



**la Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand Incorporated**

**submission to**

**Auckland Transport on the Hobson Street Bus Lane  
Extension**

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# **Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand submission to Auckland Transport on the Hobson Street Bus Lane Extension**

## **1. Representation**

- 1.1 Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand Incorporated (Transporting New Zealand) is made up of several regional trucking associations for which Transporting New Zealand provides unified national representation. It is the peak body and authoritative voice of New Zealand's road freight transport industry which employs 32,868 people (1.2% of the workforce), and has a gross annual turnover in the order of \$6 billion. This is part of a wider transport sector that employs 108,000 people, or 4 percent of the country's workforce and contributes 4.8 percent of New Zealand's GDP.
- 1.2 Transporting New Zealand members are predominately involved in the operation of commercial freight transport services, both urban and inter-regional. These services are entirely based on the deployment of trucks both as single units for urban delivery and as multi-unit combinations that may have one or more trailers supporting rural or inter-regional transport.
- 1.3 According to Ministry of Transport (MOT) research (National Freight Demands Study 2018) road freight transport accounts for 93% of the total tonnage of freight moved in New Zealand or about 85% of the surface freight activity measured in tonne-kilometres.

## **2. Introduction**

- 2.1 Transporting New Zealand provides sector leadership and believes we all need to operate in an environment where the following must be managed and co-exist:
  - The safety and wellbeing of our drivers and other road users, our drivers are our most valuable asset
  - The impacts of transport on our environment
  - The transport of goods by road is economically feasible and viable and it contributes the best way it can to benefit our economy.
- 2.2 Transporting New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Auckland Transport Hobson Street bus lane extensions.
- 2.3 The predominant lens and scope of our submission is the impacts and risks associated with commercial (road freight) traffic and the economy that traffic serves.

## **3. Submission**

- 3.1 Freight on New Zealand's roads is almost exclusively delivered by truck movements. Transporting New Zealand's view is that heavy vehicles require access to the road network to keep the economy moving. Efficient movement of freight is helped where congestion can be reduced.
- 3.2 Transporting New Zealand also knows that where freight travels efficiently the benefits in less emissions contribute to the overall lower goals of decarbonisation

on New Zealand roads. Trucks will be required to move goods and deliver freight for the foreseeable future and by being able to carry this out efficiently will also contribute to lower costs to the end consumer.

- 3.3 In February this year Transporting New Zealand officially launched its “Green Compact”, our framework for decarbonising commercial road transport by 2050. We have adopted the International Roading Union’s (IRU) Green Compact on emission reduction. The Green Compact establishes five decarbonisation pillars: alternative fuels, efficient logistics, collective mobility, vehicle technologies and driver training. To reflect New Zealand’s roading and political environment, Transporting New Zealand has added a sixth pillar: designing infrastructure to lessen emissions.
- 3.4 The objective of our Green Compact’s third pillar, Collective Mobility, is to move people from their private cars to collective means of transport, including public bus transport and private coach and taxi services. Coupled with a clear enabling legal framework in support of collective mobility, this will help the transport industry reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- 3.5 Transporting New Zealand has considered the proposed extension of the Hobson Street Bus Lanes. We understand it is Auckland Transport’s intent that the changes are designed to increase dedicated bus lane availability and consequently enable more capacity in the public transport network.
- 3.6 Transporting New Zealand also notes that Auckland Transport predict the changes on Hobson Street will have a positive flow effect onto arterial routes in Northwest Auckland where congestion from light vehicles is a significant issue that contributes to overall increased journey times.
- 3.7 Given the approach we are taking with our Green Compact, in principle we support Auckland Transport’s proposal. However, we have added some caveats below to our support of this proposal
- 3.8 Transporting New Zealand notes Auckland Transport’s desire to see better utilisation of public transport to future proof predicted population growth. We also note Auckland Transport’s prediction of better services and a significant capacity increase per hour from 2,000 to 8,000 people being transported on Hobson Street
- 3.9 In Transporting New Zealand’s opinion, public transport, particularly in the major centres with buses and trains, has historically had a poor reputation of being unreliable. It is our understanding that the main contributing factors underpinning that unreliability are staffing and engineering issues as opposed to network access issues. Therefore, we are concerned that unless Auckland Transport are taking a much broader systemic approach to remedying the issues with public transport, these roading change will not deliver the changes intended in increasing passenger volumes.
- 3.10 Further to paragraph 3.9, we would be concerned if Auckland Transport is using its predicted numbers to underpin business investment cases based only on road infrastructure changes, as this would be placing the return on investment of public funding at considerable risk.
- 3.11 Transporting New Zealand has not taken a rigorous approach to considering the detailed engineering design related to these proposals as we believe that

responsibility should lie with Auckland Transport and we entrust it will use good traffic engineering design practice and sound engineering for the associated construction activity.

- 3.12 Transporting New Zealand is concerned with the proposal in the Fanshawe Street to Victoria Street activity to remove one of the two right turn lanes on Hobson Street at the Victoria Street Intersection. Removal of a lane invariably reduce throughput and capacity. The rationale for removing the lane is that a tree is creating safety issues for buses.
- 3.13 It is Transporting New Zealand's view that rather than remove the traffic lane, a much better solution would be to either trim or preferably remove the tree altogether. It appears somewhat ironic that a tree trumps improvements to the network to improve flow and the movement of people and freight.
- 3.14 Further to paragraphs 3.12 and 3.13, Transporting New Zealand is concerned that if that case consistently demonstrates Auckland Transport's general thinking and prioritisation, then the integrity and rigour of its processes needs to be reviewed with urgency.
- 3.15 In summary, heavy vehicles undertake the critical activity of moving freight, our members and their vehicles do not travel on roads unnecessarily, they are providing a service and it is important for the economy and the environment that this is done the most efficient way possible. Reducing congestion on the network will help our industry undertake its activity and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Therefore, in principle, with the caveats mentioned above, Transporting New Zealand supports the proposed bus lane extensions on Hobson Street.

**END**