

Local Government Road Safety Summit - 9 April 2018

Responses to the question: What is the one thing you want to happen to improve road safety?

At the end of the Local Government Road Safety Summit on 9 April 2018, participants were invited to write an anonymous response to the question: ***What is the one thing you want to happen to improve road safety?*** The question was intended to allow all participants to reflect on discussions and emphasise any ideas they felt strongly about.

We received around 50 responses to the question. The suggestions have been transcribed and recorded largely as written (allowing for interpretation of hand writing and correction of spelling and editing for clarity). They are also grouped into common themes. A number of respondents recorded more than one suggestion and these are all included.

The responses provide a valuable insight into the key concerns around road safety in New Zealand from a local government perspective.

Speed

- Central Government should set default road speeds.
- Commitment to accelerating implementation of the new speed management guide as a priority.
- Central Government take the lead on key issues, especially speed. Less consultation cost for local authorities and enables them to concentrate on road safety.
- Change default speed limits to 80 km/h, Urban 40 km/h.
- Make it easy for councils to make changes to defaults where decisions are required for safety - not a by-law process.
- Simplify the process for RCAs to adjust the speed limits through accelerated legislation change nationally. Coupled with support for police to increase speed enforcement as a complete package to speed management.
- Bold focus on speed management
 - Simplify process for limit changes
 - Increased enforcement
 - A big campaign to support a change in the conversation around speed
 - The ability to trial new technologies.
- Leadership to speed up the implementation of the speed management guidelines 'safe speeds'.
- Nation-wide consensus on safe speeds in similar environments.
- Include design and implementation of appropriate speed limits, as well as funding for enforcement of appropriate speeds.

- Resource for and allow roading authorities to implement higher speeds (other than 80/40) only where evidence supports that this is ok.
- Local rural roads:
 - Match roads with speed limits
 - Encourage better behaviour - speed, risk taking, drug & alcohol
 - Enforce poor behaviour - points above plus lack of regos/licences
 - Roads & roadsides, Intersections, skid resistance, delineation, lighting.

Funding

- Increase FAR to 80 - 85%+ for safety projects.
- Increase FAR rate for networks, rather than single projects, pedestrianisation, cycle/walkways, public transport routes/stops prioritised as part of any development/project
- Increase government funding for cycleways would allow programmes to be completed quicker & it is only when the networks are completed that the full benefits can be realised.
- Provide a less onerous business case approach to obtain a FAR for cycling and footpaths.
- Incentivise behaviours through the FAR.
- Reduce and simplify the NZTA business case and approval process, which is time and resource hungry and can mean worthwhile projects and safety improvements are not progressed.

Safe Road Use

- More visible enforcement and harsher penalties (demerit points and loss of licence) for repeat offenders. Double demerits during holiday periods. Visible enforcement means more resources both on regional and local roads and visible traffic police officials who not only enforce but educate people.
- Greater police presence, providing guidance, education, as well as ticketing.
- More enforcement around the use of mobile phones whilst driving.
- Ask the police Minister to support the police to adopt a zero tolerance approach (and leave to officer discretion) – no “public tolerance”.
- Improve policing of anti-authoritarianism;
 - Impound “fleeing” pursued vehicles on next sighting.
 - Confiscate cell phones from users (collect from local police station later)
 - Policing truck speeds and behaviours.

- Target road policing at the higher risk areas (16 - 24 year olds, drink/drug driver and in areas with high crash statistics). Invest resource in these areas, rather than have police sitting on wide open roads, or bottom of passing lanes and giving tickets to “good drivers” doing 108km /hr. This will get more community buy in and support.

Education

- Roll out “Any Number Is Too Many” campaign (started in Otago and Southland) to the rest of NZ, to encourage community and self-responsibility for safety on our transport network.
- Driver licensing and training at schools.
- Education campaigns reinforcing road safety messages (other than speed & alcohol as currently), with the focus on enforcement – e.g. pull over when towing, make it click, do I have to pass, cycle share the roads etc.
- Education around cycle and pedestrian use as legitimate modes – especially in rural settings where vehicles can be at work and see other modes of transport as obstacles.
- Driver and rider education – mandated regularly (every 10 years?). To pick up new technologies and what it can do to deliver better safety and to check on skills linked to the vehicles being driven (e.g. what car was licence passed in, being driven now and what skills updating has been done).

Culture change

- Adopt and fully support “Vision Zero”
 - Requires strong leadership
 - Requires resource at local level to get buy-in at grass roots.
- Culture change that there doesn’t need to be a cost (i.e. deaths to use the roads).
- Change perception of policing in NZ to be one of road safety rather than enforcement.
- Change the mind set/behaviour of drivers and transport users.
- Bring the community along with speed changes, to avoid the risk of unintentional consequences e.g. Undermining police if only contact is enforcement of a speed limit which is not widely supported; drivers who want to drive fast will use lower quality secondary roads to avoid enforcement.
- Culture change – as road safety for councils is hard to measure and therefore justify funding. Strong messaging from Central government helps raise profile of road safety.

Motorcycling

- Offer heavily reduced registration if advanced riding course completed within last 2 years.
- Outlaw formation riding (this is a significant cause of serious accidents). Bring in single file only – as for cars.
- Embed making roads more motorcycle friendly.

Drug Testing

- Changes in legislation so that Police can take a blood sample where they suspect a driver is drug impaired - Random drug testing.
- Compulsory drug testing after an accident.

Technology

- Support for technology to make enforcement more effective and sustainable (e.g. point to point camera enforcement).
- NZTA launch a nationwide app on, no texting while driving (Driver sets it on and all texts get an automatic response saying “Thanks for saving lives on the roads”).

Other points raised

- Eliminate 1 star vehicles from the NZ fleet.
- Seatbelts.
- All roads should have a shoulder.
- Head lights on during the day for all vehicles.
- Compulsory Third Party Insurance.
- Take trucks off the roads, increase the use of rail and coastal shipping.
- Legislative change in line with the Dutch system where liability in the case of a cycle/vehicle crash rests immediately with the vehicle driver unless proven otherwise. This will give cyclists a right to use the road, rather than being viewed as a nuisance to car drivers who don't even give cyclists a basic courtesy of space on the roads.
- Greater awareness of the local government role in road safety issues.
- Greater investment in staff resources.
- Change KiwiRail approach to construction of cycle trails and walkways on their land. The previous government required KiwiRail to make money, which has resulted in a slow and costly process to gain approval to use land for new walkways and cycleways. KiwiRail land should be treated like the road network and access available without an annual charge and access should be a right.

- Have all authorities singing from the same sheet on road safety (i.e. NZTA “Go to person” who understands objectives, enables and does not put obstacles in place). Currently NZTA staff are not available, receptive to improvements and changes.
- Co-design policy, LGNZ and Government working in a genuine partnership.
- Mandatory safe systems analysis based on vision zero.
- Use of good evidence to support changes (e.g. Australia has lower deaths per 100,000 people but yet higher speeds).
- Look beyond the measurable (speed and alcohol etc.) and address distraction and fatigue.
- Measurable, accurate data and targets for all authorities that are aligned to National targets.