

Hon Simeon Brown

MP for Pakuranga

Minister for Energy
Minister of Local Government
Minister of Transport

Minister for Auckland
Deputy Leader of the House



Cassandra Crowley
Acting Chair, NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

Dear Cassandra,

As you will be aware, a new Government has taken office with a comprehensive transport programme that will see Kiwis get to where they want to go, quickly and safely. The Government is writing a new Government Policy Statement on Land Transport to prioritise reducing travel times and to create a more productive and resilient transport network that drives economic growth to boost incomes and unlock land for houses.

I am writing to inform you of recent changes made to the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2022 (the Rule).

I am aware Regional Transport Committees and Road Controlling Authorities are currently developing, or have developed, speed management plans in line with the Rule and deadlines set by the NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA).

The Rule has been amended to revoke the deadlines set by the NZTA, including the 29 March 2024 deadline for submitting the final draft speed management plans for certification. The deadlines and targets for reviewing speed limits, including around schools, have also been revoked. The Rule no longer requires Regional Transport Committees and Road Controlling Authorities to develop speed management plans, and instead allows them to choose to do so.

The changes also empower me, as Minister of Transport, to set new deadlines for any of the steps in developing, reviewing, varying or replacing speed management plans. At this stage, I have no intention of setting any deadlines as I intend to replace the Rule.

This new Rule will ensure that when speed limits are set, economic impacts – including travel times – and the views of road users and local communities are taken into account, alongside safety.

The new Rule will also implement requirements for variable speed limits on roads approaching schools during pick up and drop off times, rather than permanent reductions, to keep young New Zealanders safe when they are arriving at, or leaving, school.

I consider it is undesirable for Regional Transport Committees and Road Controlling Authorities to apply public money and resources in developing speed management plans only to have to revisit the plans under the new rule. I would like to advise the NZTA, in its role as the regulator, that I have written to Regional Transport Committees and Road Controlling Authorities signalling my intention to replace the Rule and my preference that they consider the new rule before finalising their speed management plans.

In its role of Road Controlling Authority for the state highway network, I would also encourage the NZTA to consider the new rule before finalising the speed management plan for the state highway network.

I also note the policies within the previous Government's so-called 'Road to Zero' strategy, in relation to speed limits, are no longer the Government road safety strategy for the purpose of the Rule. The Government is committed to road safety and will be publishing new objectives for road safety along with the new Rule next year.

In addition, I understand that NZTA has been developing programmes with stakeholders to reduce vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) by the light vehicle fleet, using funding from the Climate Emergency Response Fund. I am giving notice to the Agency to end its work on these programmes, and to not commit any further funding to local authorities (beyond existing contractual obligations) to develop these programmes. This replaces the expectations in the 16 May 2022 letter of expectations from the Minister of Transport to the Chair of the Board (and any subsequent changes to that letter and any letter from the Minister of Transport replacing that letter) regarding this funding.

I appreciate the hard work that has already gone into developing the Interim State Highway Speed Management Plan and your work with local authorities on VKT programmes.

Thank you for your understanding as we work through these changes. I look forward to working with the NTZA to deliver the Government's objectives.

Yours sincerely



Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Transport

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