



7 December 2022

Waka Kotahi
50 Victoria Street
Wellington

Via email to: info@nzta.govt.nz

Tēnā koe,

Interim State Highway Speed Management Plan

Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) welcomes the opportunity to submit on the Waka Kotahi Interim State Highway Speed Management Plan (ISMP). We support the vision for a “state highway network where no-one is killed or seriously injured”, and the five underlying objectives to achieve this vision.

While we agree that speed management is an important lever for increasing the safety of our state highways, we think it’s crucial that Waka Kotahi also considers the broader range of levers available to determine what will deliver the best safety outcomes for local communities. Maintenance and renewals, driver education, and investment in road safety signage and promotion are also important levers for increasing the safety of our state highway network. Change is also needed across each of these areas.

The main concern our members have raised is the need to ensure that speed management doesn’t come at the cost of investing in these other areas, and in particular maintenance. If speed reduction is viewed in isolation, it risks becoming an overly simplistic approach to increasing safety that fails to account for the extensive maintenance work that our state highway and roading network needs. To realise the vision of a state highway network where no-one is killed or seriously injured, we need well-maintained state highways. We know that newer and well-maintained roads are safer roads.

It’s positive to see a whole-of-network approach being taken for a more joined up approach to speed management, and we’re supportive of the focus areas identified. We note that community needs will differ significantly even within the regions identified, and while speed reductions outside of schools, marae and townships likely do make sense, it will be vital to make sure there’s appropriate and genuine engagement with communities to avoid adopting a blanket approach that fails to recognise the specific needs of an area.

Our members have raised concerns about the effect that blanket speed changes could have on the economy and productivity, as well as the potential to create congestion or increased travel times – particularly for those living in rural areas where public transport isn’t yet a viable option. If the core purpose of the state highway network is to move people and freight, we think that making sure those who live in and know their local area have a voice in decision-making about speed management is crucial – particularly to ensure that economic and productivity impacts are factored in. We’ve

consistently heard that councils want to be a part of the decision-making process to make sure that local voice is heard and valued in decisions that affect their communities. We encourage Waka Kotahi to work closely with councils to determine the approach that will deliver the best outcomes for each community.

The management of the state highway network remains a key interest for our members, and we thank Waka Kotahi for the opportunity to comment on the ISMP. We welcome the opportunity to work with Waka Kotahi on the recommendations and issues raised in our submission and are happy to answer any questions you may have. If we can be of any assistance, please contact charlotte.mckay@lgnz.co.nz

Ngā mihi nui,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Grace Hall', written in a cursive style.

Grace Hall
Director Policy and Advocacy
Local Government New Zealand