

Name: Councillor Ann Court

Date: August 2023

Northland Road Safety Meeting

Quarterly meetings so nothing to report this month.

Road Safety

Waka Kotahi has advised the following new variable speed limits will come into effect 31 July 2023:

- Mahimaru marae will have a 60km/h variable speed limit area to ensure the safe entry and exit of vehicles into the marae. At all other times, the speed limit will be 80km/h.
- Kareponia marae will have a 60km/h variable speed limit area around the marae to allow safe entry and exit of vehicles into the marae and a 30km/h variable speed limit area between Kareponia marae and the urupā to keep whanau safe as they walk along the state highway during tangi. At all other times, the speed limit will be 80km/h.

The variable speed limit uses electronic signs to lower the speed limit for a short period when vehicles are detected at the marae accessway or between Kareponia marae and the urupā when activated by Kareponia marae.

OIA requests have confirmed that drink driving deaths more than doubled over the last decade increasing from 53 in 2013 to 111 in 2022. At the same time fewer alcohol checkpoints have been conducted in Northland. Northland Police have risen to the challenge and recently you may have observed an increased Police presence on the network undertaking random alcohol screening. 😊

Disability Action Group

No meeting this period.

Te Puawaitanga

No meetings. The site is unworkable to due ground saturation – we can do little until the weather improves. We need to resolve the Governance structure for when the site is operational.

Liquor Licensing

Year to date 330 applications have been received. 51 decisions were written in July.

Commissioner Clearwater spent a few days in Northland and delivered bespoke training to the pool members and staff 27 and 28 July.

Hearings

Nautipenguin Limited reconvened 21 July. By written decision released 26 July the renewal was granted the variation was declined.

Regional Land Transport Committee

The Regional Land Transport Committee met Tuesday 1 August. I circulated the agenda to Councillors by email Saturday 29 July with my usual cover note to save you having to read the whole thing.

The GPS has still not been released. The delay is becoming untenable in regard to our ability to plan for our next three-year work programme. There is a report on this in the agenda.

Excellent report from the road safety team with a focus on speed reductions. Note KDC has sought a legal review on the requirement to receive/adopt or not. It will be interesting to see exactly what we sought and what the legal opinion offered. My understanding is that whilst we are legally required to produce a speed management plan the only compulsory is the definition of category 1 and 2 schools and the introduction of permanent or variable speed limits. Happy to stand corrected as this is still in my research pile on my desk.

The workshop agenda for this month was procurement.

New Zealand Automobile Association

The AA research Foundation research on the safety impact of new roads has found on average there is a 37% reduction in deaths and serious injuries in locations where new roads or bypasses were built. Many of the key regional connections are not up to the standard they should be.

NZAA Election Calls: These are what the membership has voted on as our strategic focus points....

1. Increase road maintenance by at least \$1.2 billion over the next three years – focussed on foundation and resurfacing work. This is needed to catch up on work that should have been done in previous years. It could enable, for example, an extra 1,600 lane km of foundation work and 7,500 lane km of resurfacing. The AA believes road maintenance should get the first call on Fuel Excise Duty (FED) & Road User Charge (RUC) revenue to ensure road users get the quality road they have paid for.
2. Improving the resilience of our road network needs to become an urgent ongoing priority. This means having a clear and fully funded plan for improving the resilience of major roads most at risk or where the consequences of a road being impassable are most significant. It also means carefully considering

opportunities to improve resilience when planning road construction, renewals and maintenance work.

3. Saliva-based roadside drug testing devices need to be introduced as soon as possible by Police and alcohol testing numbers need to return to their previous high levels. Authorities need to monitor and follow up those who do not install an interlock so that all drivers sentenced to them actually end up with a device in their vehicle.
4. Reducing cell phone use by drivers needs to be made an urgent road safety priority by the authorities. A coordinated plan and package of actions is required to change people's behaviour – combining better detection and enforcement, effective penalties, awareness campaigns and technology solutions.
5. We need a pipeline of new builds to replace our least safe roads, and we need to complement this with decarbonising the cars that drive on them. The AA wants to see clear, fully funded plans for upgrading regional roads. This should include a combination of building new roads and bypasses; upgrading entire road corridors to a quality that fits the use and purpose of the road; and smaller safety retrofits where appropriate.
6. To boost transport funding, the AA wants GST paid on fuel tax and road user charges to be added into the National Land Transport Fund to be spent on maintaining safe, high-quality roads. Doing this is fair and would increase transport funding by 15% at no extra cost to motorists.
7. The AA wants to see a clear, long-term strategy, with time-bound targets, showing how the money paid by Kiwis in transport-related ETS charges is actually reducing transport emissions in line with the Government's climate change commitments.

Did You Know

Did you know the transport sector has been paying into the New Zealand 'Emissions Trading Scheme' (ETS) since 2010 and currently pays about \$1 billion annually in ETS charges.

Did you know that white typeface on a green sign is the perfect contrast for night driving visibility. Standardized in 1954 as a universally accepted colour scheme, this colour combination actually makes the letters appear larger and easier to read. Remember that come next election.... 😊