

13 December 2013

Regan Gibbons
fyi-request-1273-17f49a29@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Regan

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 5 November 2013 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982:

'Statistics regarding the traffic volume on the Opawa River bridge on State Highway One, north of Blenheim.
What investigations have been done into improving the safety and traffic flow on the bridge?
What plans does the NZTA have to manage increasing traffic volumes using the bridge in the future?'

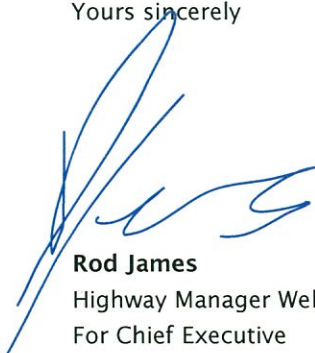
The NZ Transport Agency wrote to you on 4 December 2013 to extend the time available to respond to your request.

Annual average daily traffic volumes at the Opawa River Bridge have decreased from 9998 in 2008 to 9602 in 2012. More information on traffic volumes is available on the Transport Agency website at: www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/state-highway-traffic-volumes/. 2013 data will be made available in April 2014.

The Transport Agency has investigated the economic benefits of a replacement bridge. However there is a very weak case to spend \$5-10m on a replacement bridge. Truck drivers have a protocol of not crossing if another truck from the opposite direction is already on the bridge. This causes some delays but is a practice accepted by operators and the delays are short. There is no serious crash history and there are no weight restrictions on the bridge. We have therefore not been able to include the bridge renewal in the National Land Transport Programme as strategic fit, effectiveness and efficiency are all low.

If you would like to discuss this reply with the Transport Agency, please contact Frank Porter, Highway Manager Marlborough Roads, by email to Frank.Porter@nzta.govt.nz or by phone on (03) 520 8331.

Yours sincerely



Rod James
Highway Manager Wellington
For Chief Executive