% change on previous year



business size growth 2008

FTEs per business unit
% change on previous year

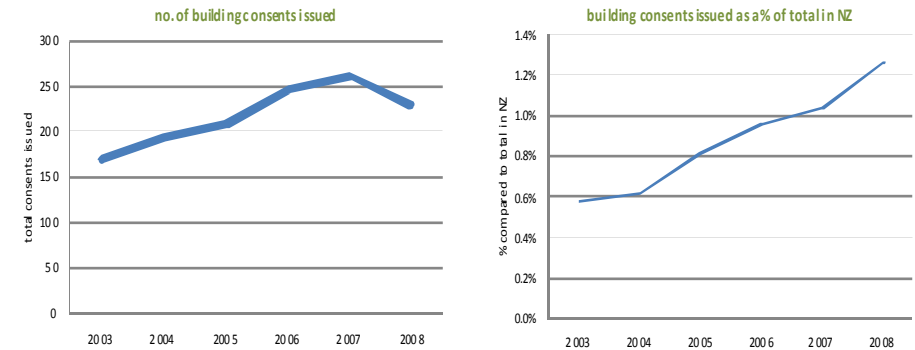


Source: BERL Regional Performance Indicators 2008

Indicator 3: Building consents issued

The number of building consents issued reflects money being invested in the region.

The first graph tracks the total number of building consents issued on the West Coast for the respective year. The second graph shows the total number of consents issued on the West Coast as a proportion of the total consents issued in New Zealand. Whilst the gross number of consents issued on the West Coast has had a recent decline, this decline has not been as marked as the national decline.

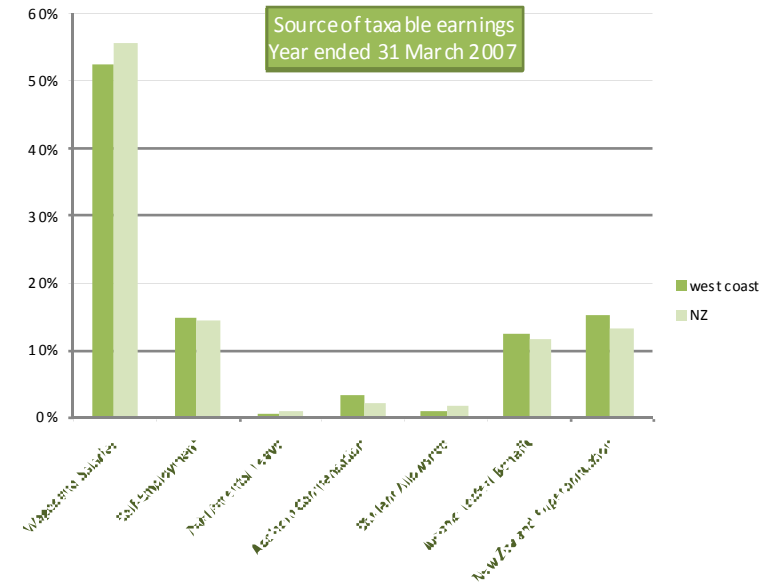


Indicator 4: Employment

Paid employment is a major factor determining personal income, which in turn determines the ability to purchase goods and services. Up to date employment data is difficult to obtain for the West Coast region in isolation, as the West Coast region is included with Nelson/Tasman/Marlborough area for the relevant central government agencies. For example employment/unemployment rates are unavailable for only the West Coast.

The following graphs do however give an indication of the number of West Coast residents in paid employment vs. other sources of taxable income. This gives an overview of how it has changed since 2000, and also a comparison to the national data.

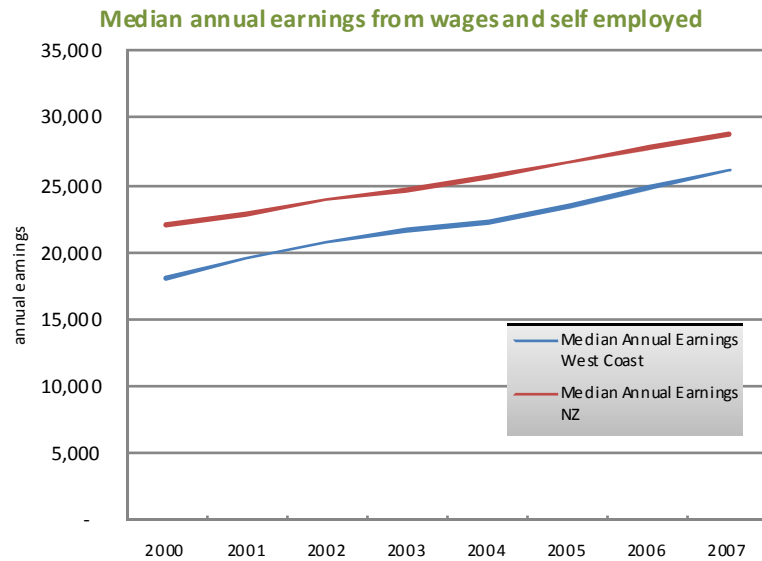
The West Coast generally mirrors national trends for income sources.



Indicator 5: Income

Income is a key indicator of individual, family and community wellbeing. Income levels indicate the ability of people to purchase essential and nonessential goods and services including food, housing, health, education, leisure and transport.

The following graph indicates the median annual earnings on the West Coast, compared with the median for the whole of New Zealand. Average incomes on the West Coast remain below the national average. These figures are not available for each District.



INDICATORS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOME

The distinctive character of the environment is appreciated and retained

Indicators

Five indicators are used in this section. These indicators are intended to provide an insight into key aspects of the environmental character of the West Coast region.

Data sources:

Department of Conservation; West Coast Regional Council "State of the Environment Report, June 2008; Opus Consultants; West Coast Waste Management Working Group; NZ Freedom Camping Forum.

Indicator 1: Visitor level of appreciation

This indicator is a useful measure of the extent that visitors value and enjoy iconic West Coast features which are a part of the regions distinctive character.

The Department of Conservation have carried out a number of surveys on the quality of the visitor experience in the Franz Josef Glacier Valley, Fox Glacier Valley and Cape Foulwind, in the past two years. These surveys measure, amongst other things, visitor responses to overall satisfaction. The levels of satisfaction were: Franz Josef Glacier 2007: (90%), Fox Glacier 2008 (91%), Cape Foulwind 2008 (93%). These figures exceed the Department's performance measure, and indicate that visitors are very happy with the quality of the experience and the standard of facilities provided at these sites.

A visitor satisfaction survey is being considered for the Punakaki area.

Indicator 2: Access to natural features

Being able to physically get to key natural features, the beach, rivers, lakes, or the bush is an important part of enjoying the natural West Coast environment. No specific records or assessment has been done about physical accessways to

rivers, lakes, and the coast. Resource consents for activities near fresh or coastal water usually require that public access be maintained. This is consistent with the Resource Management Act 1991 and policies in regional plans. The Regional Council received six complaints about problems with public access to beaches, lakes, or rivers, which is a relatively small number. District Councils have also received only a small number of complaints. This indicates that there is generally few problems with access to these features.

The Department of Conservation is a key provider of access tracks to native bush on the West Coast. As at 30 June 2007 the Department maintained 1029 km of tracks, and at 30 June 2008 this figure increased to 1115 km of tracks. The increase was in the number of kilometres of back country tramping tracks and routes, that is, new routes were re-opened in this twelve month period.

Indicator 3: Water quality – fresh water and coastal

The West Coast region receives plenty of rain, and the large number of waterways and length of coastline are a core part of the Coast's identity.

The Regional Council's State of the Environment Surface Water Quality Report 2008 concluded that the West Coast's rivers, streams, and bathing beaches generally show good to excellent quality on most measures and comparisons.

Fresh water

The Regional Council monitors fresh water quality at 41 sites on a quarterly basis. Data from the last three years is too short a timeframe to show trends. However, surface water quality monitoring information since 1996-2008 shows water quality improvement in levels of ammoniacal nitrogen, clarity, turbidity, and faecal coliforms – consistent with national patterns. Improvements in these parameters benefit aquatic ecosystems, and value for commercial and recreational use. While ammoniacal nitrogen has decreased, other forms of nitrogen – total nitrogen (TN) and nitrate - have increased, which is also consistent across New Zealand. It appears that while point source pollution has decreased, diffuse source pollution has increased.

Bathing beaches

Contact recreation monitoring at 22 sites showed that lake sites had good water quality, as did to a lesser extent those situated in open coastal locations. Improvements for some river and lagoon sites were apparent, although levels of faecal indicator bacteria at some were still consistently above their respective contact recreation guidelines. Figure 1 on the right shows suitability of bathing sites for contact recreation between 1996-2008.

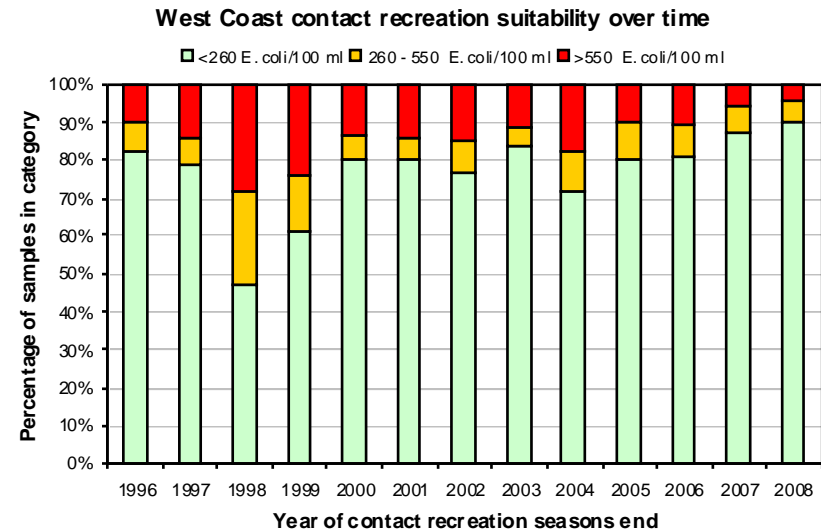


Figure 1: Proportional suitability for contact recreation at monitored contact recreation sites: All sites and samples collected within the contact recreation period (November – March) at contact recreation monitoring. sites have been pooled for each season e.g. 1996 includes the summer of 1995-1996. The three categories are based on MfE (2003) E. coli single sample criteria for bathing suitability.

Lake Brunner

Trend analysis accounting for seasonality was conducted on data collected at the central lake monitoring site. From 1992-2007, a statistically significant trend was observed for increasing Total Nitrogen, phytoplankton (as inferred from chlorophyll a), Total Phosphate, and decreasing clarity. Analysing a shorter data record of 2001-2007, nitrate decreased but phytoplankton remained on an upward trend.

The West Coast Regional Council's Water Management Plan contains policies, methods, and rules to maintain and enhance water quality.

Indicator 4: Reduction in waste on roadsides

This indicator is useful in measuring approximate volumes of waste disposed of at random sample sites along main tourist routes in the region. Rubbish dumped along roadsides and in rest areas detracts from the 'clean, green' image of the West Coast.

In the last three years there appears to be an increase in rubbish volumes collected from the sections of State Highway shown in Table 3. Although it is unclear whether this reflects an increase in the amount of litter, anecdotal information from those in the field suggests there is a trend of increasing litter.

Number of bags collected at sections of State Highway roadside			
State Highway	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
SH73 between Arthurs Pass and Kumara Junction	129	164	155
SH7 between Ikamatua and Greymouth	244	243	291
SH6 between Punakaiki and Greymouth (Cobden Bridge)	204	343	225
SH6 between Greymouth (South Beach) and Hokitika	289	435	518
SH6 between Hokitika and Wanganui River	63	113	125

(Ref: Central West Coast Traffic Services TNZ61647, Fulton Hogan for Opus Consultants)

Indicator 5: Level of visitor waste minimisation activity

The adverse environmental and health effects of visitor waste such as toileting in the bush at rest areas, and solid waste dumping has been an issue on the West Coast in recent years, with increasing numbers of tourists generating increased volumes of waste.

The "West Coast Visitor Waste Management Strategy" was prepared in 2006 to minimise effects of waste generated by visitors to the West Coast, through infrastructure, information and education, and enforcement. The main action from the Strategy implemented so far is that roadside stopping places have been rationalised in terms of which ones need closing (for example, those close to existing public toilets and rubbish bins, etc), which ones need signage (for example, distance to nearest public toilet, camping/no camping allowed, etc), and which ones need services such as toilets, rubbish bins, water taps. Infrastructure work will begin when costs of capital and maintenance, and agreements between Transit and the District Councils, are finalised.

In addition to the West Coast Visitor Waste Management Strategy, an independent national Freedom Camping Forum (FCF) comprising members from central and local government, the tourism industry, and recreational motor home organisations, was established in 2008 to progress dealing with freedom camping waste. To date actions taken under the Forum umbrella include:

- Stickers on campervans promoting asking locals where suitable camping sites are;
- "Waste contained on board" stickers for campervans and rental vehicles which are self-contained;
- Website information and publicity at information centres on good camping practices, for example, "Don't toilet in the bush";
- Freedom camping principles for councils to adopt;
- "No Camping" signage;

Ministry for the Environment are funding Love NZ bins in Buller and Westland, which are bins for recyclables.

Some of the FCF work has implemented the education and information actions in the West Coast Visitor Waste Management Strategy, so these don't need to be duplicated.

INDICATORS FOR EDUCATION OUTCOME

A region that values and supports learning with accessible, relevant education and training opportunities

Indicators

Four indicators are used in this section. These indicators are intended to convey a general overview of educational trends and participation in the West Coast region, as compared to National Averages wherever possible.

Data Sources:

Ministry of Social Development – Social Report 2008 Regional Indicators; West Coast Apprenticeship Research Report – Prepared for Development West Coast; Statistics NZ for national averages; Tai Poutini Polytechnic; Open Polytechnic; NCEA National Averages: www.educationcounts.govt.nz; Massey University.

Indicator 1: Level of Qualification

The educational attainment of the adult population is an indicator of the skills and knowledge available to the West Coast economy from the adult population. Upper secondary school qualifications serve as the foundation for higher learning and training opportunities as well as the preparation for direct entry in to the labour market.

School leavers with Qualifications NCEA Level 2 or Higher (%)			
	2006	2007	% change
West Coast	35	45	29%
National Average	60	66	10%

The next table reports the number of qualifications awarded to students of the Tai Poutini Polytechnic from 2006 to 2008. Students often graduate with more than one qualification so it is necessary to understand one enrolment may equal two or more qualifications from the same program. There are also students who study part time, so they may enroll in one year but not graduate until the following year or

even longer. The **majority** of Tai Poutini Polytechnic students are enrolled in **Level 1 to Level 3 certificates**, accounting for 61% of the total. A further fifth are enrolled in each of Level 4 certificates and level 5 to level 7 diplomas. The vast majority of students are New Zealand residents, with around 3.2 percent from overseas.

Statistics - Tai Poutini Polytechnic		
2006*	Students Enrolled	Qualifications Awarded
Level 2	23	21
Level 3	40	22
Level 4	28	63
Level 5	26	20
Level 6	6	4
2007*	Students Enrolled	Qualifications Awarded
Level 2	51	46
Level 3	103	163
Level 4	55	62
Level 5	276	309
Level 6	6	20
2008*	Students Enrolled	Qualifications Awarded
Level 2	54	48
Level 3	111	65
Level 4	207	115
Level 5	114	26
Level 6	8	25

*Figures based on West Coast mainstream enrolments

Indicator 2: Number of Educational Institutions

The number of educational institutions was reviewed nearly four years ago and now is only driven by the community or by the Educational Review Office. The purpose of this review was to ascertain whether a local population would benefit from an

amalgamation of its smaller schools. The resulting larger facilities would need to provide an equal or improved level of academic achievement and opportunity, and be on a par with the nationwide recorded averages. This is monitored by the NCEA results for an institution as compared to others of the same size and decile nationwide.

Number of West Coast Educational Institutions			
2008	Buller	Grey	Westland
Primary Schools	8	13	11
Area Schools	2		1
Secondary Schools	1	2	1
Tertiary Institutes		2	1
Tertiary Campus	1 Westport 1 Reefton		1 Hokitika
Open Polytechnic Coastwide	213 students		
Massey University Extramural	58 students		

Indicator 3: Participation in Early Childhood Education (ECE)

This indicator measures the number of 3 and 4 year olds enrolled in early childhood centres or home-based education programmes as proportion of all 3 and 4 year olds.

Evidence from New Zealand and international research shows that the early years of childhood education are vital to a child's development and future ability to learn. Childhood programmes prepare young children socially, physically and academically for entry into primary school education and can help narrow the achievement gap between children from low income families and those from high-income families.

As shown below, the early childhood participation rates for the West Coast are quite similar to the national averages.

"Apparent" Participation Rate (%)			
	2007	2006	% change
West Coast	101	100	1%
National Average	104	102	2%

Note: These figures overestimate the true participation rate. Rates in excess of 100 percent are possible because children can be enrolled in more than one service.

Enrolment in ECE by Territorial Authority (%) 2007						
Territorial Local Authority	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5
Buller District	20.5	47.0	92.7	115.5	96.6	0.9
Grey District	20.0	43.2	68.8	95.7	107.4	10.6
Westland District	19.0	34.0	62.4	87.5	95.8	3.0
National Average	17.1	44.8	67.6	97.1	101.6	3.1

Indicator 4: Apprenticeships

Various Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) on the West Coast have been operating for some years – with 2003 standing out as a period of significant growth.

Night classes or weekend courses/block courses outside of the workplace are not always needed for those in apprenticeships – those that do are Engineering, Electrical, Plumbing, Carpentry and Automotive Engineering.

Low apprentice wages and the cost of study are considered a deterrent to some potential apprentices, especially those not within large companies, and funding their own studies.

A number of scholarships are offered by West Coast companies; five were identified within the research project entitled 'West Coast Apprenticeship Research' prepared for Development West Coast.

Five year break down by Local Authority and Industry of Modern Apprenticeships on the West Coast					
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Buller	13	39	33	32	26
Grey	24	41	44	55	66
Westland	18	23	33	27	24

Table: People involved in Industry Training on the West Coast

Age at 31/12/06	Trainee Count
15 to 19	172
20 to 29	464
30 to 39	374
40 to 49	422
50+	241
Total	1673

People aged between 16-21 undertaking apprenticeships are classified as Modern Apprentices. They receive a 60% government subsidy on training and are funded for quarterly visits from Modern Apprenticeship Coordinators. People over 21 years undertaking apprenticeships or over 40 credits per year are classed as Industry Trainees.

As at 31 December 2006, there were 117 Modern Apprentices on the West Coast and a total of 1673 trainees.

INDICATORS FOR SAFETY OUTCOME

A region that is a safe place to live

Indicators

Six indicators are used in this section. These indicators are intended to provide an insight into key aspects of personal and property safety in the West Coast region.

Data Sources

West Coast Police; Buller, Grey, Westland Road Safety Reports 2003-2007, Land Transport New Zealand; West Coast Regional Council.

Indicator 1: Recorded crime and resolution rates

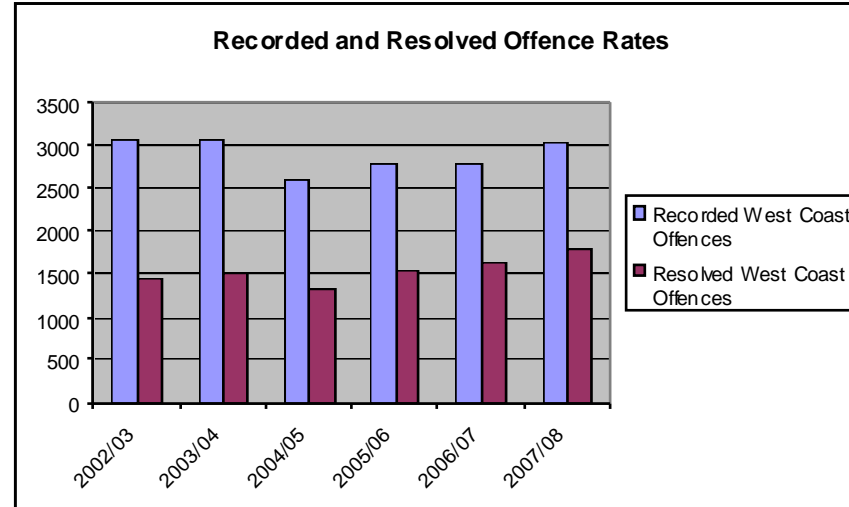
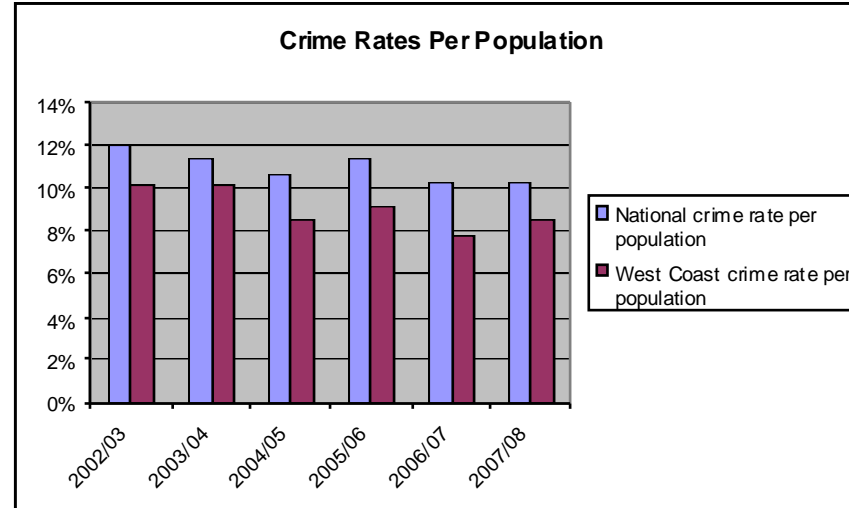
The level of recorded crime and resolution rates provides a broad measure of personal safety for the West Coast community. Being safe and secure within our homes, communities and towns is a desire most people share, and a key determinant of wellbeing and quality of life.

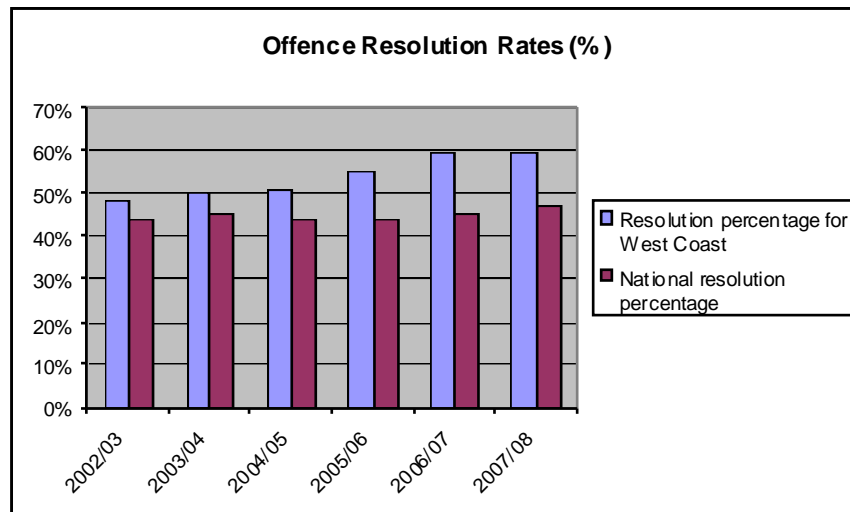
Caution is required when interpreting crime data – fluctuations in crime rates may be affected by changes in reporting by the public and recording by the police, as well as changes in the actual level recorded.

Current levels and trends

As illustrated in the tables below, recorded crime on the West Coast generally reflects the level of crime per population nationally. The West Coast has a high resolution rate compared with the rest of the country. Last year we had a 59% resolution rate compared with 47% for all of New Zealand. This may be attributed to the West Coast having less serious crime compared to other areas, as we deal with more minor offences such as breach of liquor ban.

National and West Coast recorded crime and resolution rates 2002-08





NB: Crime rates per population for 2002-2006 are based on 2001 Census population figures, and 2006 Census figures for 2006-2008.

Indicator 2: Youth offending rates

The youth offending rate gives a reasonable indication of youth problems in the region. Several responses to the draft Community Outcomes in 2005 raised concerns about West Coast youth. It is desirable to prevent patterns of offending at an early age.

Current levels and trends

Youth offending accounts for around 20% of the total offending on the West Coast. This compares closely with the national average of 18-20% (see Table X).

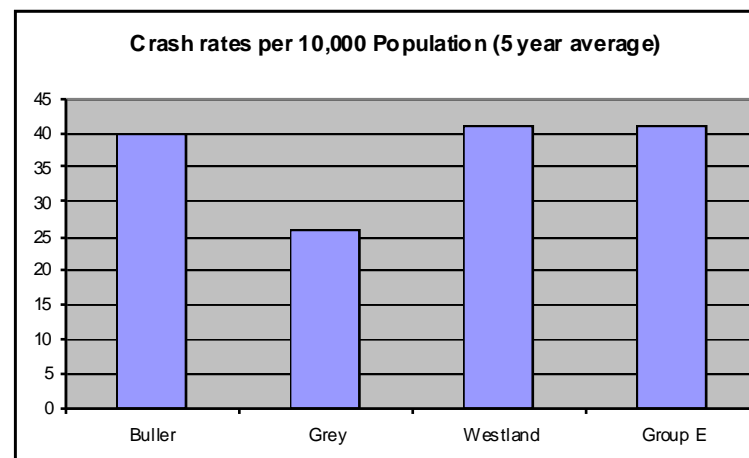
Variations in figures between years may be due to changes in recording procedures, although there has been an overall increase in youth offending due largely to recidivist offending or alcohol-related offending.

There has not been an increase in serious youth offending on the West Coast, and this is generally low.

Year	Buller	Grey	Westland	West Coast	National
2006	49	329	35	413	101279
2007	229	604	47	880	105349
2008	198	601	142	941	94435

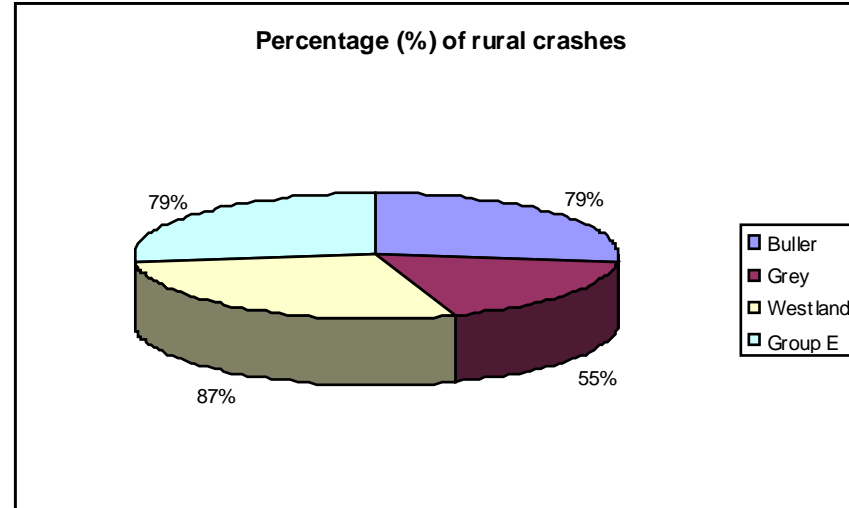
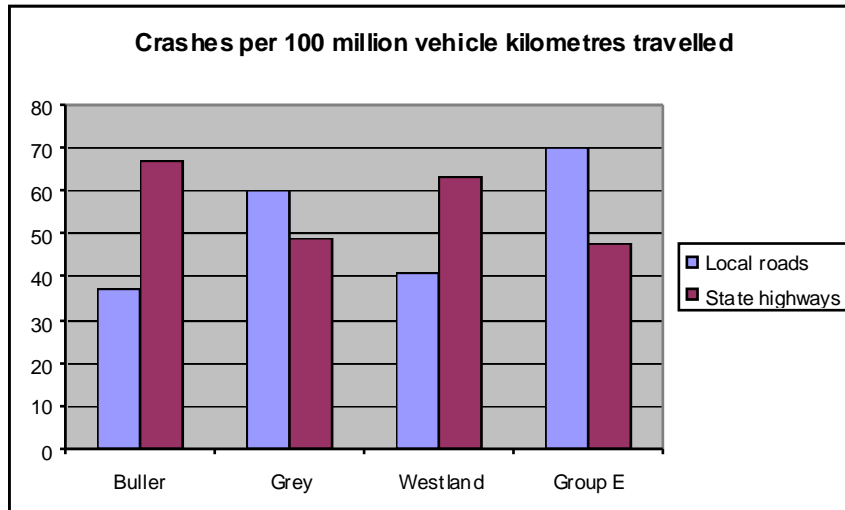
Indicator 3: Number of motor vehicle accidents

This indicator is a useful measure of any reductions in motor vehicle accidents and increase in the level of safety amongst drivers of vehicles on West Coast roads. It does not include crashes between motor vehicles and cyclists or pedestrians. Crashes per 10,000 population are based on five year average crash data (2003-2007) and Statistics NZ 2007 population estimates.



A comparison is made with Group E districts, which are small provincial towns with low traffic volumes, populations less than 20,000 and/or rural crashes greater than 55%.

The tables below show that the number of crashes in the Buller District is on par with the average for small rural areas. The number of crashes in the Grey District is below the Group E average, and the number in Westland is above this average.



(Ref: Buller, Grey, Westland Road Safety Reports 2003-2007, Land Transport New Zealand, April 2008).

Indicator 4: Improvements in preparedness for natural hazard events

This indicator is a useful measure to gauge progress with civil defence emergency management readiness work. The emergency management legislation requires agencies with civil defence roles to plan and co-ordinate how they will deal with natural hazard events.

Since the new emergency management legislation came into effect in 2002, there has been an increased level and quality of training to prepare council and other agency staff for an emergency event.

The following key Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) activities have been undertaken throughout the region and in the Districts over the last four years:

2005

- The Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan and Group Welfare Plan was completed.
- Training Needs Analysis undertaken.
- Engineering Lifelines Project initiated.

2006

- Urban Search and Rescue training provided for local engineers.
- Involvement in Exercise Pacific Wave, a national tsunami warning trial to practice emergency response decision-making and Emergency Operations Centre running in the event of a destructive tsunami.
- Engineering Lifelines Reports completed with recommendations for improving the resilience of water, sewerage, transport, power, and communications network services.
- Commenced Pandemic Planning, exercised through Exercise Cruickshank.
- Regional Council purchased three satellite phones.

2007

- Training for Regional and District Councils provided by Tai Poutini Polytechnic on basic CDEM principles.
- Exercise Pandora, a 24 hour pan-regional exercise was held in conjunction with Nelson-Tasman, Marlborough, and Canterbury. The exercise was based on an Alpine Fault earthquake scenario. All four Councils participated. Health, emergency services, welfare groups, Solid Energy, Transit, and Transpower were also involved.
- Controller and Group Recovery Manager training facilitated through Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management.

2008

- Research completed to identify stores of fuel that could be used in an emergency event.

- Local Welfare Plans revised into a generic Welfare Manual with guidelines on setting up and operating a welfare centre.
- Ongoing work by engineering Lifelines agencies to build resilience into their equipment and services.
- Group Controller training.
- Local Civil Defence Officers forum, and Controllers forum held.

Indicator 5: Progress towards identifying hazard areas where greater management is required

This is a useful indicator to evaluate improvements in our level of knowledge and understanding of patterns of hazard activity, in order to better manage resource use and development in hazard-prone areas, and minimise risk of damage and harm to people and property. There is increasing pressure to develop hazard-prone sites near rivers, the coastline, slopes, or earthquake faultlines.

Hazard area identification is done on an ongoing, case by case basis through regional and district planning and consent processes, for example, by assessing hazard risk from sea level rise for coastal subdivisions. Regional and district plans have identified some coastal, slope, and rockfall hazard areas, and have general rules controlling land, water and coastal marine area use to minimize the risk of natural hazards unduly affecting people or property.

In addition to the above, over the last three years the following work has been done to further identify hazard-prone areas:

- The Regional Council has compiled and collated up to date information regarding earthquake and slope stability hazard areas; this information is reported to District Councils.
- Latest publications with planning guidelines for hazard assessment and managing development near active faults in landslide areas have been circulated to District Councils.
- A GIS geology mapping database showing changes in landslide areas and faultline information has been updated.

- Two Envirolink projects have been instigated: Active Alpine Fault zone mapping, and a review of historical landslide information.
- Some assessment has been done of the risk of flood protection walls being overtopped, and information updated, on the Karamea, Buller (at Westport), Grey, Taramakau (at the Settlement and Inchbonnie), Kowhitirangi, Waiho (at Franz Josef), and Waitangitona Rivers.
- NIWA has done work on coastal erosion and beach profiling using the CAM-ERA approach, at Karamea, Granity, Ngakawau, Westport, Carters Beach, Rapahoe, and Blaketown.

Steady progress is being made to identify hazard prone areas, and make this information available to decision makers. The information being collected will also be used for reviewing RMA plans at their respective 10 year full review periods.

Indicator 6: Improved safety in public places

Dog control data, liquor bans, and security cameras in the main towns are used as a measure of this indicator. They are activities that contribute to making communal places safer for the public to utilise.

Buller District:

Dog attacks: Eight dogs were classified as dangerous in the last three years for attacks, and 24 dogs were classified menacing as a result of attacks. No prosecutions were made.

Liquor bans: A liquor ban came into force covering Reefton and Westport skate parks in 2005. The liquor ban in Westport was extended in 2007 to also include Victoria Square, surrounding roads and footpaths, and the Westport central business district. These liquor ban areas became permanent in late 2007. An extension to the Reefton liquor ban area came into force in 2008.

Security cameras

20 cameras are installed along the main street in Westport, and the footage has been useful in police prosecutions and defences.

Grey District

Dog attacks: The number of dog attacks on stock and people in the last three years were: 2005/06=17, 06/07=26, 07/08=36. From July 2008 to January 2009 there were 12 attacks. Between July 2008 and January 2009 three prosecutions were made.

Liquor ban: Since 2004 a ban has been in place in the Greymouth CBD streets and carparks, Runanga, Karoro Domain, and recently the Cobden Bridge carpark.

Security cameras: A camera is installed in Greymouth, and another two cameras are being considered in the town area.

Westland District:

Dog attacks: No records are kept of the number of dog attacks occurring in the District. No dogs have been classified as dangerous or menacing, although the number of prosecutions taken in the last three years is 31.

Liquor ban: The Hokitika CBD and the immediately adjoining residential area is subject to a liquor ban from 8.00pm – 6.00 am each day. The bylaw imposing the liquor ban is to be reviewed shortly.

Security cameras: There are three security cameras in Hokitika.

Liquor bans have been effective in improving safety in town centres by decreasing broken glass litter, the use of drinking vessels as weapons or missiles, and stopping groups of young people with alcohol congregating.

INDICATORS FOR IDENTITY OUTCOME

A "happening" region with a strong community spirit and distinctive lifestyle

Indicators

Four indicators are used in this section. These indicators are intended to provide an insight into key aspects of identity in the West Coast region.

Data Sources

Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils, West Coast Regional Council, Statistics New Zealand, Ministry of Social Development Social Report 2008, Elections New Zealand, Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC).

Indicator 1: Community events and activities

Community events and activities contribute to making our region a vibrant, "happening" place to live.

Community participation in events and activities contributes to our sense of community spirit and makes our region an enjoyable place to live.

Community events can also attract visitors to our region, promoting it as a tourist destination and a vibrant place to live.

Current levels and trends

Community events and activities come in all different forms including:

- Cultural
- Social
- Recreational
- Sporting

A range of community events take place throughout Buller, Grey and Westland each year, attracting locals and visitors alike. Many of these

events are organised and held by community groups within our region. Others are organised by or receive support from the local council.

Major annual events in our region attracting more than 300 people from outside the region include the following:

Buller

- Buller Gorge Marathon
- Westport Performing Arts Competitions Society Festival
- Best of the West Country Music Awards
- Boxing Day Horse Races
- Source to Sea Cycle Race

Grey

- Greymouth Motorcycle Street Race
- King of the Coast Speedway
- Art in the Park
- Around Brunner Cycle Race
- Greymouth Dance Competitions

Westland

- Wildfoods Festival
- Speights Coast to Coast, which begins in Kumara
- Kumara Horse Races

Indicator 2: Community amenity facilities

Community facilities contribute to making communities vibrant and attractive places to live.

These facilities provide the community with places to hold, participate in and attend cultural, social, recreational and sporting events and activities.

Having modern community facilities can also help attract people to an area.

By monitoring the number of facilities provided for our communities, and our progress on upgrading existing and creating new facilities, we will see how well we are providing amenities and opportunities for our communities to be vibrant and interesting places to live.

Current levels and trends

The current and planned facilities available to our communities, provided by or with support from local councils include:

Community Facilities provided or supported by District Councils			
Type of Facility	Buller	Grey	Westland
Community Halls	Reefton Community Centre, and financial assistance to Maruia, Inangahua, Little Wanganui, Waimangaroa, Granity, Ngakawau and Karamea community buildings	Camerons, Barrytown, Blackball, Inchbonnie, Moonlight, Nga here, Rotomanu, Totara Flat, Kaiata, Lake Brunner, Nelson Creek, Runanga and Dobson community halls	7 halls in Westland, 3 community buildings in Hokitika
Libraries	Westport and Reefton, with voluntary community libraries in Granity, Inangahua, Karamea, Maruia and Seddonville	Greymouth, and a community library in Runanga	Hokitika, and community libraries in Haast, Jacobs River, Franz Josef/Waiau, Fox Glacier, Okarito, Ross, Kumara, Harihari and Whataroa
Parks and Reserves	22 parks and reserves	22 parks and open spaces and 9 reserves	1 Square, 3 reserves
Museums	Support Coaltown in Westport, Karamea and Blacks Point Museums	History House, Greymouth; helping develop Coal River Park	West Coast Historical Museum, Carnegie Complex, Hokitika
Swimming Pools	Buller Electricity Ltd Aquatics Centre at the Solid Energy Centre, Westport; Reefton, Karamea and Hector pools	New Greymouth Aquatic Centre; Spring Creek Aquatic Centre (Runanga)	Centennial Pool, Hokitika; Ross pool
Theatres	Reefton Cinema, financial assistance to the Lyric Theatre, Granity	Regent Theatre, Greymouth	Regent Theatre, Hokitika
Other	Solid Energy Centre, a recreation and events centre comprising a multi-sport stadium, the Holcim Multi-purpose Room, the Development West Coast Hockey Turf, and the WestReef Squash Courts, Westport Buller Community Centre, a community facility containing a multi-use auditorium, cinema and screening room, Westport	Civic Centre, an indoor sport facility and Climbing Wall, Greymouth Shantytown Hockey Turf, Greymouth Left Bank Art Gallery, Greymouth	Hokitika Heritage Trail, a walk around the town passing main features and scenic attractions Art/Exhibition room, Carnegie Complex, Hokitika Donovans Store, Okarito Harihari Community Centre 4 th Westland Boys Brigade Hall, Hokitika

Note: the performance of the community facilities provided by the district councils is monitored and reported on by the respective councils each financial year in their annual reports. For more information on the performance of these facilities, please see the relevant council's annual report.

Indicator 3: Number of people involved in cultural, artistic, recreational, sporting and volunteer activities

Participation in community activities is an indicator of how involved people feel with their community.

Participation and involvement in these activities helps to create a strong community spirit, an identity, and a deeper sense of pride in our community. It also provides people with interesting activities to take part in, making our region a vibrant and attractive place to live.

Participation in cultural and artistic activities can help us share our identity with others. Maintaining or increasing our levels of participation in these types of activities over time will suggest that our region continues to be an attractive place to live and to be a community that people want to be involved in.

Current levels and trends

Cultural and artistic activities

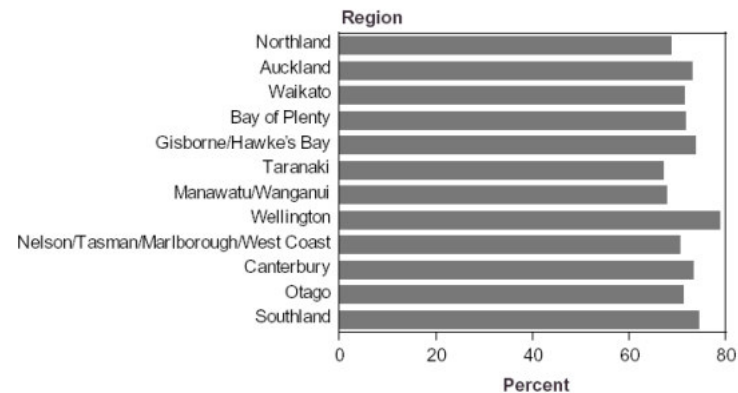
Data on participation in cultural and artistic activities is not currently available at a regional level.

"*New Zealanders and the arts 2008*", a study undertaken by Creative New Zealand, found that 86% of New Zealanders aged 15+ years are involved in the arts as attendees and/or participants and that virtually all (99%) of 10 to 14 years are involved.

When surveyed for this study, 48% of those aged 15+ years and 99% of those aged 10 to 14 years said they had participated in an arts event in the past 12 months.

Data on attendance at performing arts activities is available at a regional level, however this data was collected in 2001/2002.

Proportion of Adults Experiencing at Least One Performing Arts Activity
In previous 12 months
By region



Source: *New Zealand Framework for Cultural Statistics*, <http://www.stats.govt.nz/analytical-reports/measure-of-culture/performing-arts/default.htm> accessed 17/04/2009

Of the 12 regions, eight had a higher proportion of adults experiencing at least one performing arts activity than the West Coast region and three had a lower proportion.

Around 70% of adults in the West Coast region experienced at least one performing arts activity in the 12 months prior to the survey being conducted.

Limitations of the data

The West Coast region's survey results were collected with the Nelson/Tasman/Marlborough region. The overall results include people who do not live in the West Coast region.

Recreational and sporting activities

As well as being a great way of getting involved with the community, sport and recreation activities are a way of staying fit and healthy.

Percentage of adults who participated in at least one sport or recreation activity per year, per month and per week in 2007/2008				
Region	Per 12 months	Per month	Per week	Average number of activities per adult per year
Sport Tasman¹	97.9%	93.2%	85.4%	5.0
Sport Canterbury West Coast²	94.2%	89.0%	79.6%	4.6
New Zealand	96.0%	90.0%	79.0%	4.6

Source: SPARC Active New Zealand Survey 2007/2008

Percentage of adults who volunteered to help with a sport or recreation activity in 2007/2008	
Region	Percentage
Sport Tasman¹	32.7%
Sport Canterbury West Coast²	28.1%
New Zealand	25.3%

Source: SPARC Active New Zealand Survey 2007/2008

The data suggests that adults living on the West Coast are at least as likely as adults in other parts of New Zealand to participate in sport or recreation activities, and that they are more likely to be involved as volunteers for a sport or recreation activity.

By monitoring these participation statistics overtime we will see how active our community is in sporting and recreational pursuits.

¹ Sport Tasman incorporates the Buller district

² Sport Canterbury West Coast incorporates the Grey and Westland districts

Limitations of the data

Participation in sport and recreation is measured across geographic areas defined as regional sports trusts (RST).

The Buller district belongs to the Tasman RST. This RST covers the top of the South Island.

The Grey and Westland districts belong to the Canterbury-West Coast RST which covers the middle of the South Island.

The data in the tables above includes information from people who live within the RSTs covering the West Coast region, but who do not necessarily live in the West Coast region themselves.

Volunteer activities

The following table shows the percentage of people in the West Coast region, aged 15 years and over, who had undertaken any helping or voluntary work for or through any organisation, group or marae in the four weeks preceding census night for the past two census.

Percentage of people involved in helping or voluntary work in the four weeks preceding census night		
	Census years	
Area	2001	2006
West Coast	20.9%	17.3%
National	16.2%	13.8%

Source: Census data, Statistics New Zealand, <http://www.stats.govt.nz/census/default.htm> accessed 17/04/2009

The percentage of West Coasters undertaking voluntary activities is higher than the percentage of people nationally. This suggests that West Coasters tend to be more involved in community and volunteer groups than people in other regions.

Indicator 4: Voter turnout at local body and general elections

The level of voter turnout is an indication of how connected and involved we are with our community.

A high level of voter turnout suggests that the community is engaged and involved in how our community is governed, and the direction our community is moving in.

Current levels and trends

Local body elections

Table: Proportion of all enrolled electors (both resident and ratepayer) who cast a vote in district council elections

Area	District council election years		
	2001	2004	2007
Buller	72%	70%	61%
Grey	63%	67%	56%
Westland	75%	72%	53%
National	57%	51%	49%

Source: Ministry of Social Development Social Report 2008,
<http://www.socialreport.msd.govt.nz> accessed 16/04/2009

Table: Proportion of all enrolled electors (both resident and ratepayer) who cast a vote in regional council elections

Area	Regional council election years		
	2001	2004	2007
West Coast	79%	68%	57%
National	49%	45%	43%

Source: Ministry of Social Development Social Report 2008,
<http://www.socialreport.msd.govt.nz> accessed 16/04/2009

Buller, Grey and Westland districts have all recorded voter turnouts above the national average for the past seven territorial authority elections (1989-2007).

The West Coast region has had the highest voter turnout in New Zealand for the past five regional council elections (1995-2007).

General elections

High voter turnout is linked to high levels of community engagement and a greater likelihood that elected representatives will accurately reflect the needs of the community in their decision-making. General Election voter turnout can also indicate the level of confidence voters have in the nation's political institutions.

Table: Proportion of all enrolled electors who cast a vote in general elections

Area	General election years		
	2002	2005	2008
West Coast-Tasman	79.3%	82.5%	81.5%
National	76.9%	80.9%	79.5%

Source: Elections New Zealand, <http://www.elections.org.nz> accessed 17/04/2009

The West Coast-Tasman electorate consistently records above average voter turnout for general elections.

The high turnout of West Coast voters at both local and national elections suggests that residents here are generally interested in and engaged with what is happening in our community, and in New Zealand as a whole, and value the opportunity to have a say on the direction our region and our country is taking.

Limitations of the data

Data for general elections is collected by electorate rather than by regional or territorial authority area. The data above shows voter turnout for the West-Coast Tasman electorate. It includes voters from the West Coast and Tasman regions.