

Regional Speed Management Plan for Taranaki 2024

Introduction

From the busy streets of our urban hubs to the expanses of rural roads in the eastern hill country, our roading network in Taranaki is diverse and dynamic. This Regional Speed Management Plan (RSMP) is about finding ways to make every road in our region as safe as possible reflecting road function, design, and use, while maintaining efficiencies across the network. The RSMP includes principles and objectives to guide the speed management approaches of the region's road controlling authorities¹.

Speed management – what is it and why does it matter?

'Imagine an Aotearoa where everyone can get to where they're going safely. Where it's safe to drive to work and home again or visit whānau and friends. Where it's safe to ride bikes and let tamariki walk to school. Where transport improves our health and wellbeing, creating liveable places for our communities.' (Road to Zero Strategy)

The provision of a safer transport system for everyone who travels around the Taranaki region has been a key regional priority for many years. This safety focus has been strengthened through the Government's [Road to Zero safety strategy](#), which sets a clear vision where no one is killed or seriously injured in road crashes.

Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2022

In May 2022, the new *Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2022* (the Rule) came into force. The new Rule aims to create a more consistent approach to applying speed management within each region, with consideration of speed limits alongside investment in infrastructure by Road Controlling Authorities (RCAs).

Taranaki context

The [Taranaki Regional Land Transport Plan 2021](#) (RLTP) is the key strategic document for land transport that outlines the region's vision, objectives and the intended investment programme. It reflects the national target to achieve a 40 percent reduction in deaths and serious injuries on our roads by 2030.

Extensive international research has been undertaken to understand the relationship between speed and the risk of crashes. According to police reports, speed contributed to 26% of deaths from crashes in New Zealand, and almost 2,000 crashes causing injury.

It is estimated, combining evidence from multiple sources to account for under-reporting, that exceeding the legal speed limit contributed to approximately 60% of fatal road crashes, while approximately 71% of injury crashes involved speeds in excess of the Safe and Appropriate Speed limit.

While there are many factors that contribute to an incident, for example visibility and conditions, or driver distraction or impairment, the severity of the event can be directly attributed to the speed at which a vehicle is travelling.

¹ The major road controlling authorities in Taranaki include Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (for state highways), and the New Plymouth District Council, Stratford District Council, and South Taranaki District Council (for local roads). Conversations have also taken place with the Department of Conservation and Taranaki Regional Council.

Research also shows that safety concerns are a bigger deterrent to trying cycling than travel time or weather². A reduction in average speeds is known to encourage more people out of their cars for more short journeys.

The draft *Taranaki Regional Speed Management Plan 2024* has been developed by a working group coordinated by the Taranaki Regional Council; and supported by Roadsafes Taranaki; but centrally with Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency and the district councils, as the RCAs and technical experts in the region. We have a commitment that local speed management plans will be developed based on these agreed principles.

Guiding strategic framework

As per the Rule, the RSMP requires a vision, principles, objectives and measures. These are outlined in this section.

Vision

Our RLTP³ outlines the vision for Taranaki of —

A vibrant, resilient and connected region,
with a safe transport system enhancing liveable places.

Overarching objective

This RSMP focuses on the following key 30-year strategic objective of the RLTP —

Safe and healthy people
Protecting people from transport-related
deaths and serious injuries,
and making active travel
an attractive option.

Guiding national principles

The following guiding principles, from Waka Kotahi's *Speed Management Guide: Road to Zero Edition*, are expected to be applied by RCAs when developing their SMPs.

² Urban New Zealanders attitudes and perceptions of cycling and walking 2018. NZ Transport Agency

³ Note that the Vision and Objective may need to be updated if these change during the RLTP review



Guiding regional principles

There are a range of speed management tools and techniques that can be applied depending on the type and use of the road. The following regional principles will be considered by RCAs when making decisions about appropriate speed management approaches:

Principle A	Liveable and safe neighbourhoods, school areas, and other cultural or community areas of significance
Principle B	Designed with and for the community
Principle C	Ensuring safety of all transport users
Principle D	Design and build for safety, accessibility and with local context

Regional policies

Informed by the RLTP, and associated national and regional documents, these policies will guide the RCAs in the region as they each prepare the SMP for their roading network:

Policy A	Ensure speed limits are appropriate to the movement and place ⁴ function of the transport network
Policy B	Ensure safe speed limits around schools/kura, marae and other areas of local significance

⁴ Traditionally, roads and streets were considered as **movement** corridors only to get people from A to B. The national [One Network Framework](#) (ONF) is now used to better recognise that streets not only keep people and goods moving, but they're also **places** for people to live, work and enjoy.

Measures

Implementation and monitoring of SMPs will be undertaken by RCAs. This will include the monitoring of deaths and serious injuries from road crashes.

Variations

An RCA may wish to prepare a variation to their SMP outside of the three-year planning cycle, with the approval of the Director of Land Transport.

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