



National Road Carriers Association (NRC) submission on Draft Hawke's Bay Regional Land Transport Plan



About National Road Carriers Association

National Road Carriers Association (NRC) is New Zealand's progressive nationwide organisation representing 1500 supply chain company members, who collectively operate over 16,000 trucks throughout New Zealand. NRC advocates on behalf of members and works with central and local government on road transport infrastructure and regulations.

NRC members are committed to providing an efficient, productive, resilient, safe and value for money service that supports the wider economy. To achieve this, trucking operators need a safe, efficient, and sustainable operating environment that enables the efficient and safe movement of goods. Our members primarily operate road freight however a number also operate air, sea and rail freight services.

Some 54% of NRC's membership comprises single vehicle operators and 89% employ 10 or fewer.

General Comments

National Road Carriers welcomes that the Hawke's Bay Regional Land Transport Plan underscores the critical importance of a resilient, efficient, and sustainable transport system for the freight sector, necessitating significant investment and strategic planning to address current challenges and future demands.

Access to a resilient network is essential for enabling the wider Hawkes Bay economy.

National Road Carriers acknowledges the significant work already done in the region to restore access for communities cut o by the adverse weather events last year.

Dependence on Key Transport Corridors

As the plan notes State Highways 2 and 5 are critical lifeline links for the region. These highways are hilly, winding, and narrow in places, creating resilience challenges and potential for disruptions. Any disruption in these corridors significantly impacts freight movement, as these are the main routes for connecting Hawke's Bay with other parts of New Zealand.

National Road Carriers will support any request by Hawkes Bay Regional Council to the New Zealand Transport Agency to increase the resilience of these State Highways.

Investments in transport infrastructure

National Road Carriers supports the thirty year horizon in the plan as long term planning is required if New Zealand is to overcome the challenges brought about by climate change and decades of under investment in infrastructure.

We would encourage Hawkes Bay Regional Council to also ensure that robust connections to Gisborne and Napier Ports are maintained as alternative freight connections should road access be disrupted.

As the transport industry decarbonises there will be an increased need for charging infrastructure both electric and hydrogen.

It is also highly likely that zero emission freight vehicles will have higher axle loadings until technology advances sufficiently.

Resilience and maintenance

We agree that Hawke's Bay's transport system, particularly the rural roading network, is crucial for the regional economy and that it faces significant resilience challenges. This includes vulnerability to natural disasters like Cyclone Gabrielle, which caused extensive damage, highlighting the fragility of transport links. The region's geography and terrain, such as erodible land, unstable cliffs, bluffs, and road bridges through deep gorges, further exacerbate these challenges.

Increasing the use of structural pavements on key freight routes along with a review of structures to allow for the full potential of High Productivity Motor Vehicles to be realised will increase resilience and provide a lower cost of life for the assets.

Public transport investment

National Road Carriers supports Investments in public transport and active travel, that could indirectly impact freight transport by potentially reducing congestion and improving efficiency on shared road networks.

We would encourage active transport where it can be separated from other road users without sacrificing traffic lanes.

Road safety

National Road Carriers supports improving road safety. We support increased enforcement to discourage unsafe driving. We would encourage more use of technology such as what is proposed at the SH2 Eskdale Commercial Vehicle Safety

Centre and preventative active safety measures such as median barriers.

Potential rate changes and funding mechanisms

We agree there is a need for reform in the transport sector, including a shift from fuel excise duty to road user charges and exploring private funding options for major projects. The move to a longer-term focus will increase New Zealand's attractiveness for alternative funding options including international Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). We encourage the move towards electronic road user charges as a fully digital system can provide both a rich source of data and a platform for alternative funding options.

We would like to see better use of data to help all Road Controlling Authorities to better manage their assets.

Closing Comments

National Road Carriers supports the ambitious targets set out in this plan and encourage Hawkes Bay Regional Council to continue to increase the resilience of your network. We welcome any opportunity to engage with Council to resolve the challenges identified.

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