

New Zealand Government

ROAD TO ZERO

Creating New Zealand's new
Road Safety Strategy 2020-2030

Summary document



CONSULTATION DOCUMENT – NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY

This is a summary of *Road to Zero*, a consultation document that outlines proposals for a new road safety strategy for New Zealand and some first actions. The strategy will replace *Safer Journeys*, which concludes at the end of this year.

Road safety is a really important issue in New Zealand; too many people are being killed and injured on our roads every day. We're keen to hear what you think about our plan to improve safety for everyone who uses our roads, streets and footpaths.

This document is intended to help people to complete the online submission. Visit our website at www.transport.govt.nz/zero to find out more and share your views.

The public submission process is open from 17 July – 14 August 2019.

01 The case for change

New Zealand's road system, including our streets, footpaths, cycleways, bus lanes and state highways, shapes how we get around and how we use public spaces.

Last year, 377 people were killed on our roads, and thousands more seriously injured. The impact of these tragedies on families, survivors and communities, as well as on the economy and health system, is devastating and it is unacceptable. Deaths or serious injuries should not be a cost of travelling around.

Most other developed countries have far lower rates of death and serious injury on their roads so we know we can do better. If New Zealand's roads were as safe as Norway's (a country with a similar road network and population to New Zealand), around two-thirds of the people who were killed last year would still be alive.

A good road safety outlines a plan to stop people being killed or injured on our roads. It also aims to give people more choice about how they get around because they'll feel safer to walk or bike, and won't worry so much about letting their families head out on the roads. It makes our towns and cities better places to live and work in and our communities more vibrant places to spend time in.

A good road safety strategy is about putting the needs of people, rather than vehicles, at the heart of decision making.

Our new strategy will details the steps we need to take over the next decade to reduce road trauma.

People in New Zealand spend an average of **AN HOUR A DAY TRAVELLING**



There are **94,000KM** OF ROADS ON THE NETWORK

37% of people aged 15+ in New Zealand have **USED PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE PAST YEAR**



31% of people aged 15+ in New Zealand have **CYCLED IN THE PAST YEAR**



There are **83,000KM** OF LOCAL ROADS

There are **11,000KM** OF STATE HIGHWAYS



02

Vision



Our proposed vision is: a New Zealand where no one is killed or seriously injured in road crashes.

Our proposed vision is based on Vision Zero – a world-leading approach that says that no death or serious injury while travelling on our roads is acceptable.

Vision Zero has delivered significant reductions in road trauma in countries and cities that have adopted it, such as Sweden, New York and parts of Australia.

We recognise that we have a long way to go, but we need to be far more transformative in our approach.

Traditionally, we have focused most of our road safety efforts on trying to improve driving skills and tackling risk-taking behaviours. This is important, but it won't solve the road safety problem by itself. No one expects to crash, but everyone make mistakes – including those of us who are usually careful and responsible drivers.

We need to build a safe road system that is designed for people. This means doing our best to reduce the number of crashes, but acknowledging that mistakes will happen. When they do, we can prevent serious harm through safer vehicles, safer speeds and more forgiving road design.

We can achieve our vision if we shift the way we think about road safety and work together.

03

Target



On the way to achieving our vision, we propose to reduce death and serious injuries on our roads by 40 percent over the next decade. Steady progress towards this target would mean approximately 750 fewer people would be killed and 5,600 fewer would be seriously injured on our roads over the next 10 years, compared to now.

Change will not happen overnight, it will take time, investment, and teamwork to make the changes we need. If we are truly committed to this vision, we need to set an ambitious interim target and hold ourselves to account.

We are proposing a target of reducing annual deaths and serious injuries on our roads by 40 percent by 2030 [from 2018 levels]. This is a challenging but achievable target, based on modelling of a substantial programme of road safety improvements over the next ten years. This target will ensure that we continue to prioritise effective road safety interventions and allow us to be held to account on overall outcomes.

The modelling tells us that investment in proven infrastructure upgrades, such as median barriers and rumble strips, and in effective enforcement will be a key part of achieving this target. This will need to be supported by a programme of safety changes, including setting safe and appropriate speeds, improving the safety of vehicles, and tackling risk taking on our roads.

04 Principles



These guiding principles will be central to how we design the network and how we make road safety decisions. They provide a shared understanding of how we will work and the values that will direct our activities.

1

We plan for people's mistakes

We accept that people will make mistakes and take risks but that these mistakes should not result in people dying or suffering serious injuries on our roads.

2

We design for human vulnerability

There are physical limits to the amount of force our bodies can take before we are injured in a crash and we will design our road system to acknowledge this.



3

We strengthen all parts of the road transport system

We will improve the safety of all parts of the system – roads and roadsides, speeds, vehicles, and road use – so that if one part fails, other parts will still protect the people involved. We will make roads and streets safer for more vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and scooter riders.

4

We have a shared responsibility for improving road safety

The people who design, build and manage the road transport system, as well as the individuals and communities who use it, all have a part to play in making our roads safe.

5

Our actions are grounded in evidence and evaluated

We will strengthen road safety research so that we can base our decisions on the best evidence available. We will evaluate the changes we make so that we see what works, what doesn't work and what needs to be altered.



6

Our road safety actions support health, wellbeing and liveable places

Our roads are not just used for getting from A to B. In urban areas in particular, they are often places where people meet, shop and where children play. We will acknowledge this in our decision-making process to support healthier and more liveable places.

7

We make safety a critical decision-making priority

We will treat safety as a higher priority in the way we make decisions. This does not mean that other objectives, such as efficiency, are no longer important, but that they should not be achieved at the cost of safety.

05

Focus areas



Our five focus areas

- 1 Infrastructure improvements and speed management
- 2 Vehicle safety
- 3 Work-related road safety
- 4 Road user choices
- 5 System management

The journey towards our vision requires us to improve the quality of our roads, to encourage people to drive safer vehicles, to incentivise people to follow traffic laws and to create a transport culture that values and protects human life. We also need to ensure that the way we manage the road safety system enables all these changes to happen.

We have examined how and why crashes happen, and what road safety measures are most effective. This work has helped identify five areas for us to focus work on over the next decade.

1. Infrastructure improvements and speed management

We want to make the road network safer by investing in infrastructure changes that are long-lasting and proven to save lives. Evidence tells us that median barriers virtually eliminate the risk of head-on crashes. Rumble strips and side barriers help prevent run-off crashes. Roundabouts can help reduce the number of casualties at intersections.

Safer travel speeds on our highest risk roads will save lives. They also reduce stress for other road users, including passengers, and help people feel safe to walk, bike, or travel with children. Safer speeds can also reduce harmful emissions.

Won't lower speed limits in some areas mean slower journeys?

Research has shown that reducing your speed a little generally results in a very small increase in travel time. When you factor in traffic lights, congestion and intersections, travel times don't vary as much as many people think. If you drove for 10km at 80 km/h instead of 100 km/h, it would take you between 30 to 48 seconds more. In some instances, lower travel speeds can also save fuel.

Our **initial actions** in this area include:

- investing more in safety infrastructure
- taking a new approach to tackling unsafe speeds by changing the way we set speed limits, by reducing speeds in urban areas and around schools, and by taking a new approach to safety cameras
- reviewing infrastructure standards and guidelines to ensure they are fit for purpose
- improving the safety and accessibility of footpaths, bike lanes and cycleways for vulnerable users.



2. Vehicle safety

We know that safer vehicles not only help drivers avoid crashes, but also protect occupants and other road users when crashes do happen. We want to raise the safety standard of vehicles entering New Zealand, and to lift demand for safer vehicles. We will also support the uptake of proven safety technologies into our existing fleet.

Did you know?: You're at least 90 percent more likely to die or be seriously injured in a crash in a one-star safety-rated car than in a five-star safety-rated car.

Our **initial actions** in this area are:

- ▶ raising safety standards for vehicles entering the fleet
- ▶ promoting the availability of vehicle safety information
- ▶ requiring anti-lock braking systems to be fitted on new motorcycles over 125cc (or a simpler system known as a combined braking system on smaller motorcycles).

3. Work-related road safety

Every day, thousands of people travel on our roads while at work. Some of these people are professional drivers transporting goods. Others may be tradespeople moving between jobs or salespeople visiting clients. All of them have the right to come home from work healthy and safe.

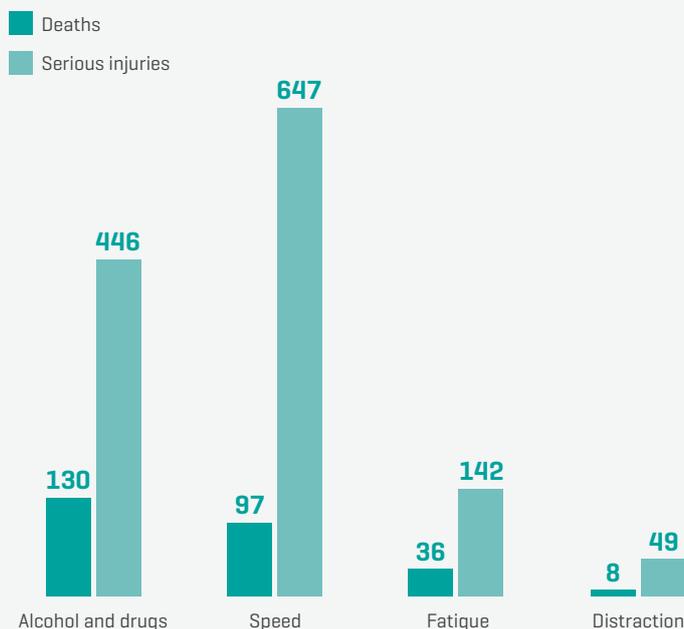
We know that not all businesses treat road safety as a critical health and safety risk, and that businesses in all sectors need better information about how to meet their obligations. This is especially important when it comes to rules about speed, fatigue and how long people can travel for before they should take a break.

While trucks are not involved in significantly more crashes per kilometre than other types of vehicles, these crashes are far more likely to be fatal, accounting for over 20 percent of road deaths.

Our **initial actions** in this area are:

- ▶ supporting best practice for work-related road safety. This includes collecting more data about work-related driving, and providing better information to businesses about how to keep workers safe on the roads.
- ▶ strengthening regulations governing commercial transport. This includes the rules on log books and work time requirements.

Contributing factors to death and serious injuries (2017)



What we've heard

In developing the consultation document, we have spoken to a broad range of road safety experts, academics and representatives of local and central government and businesses. We have held meetings with groups that represent different types of road users, and members of the public have written to us to share their ideas and experiences.

There has been broad support for a more ambitious approach to road safety, with many people telling us that they want more investment and stronger leadership to support lasting change.

4. Road user choices

Although most road users intend to follow the rules of the road, many will occasionally push the limits or make poor choices. It could be going too fast, misjudging the gap in traffic at a busy intersection, driving too close when passing someone riding a bicycle, or travelling too fast past a school bus picking up or dropping off children. Or it could be diverting attention – even for a second or two – to a phone or a passenger.

There is no doubt that if everyone followed the rules, stayed alert and sober, drove at safe travel speeds for the road and wore a seatbelt, fewer people would be killed or seriously injured on our roads. That's why it is important that the new road safety strategy promotes good, law-abiding and considerate road use.

Wearing a seatbelt during a crash doubles your chances of surviving a serious crash. Yet, every year, over 80 people die in crashes not wearing a seatbelt.

Our **initial actions** in this area are:

- ▶ prioritising road policing to tackle high-risk behaviours, particularly use of seatbelts, alcohol and drug impairment, driver distraction and speed
- ▶ reviewing financial penalties and remedies
- ▶ enhancing drug driver testing
- ▶ supporting motorcycle safety, including through rider training programmes.

5. System management

Road safety belongs to everyone. This strategy's success will require visionary leadership, strong partnerships, sound governance, and communities working together. We need to build good relationships across the network so that we can share information and work together effectively. This is especially important in the area of post-crash response. Different agencies need to collaborate to ensure that emergency responders can get to crash scenes quickly and provide the best quality care.

We also need to make sure that decision makers can access sound data and evidence about what works if they are to take action with confidence.

A recent New Zealand report found that improved post-crash care could have affected 11 percent of fatal crashes sampled.

Most of these relate to crashes that occurred in rural areas. In some cases there was no one able to call 111 and in others it was difficult for emergency services to access the crash site.

Our **initial actions** in this area include:

- ▶ improving data collection and research by implementing the new Transport Evidence Base Strategy
- ▶ developing a monitoring framework to help agencies keep their road safety work on track
- ▶ helping transport, health and emergency services agencies to work together to improve the way we respond to road crashes and treat crash victims.

06



Measuring success

Road to Zero provides a draft outcomes framework, which provides a list of key measures that can help us track progress and performance indicators to help us meet our targets. This outcomes framework will help us monitor how the road safety system is performing, drive action and hold agencies publicly accountable for delivering the strategy.

The framework will continue to evolve as we develop the final strategy. If you would like more information, or to comment on our proposed measures, please see the full Road to Zero consultation document.

Next steps



Please let us know your views by completing a submission on our website at www.transport.govt.nz/zero. Submissions must be lodged by 14 August 2019.

We will use your feedback to refine our approach and aim to deliver a final strategy and a first plan of actions before the end of 2019.