

OC230005

9 February 2023

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

I refer to your email sent on 10 December 2022 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

"How was the 100km speed limit established to begin with on our highways, for example Germany has drive to your ability limits".

New Zealand Police (Police) transferred this part of your request to Te Manatū Waka Ministry of Transport on 10 January 2023. You can expect a separate response to the rest of your request from Police.

The information you have requested is publicly available online in the following places:

- Subclause 21(1) of the *Traffic Regulations 1976* set a default speed limit of 80 kilometres per hour. This subclause can be found on page 17 here: http://www.nzlii.org/nz/legis/num_reg/tr1976186/tr1976186.html.
- This subclause was later amended, from 1 July 1985, by regulation 2(1) Traffic Regulations 1976 Amendment number 13 by substituting the number "100" for the number "80"
(<https://legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/1976/0227/1.0/DLM50898.html>)

As this information is accessible online, I am refusing your request under the following section of the Act:

18(d) the information requested is publicly available.

You may find the below information on speed limits helpful:

- Aotearoa New Zealand first introduced a speed limit in 1930. The first speed limit introduced was 30 miles per hour (48 kilometres per hour).
- The open speed limit was raised to 60mph (96kmh) on 'suitable' sections of New Zealand roads in 1969.
- On 4 December 1973, the maximum open road speed limit was reduced from 55 mph to 50 mph (80 km/h) as part of fuel conservation measures.
- From 1 July 1985, the open road speed limit was increased from 80 km/h to 100 km/h for all vehicles except Heavy Motor Vehicles (90 km/h), articulated vehicles (90

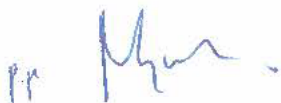
km/h) and vehicles towing trailers (80 km/h) and remains the default speed limit today.

- The original speed limit was set taking into account speed limits in other countries, and then adjusted following improvements in vehicle safety and other features, and roading. The oil shock lowered the speed limit for a period. Once New Zealand adopted the metric system, it was rounded up to 100km/h.
- Information on why we have speed limits can be found at www.nzta.govt.nz/safety/partners/speed-and-infrastructure/safe-and-appropriate-speed-limits/.
- The latest information on how speed limits are set can be found at www.nzta.govt.nz/safety/partners/speed-and-infrastructure/safe-and-appropriate-speed-limits/the-setting-of-speed-limits-rule/.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

The Ministry publishes our Official Information Act responses and the information contained in our reply to you may be published on the Ministry website. Before publishing we will remove any personal or identifiable information.

Nāku noa, nā



Helen White
Manager Mobility and Safety