

YOUNG DRIVERS

# Transporting News

May 2025



**COOK  
STRAIT  
FERRIES  
DECISION –  
WHAT NOW?**

**ROAD  
FREIGHT  
SURVEY  
RESULTS**

# STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

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**T**his month we reveal the results of the 2025 National Road Freight Survey, the biggest industry survey in a decade. Find out what your colleagues are saying and what they believe needs to be done. For many, business conditions remain tough and staying on top of it all is a challenge, however the findings also contain a few surprises. We report on what's happening with the Interislander Cook Strait ferries, as well as driving

licensing changes, and other rules and regulations which members identify as top issues. As technology continues to evolve, TR Group has launched its new dual-fuel hydrogen-diesel trucks. Meet Bruce Truman, who exports sphagnum moss, and find out why young drivers still find the road transport industry an exciting place to be.

**David Killick**  
Content Editor

# Transporting News

## About us

Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand is the central point of communication for the road freight transport industry. Visit the Transporting New Zealand website [here](https://transporting.nz) to keep up to date on media releases, chief executive blog, submissions, and advisories.

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**Website: [transporting.nz](https://transporting.nz)**



Mark Carter,  
Conroy Group  
South Island  
Operations  
Manager,  
with young  
drivers Lucas  
McGregor  
and Sydney  
Sangster.





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Meet Bruce Truman, whose company exports sphagnum moss.

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There was a good turnout for the Heavy Metal Haulage Family Fun Day, at Te Kowhai.



# OUR ADVISORY NETWORK

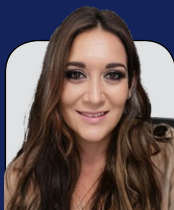
Our team of advisors can be contacted with questions or concerns relating to industry issues, and our full range of member services. We treat each call confidentially and can help with all your issues, and provide a great range of member benefits.

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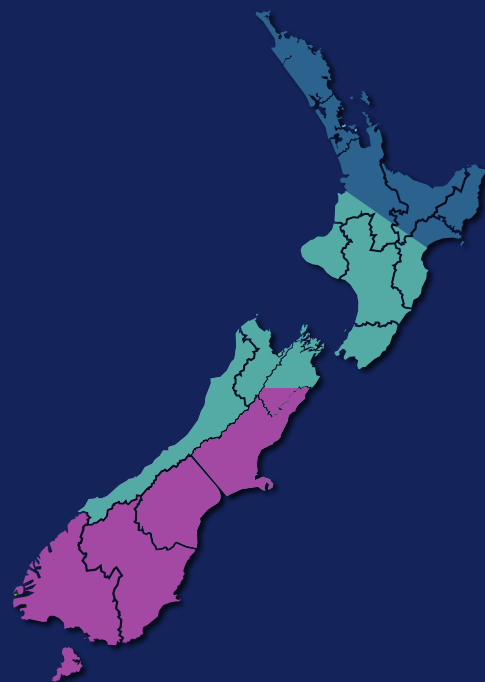


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## MOVE, EARN *and* SAVE with **Z Business**

Looking for a fuel partner that's more than just a fuel stop?  
Sign up to Z Business Partner for Transporting NZ and  
keep your team moving, earning and saving on the road.



- ✓ **Get discounts at 550+ Z, Caltex and Challenge locations**
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Z Business fuel card accepted at:



\*Standard Z Business T&Cs apply. Airpoints™ on fuel spend T&Cs apply. See [z.co.nz/business](http://z.co.nz/business)





# REGISTER NOW FOR THE SOUTH ISLAND ROAD FREIGHT SEMINAR!

**When:** June 28

**Where:** The Chateau on the Park, Christchurch

**Who:** A great range of industry speakers!

The South Island Road Freight Seminar is nearly here! There's a great mix of speakers and industry updates, and chances to catch up with friends and colleagues.

**Guest speakers include:**

Phil Thompson, pictured, is the International Director of Protect. He is an author, speaker and highly regarded self-protection expert who has delivered training to over 100,000 people all over the world. Protect's clients include professionals involved in high-risk



professions such as Police, government departments, corporations, as well as businesses of every type.

Other top speakers include Charlene Barnfather on HR challenges and staffing, Fulton Hogan's Technical Director – Pavements & Laboratories, Bryan Pidwerbesky, and many others.

The seminar will conclude with the HW Richardson Group networking drinks followed by the IVCS Awards Dinner on Saturday night.

Book through our website link below to get a special Transporting New Zealand accommodation deal and nominate people/firms for the Industry Awards.

More details are on page 17.

Register [here](#).



## ROAD SAFETY WEEK

Road Safety Week, from May 12 to 18, is coordinated by Brake and sponsored by NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi and Beca.

Brake says the week is an ideal opportunity to promote life-saving messages and show your commitment to road safety to employees and their families, customers, suppliers, and your community.

"You could use the week as an opportunity to train staff, raise awareness or partner with local schools, community groups, and road safety professionals to promote safer roads. Many organisations use the week to link existing activities to a national event, or as a springboard to launch year-round road safety programmes."

This year the theme will be Road Safety Heroes, recognising those working to make our roads safer and support people after a crash, from emergency services to road workers and school crossing patrols.

Brake is a member of the Yellow Ribbon Road Safety Alliance, a group of organisations that

use the colour yellow to raise awareness of road safety issues and the part we can all play in making our roads safer. You can show your support by wearing yellow or a yellow ribbon, or going yellow in some other way for Road Safety Week.

An easy way to join in is by running a Go Yellow Day. There are extra resources online here, to help you take part and fundraise.

For more information, see the Road Safety Week website.

### Upskill your driving skills at these free courses

They are called rollover prevention courses, but they are actually much more than that.

Led by Hamish Piercy, Fleet Risk Manager at NZI, and run in partnership with Transporting New Zealand, NZI, and NZTA, these free courses help drivers understand vehicle behaviour and how to avoid truck crashes.

The free courses are in Auckland, Warkworth, and Whangārei in early May. Dates, times and booking info are [here](#). South Island courses are planned for July.



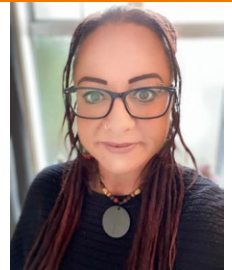




**Odette Geyer**  
Membership  
Manager



**Vicki Harris**  
Membership  
Benefits Manager



## Bridgestone is there for the life of your tyres

Calling all Transporting New Zealand members! You know the drill – the road can be tough, but your tyres prices don't have to be. Thanks to Bridgestone NZ's latest agreement, you can now grab a 30 per cent discount on both new tyres and retreads for all your commercial AND domestic needs.

Need a fresh set of wheels for your truck or just a little tread for

the family car? Either way, we've got you covered. It's a deal so good, even your tyres will be smiling (and that's a lot to ask from rubber, right?).

Bridgestone are with you for the life of your tyres. From their manufacturer's warranty to exclusive benefits, you can be confident your tyres are performing at their best and you're safe on the road. So,

why wait? Roll into Bridgestone and roll out with a big discount today.

To utilise this offer contact Member Benefits Manager Vicki Harris: [vicki@transporting.nz](mailto:vicki@transporting.nz)

T&Cs apply... because, sadly, free tyres don't grow on trees. But the savings sure feel like it!



## Kinetic makes getting top staff easier

Transporting New Zealand members can now get exclusive discounts on recruitment and career services with Kinetic Recruitment.

Members receive a massive discount on Kinetic's permanent recruitment services and an exclusive discount on wellness workshops and career support services. Kinetic has been in

the industry for 26 years and are passionate, bright and energetic about recruitment - a perpetual ball of energy that makes great things happen by connecting the right people to the right job.

Kinetic has been making waves in recruitment, with teams nationwide specialising in corporate services, medical, IT, and blue-collar recruitment.

They also offer career coaching and workplace wellness services.

Kinetic says it's all about getting it right for you, by getting to know you.

To utilise this offer contact Membership Manager Odette Geyer: [Odette@transporting.nz](mailto:Odette@transporting.nz)



Employers Assistance New Zealand provides practical and effective HR, employment law and compliance solutions to NZ employers. Transporting New Zealand members get a 20 % discount on all products and services available on the Employers Assistance website. [employers.co.nz](http://employers.co.nz)



Get three months of free Fleetview cloud service access with Viewtech. You will be able to use their live video streaming Fleetview service for FREE for 3 months to access your vehicles' cameras live, playback or event downloads. [Viewtech.co.nz](http://Viewtech.co.nz)



There is a 10% discount for members across all products at [safety-online.co.nz](http://safety-online.co.nz) Safety Online provides everything safety from a huge range of PPE to first aid gear, spill kits, signs, fire extinguishers and paramedic gear. [safety-online.co.nz](http://safety-online.co.nz)



# NATIONAL ROAD FREIGHT SURVEY

## *A Landmark Moment*



■ By Dom Kalasih

**T**he results are now in for the National Road Freight Survey – the largest industry survey undertaken in over a decade.

As I wrote earlier, our industry has seen huge changes in recent years, across multiple fronts, so the survey was very timely. It was conducted by Research NZ on behalf of Transporting New Zealand, and was supported by the New Zealand Heavy Haulage Association and Groundspread NZ.

Nearly 200 industry respondents took part in the landmark survey. It wasn't only our members who had a say – yet another reminder of why it's important we have a single organisation representing our industry and speak with one voice.

The results provide us with an invaluable and extensive insight into the industry. It's essential to

have strong, evidence-based results, so my thanks to all who took part. The survey results are a great opportunity to help us shape our future. As our Head of Policy and Advocacy, Billy Clemens, notes, "Transporting New Zealand will be highlighting this in our advocacy – especially as we push for better public facilities for drivers and policies that support the long-term sustainability of freight businesses."

So, what did the survey reveal? We already knew that key issues facing our members include the state of the roads, workforce shortages, tolling and congestion charging, regulation and road policing. This includes the ongoing slow progress being made on coming up with a decision on replacing the Interislander Cook Strait ferries.

A significant number – 84 per cent of respondents – believed that regional roads and bridges are neglected, and 79 per cent believed that delays in replacing the Cook Strait ferries pose a major risk.

We also found out that business confidence and health, safety and wellbeing are major concerns. Attracting enough new drivers is also a worry, as more older drivers retire.

There was one bright spot that came as a welcome surprise – although members of the industry believe they are viewed in a negative light, that was far from the truth: a survey of the general public, held alongside the industry survey, revealed that truck drivers are viewed extremely positively. That to me underscores the vital work our industry continues to do, supporting both local communities and the

national economy.

I encourage you to read a full report in this magazine, which drills down to the details.

### Progress on multiple issues

While many Kiwis got to enjoy some time off over the Easter break, it was business as usual for the many drivers on the road delivering essential freight. In parts of the country, they also had to contend with severe weather as Cyclone Tam made its presence felt.

Some positive news over the last month included:

- Higher speeds of 110 km/h speed limits being introduced on the Christchurch Southern Motorway. While that doesn't directly affect trucks, given their 90 km/h speed limit, we supported the increase mainly because a road that's been designed and





built to accommodate higher speed limits is inherently safer to drive on.

- Also, a 20 km/h speed difference means it's much easier for cars to pass trucks and stay on side with the law. Trucks are also typically only 10 per cent of the traffic stream, so the speed limit increase means a lot of other road uses can get to where they want to get to faster and safer.
- We were very pleased to see NZTA's announcement that its latest plans for improvements to Dunedin's SH1 one-way system no longer include installing traffic lights at a key intersection on SH1 between Great King Street and Pine Hill Road. Unnecessarily slowing or stopping all those people and freight is not helpful, particularly when we

are trying to improve the productivity of the nation.

- I was pleased to hear at the Auckland Transport Freight Reference Group that NZTA is stepping back from some of its proposed wire rope median installations. It's now taking into consideration the inconvenience and additional travel impacts that the barriers can cause.
- We made our submission to WorkSafe on its proposed single code of practice which includes the legal requirements and good practice for all supply-chain players involved in forestry and harvesting operations. We applaud WorkSafe's approach to consolidating codes of practice and taking an integrated, collective approach across the

supply chain, which demonstrates the expectations of shared responsibility. This is something we've been pushing hard for.

### **Axing Fleet Saver a backwards move**

We have called on the government to reverse its decision to end the Fleet Saver ACC levy discount scheme for transport operators. Fleet Saver closes to new entrants from July 1 this year and will end on June 20, 2029.

Fleet Saver can save up to 40 per cent on the ACC portion of a firm's annual motor vehicle licence fees if they demonstrate their commitment to road and workplace safety.

We believe terminating that programme will jeopardise road safety and the government needs to make it easier for businesses to sign up by reducing

barriers.

The closure of the programme will not support improved safety and recovery outcomes, nor will it produce any material financial savings for ACC. I find it even more puzzling that while ACC is shutting its Fleet Saver system down, NZTA is signalling its intent to reward transport operators with a variety of accredited management systems.

How one part of government can be closing down this approach just as another one starts off on that path is baffling.

The industry deserves some joined up government thinking on this otherwise it appears inevitable there will be an increased compliance cost to industry and ultimately that will show up as an increased cost of living.

Travel safe!





# HOW USING ADBLUE CAN LOWER NITROGEN OXIDE EMISSIONS

**A**dBlue is a diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) stocked at selected Z and Caltex truck stops and retail sites.

There are four regulated pollutants covered by Euro standards – nitrogen oxides (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO), hydrocarbons (HC), and fine particles (PM).

AdBlue has been designed to help vehicles with selective catalytic reduction (SCR) technology reduce their NOx emissions.

## Why should you consider using AdBlue in your SCR vehicles?

Businesses are always looking for ways to save money and curb their emissions. While customers wait for electric and hydrogen technology to achieve critical mass, right now they can invest in

diesel vehicles that use SCR technology.

It's easy to see why you should. In the commercial trucking industry, some operators report reductions of regulated emissions – especially for nitrogen dioxide and NOx – of up to 90 per cent compared with non-SCR vehicles. This is based on average usage by SCR technology vehicles and provided as a guide only. Individual use may vary based on various factors including vehicle type and age, the route, and the driver.

## Where can you get it?

Z wants to make it even easier for customers to find and use AdBlue. It's available at over 50 Z and Caltex Truck Stops across the network, with more AdBlue sites planned,

making it New Zealand's largest DEF network as of December 2024.

So you don't run out, it's a good idea to know where your nearest AdBlue location is (visit [locator.z.co.nz](https://locator.z.co.nz) to see our network of truck stops). You can also buy AdBlue brand 10-litre packs at select Z and Caltex retail sites to use as handy backups.

## How to use AdBlue

If your vehicle doesn't have a separate AdBlue tank, then you don't require any AdBlue as the vehicle isn't equipped with SCR technology. But if your vehicle does have a separate AdBlue tank, you can use AdBlue.

AdBlue is kept in a separate tank in each vehicle and added to the engine exhaust gas after combustion has occurred.

It is not a fuel additive and must not be put directly into a diesel tank as this can seriously damage the vehicle. If you accidentally put AdBlue in the diesel tank or diesel into your AdBlue tank, don't start the vehicle. Immediately contact the vehicle dealer to ask for advice. If you do start your vehicle after the diesel has been contaminated with AdBlue or AdBlue has been contaminated with diesel, major damage to the vehicle could occur.

If you're a business looking to reduce harmful NOx emissions from your diesel vehicles, look for AdBlue at Z and Caltex.

• This article was [published by Z](#) and has been published here with permission.



# Sleep better knowing **your drivers** are awake.

If you operate a fleet of heavy vehicles like trucks or buses you know how important it is to keep your drivers safe on the road. NZI knows it too, that's why our expert Fleet Risk Managers will work with you to deliver a Fleet Fit programme tailored to your business.

Helping ensure your drivers make it home safely starts with a free NZI Fleet Fit review. Ask your insurance broker to book you in.



NZI Fleet Fit.  
It's like insurance that works before a crash.



**Peace of mind**  
for NZ business



# HOW ARE WE ALL DOING?

■ By Billy Clemens, Head of Policy and Advocacy



Rangahau  
Aotearoa

Research |  
New Zealand

## National Road Freight Industry Survey.

A Report Based on the Opinions of Businesses Involved in  
the Road Freight Industry in New Zealand.

April 2025

The results of the 2025 National Road Freight Industry Survey are in. They reveal the industry's leading concerns and priorities – offering sobering insights into business conditions, the deteriorating road network, and challenges around driver safety and wellbeing.

The survey, conducted by Research NZ on behalf of Transporting New Zealand, was also supported by the New Zealand Heavy Haulage Association and Groundspread NZ. With 128 road freight businesses participating, it represents the most extensive industry snapshot in over a decade.

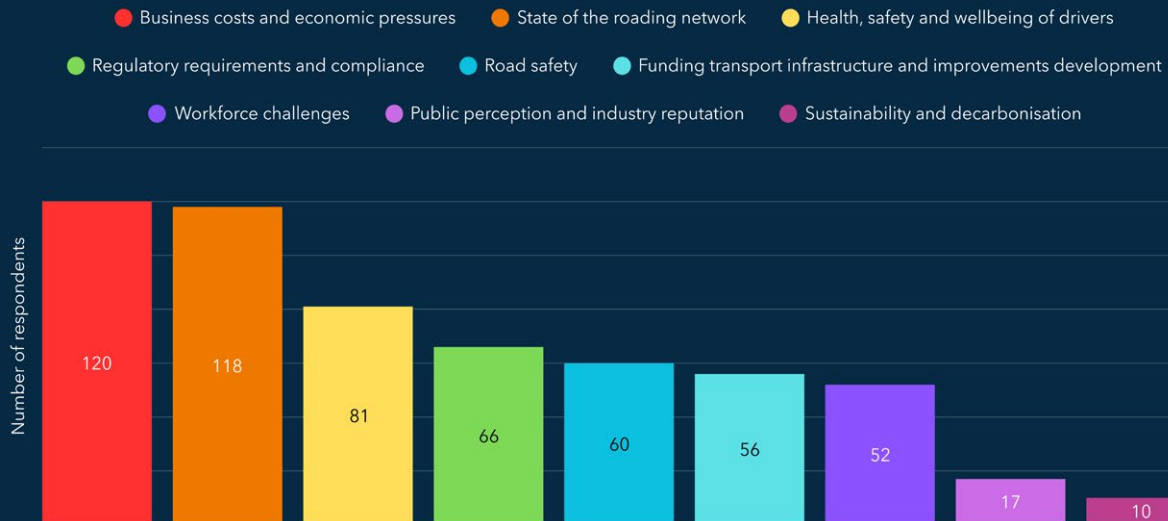
### Unsustainable operating margins

The findings echo the concerns Transporting New Zealand has heard from members and align with wider economic indicators. Reflecting mounting pressure from high operating costs, only one in four respondents reported having sustainable operating margins. Similarly, just 34% expected their financial situation to improve over the next 12 months.

When asked how best to address the issue of rising costs and economic pressure – one of the top three concerns cited – respondents

# 2025 National Road Freight Survey

Most Important Issues Concerning the Industry



Survey of 194 road freight industry participants completed by Research NZ

most frequently called for fairer industry-wide pricing and a reduction in undercutting (25%). Many voiced frustration with the current climate:

“Businesses need to stop low balling the playing field. Businesses which are taking a risk and doing things for less than cost cause issues for businesses that are

trying to stay competitive. Stay within market ranges and everyone will be able to gain a margin, it will then be up to the customer which company they want to go with.”

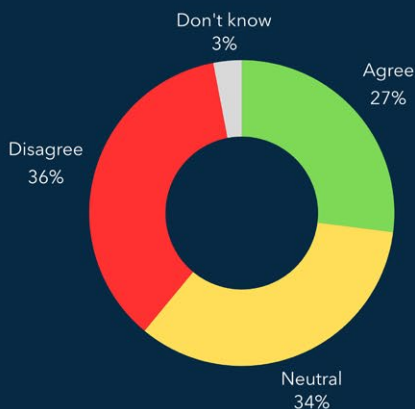
A collaborative, non-partisan approach was most frequently identified as the best way to address the concern with high business

**“REFLECTING MOUNTING PRESSURE FROM HIGH OPERATING COSTS, ONLY ONE IN FOUR RESPONDENTS REPORTED HAVING SUSTAINABLE OPERATING MARGINS.”**

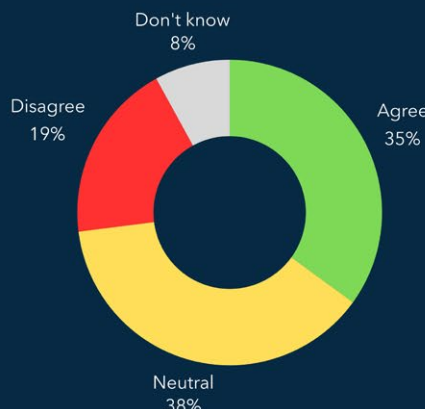
## 2025 National Road Freight Survey

Business Costs and Economic Pressures Snapshot

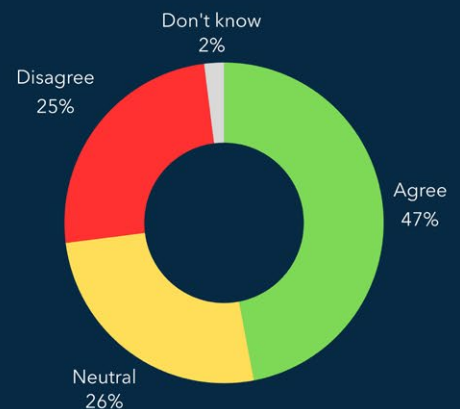
**My business has sustainable operating margins**



**My business will be financially better off in 12 months**



**The Government is on the right economic track**



Survey of 196 road freight industry participants completed by Research NZ



# 2025 National Road Freight Survey

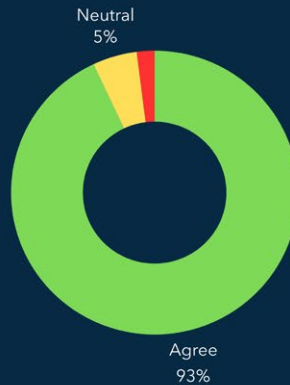
## State of the Roothing Network Snapshot

**61%**

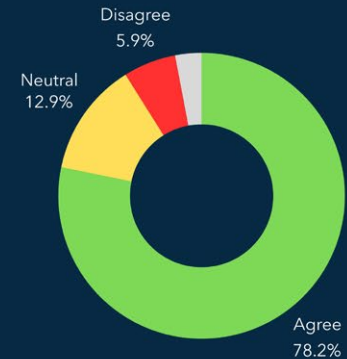
of respondents say the state of the roading network is one of their top concerns

Survey of 194 road freight industry participants completed by Research NZ

Poor maintenance of the roading network is **endangering** truck drivers and other road users



The delay in replacing the Cook Strait ferries is a **major risk** for our industry and economy



Sub-sample based on respondents who identified the state of the roading networks as one of their top three concerns

costs and economic pressures.

Assuming this issue is addressed, respondents described their "most positive outcome" in these terms:

"A sustainable and

resilient road freight industry, where businesses can operate profitably despite economic pressures...A balanced cost structure would lead to long-term industry viability, reducing the risk of service

disruptions and ensuring reliable freight movement across New Zealand."

These insights support our advocacy for policies that reduce cost pressures on transport businesses. Our sector groups are

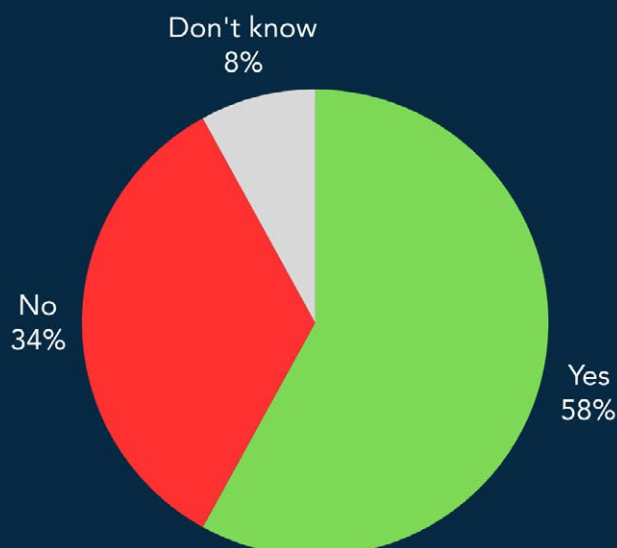
also working with supply chain partners and government officials to curb uncompetitive behaviour.

### Poor state of the roading network

Concerns about the state of

# 2025 National Road Freight Survey

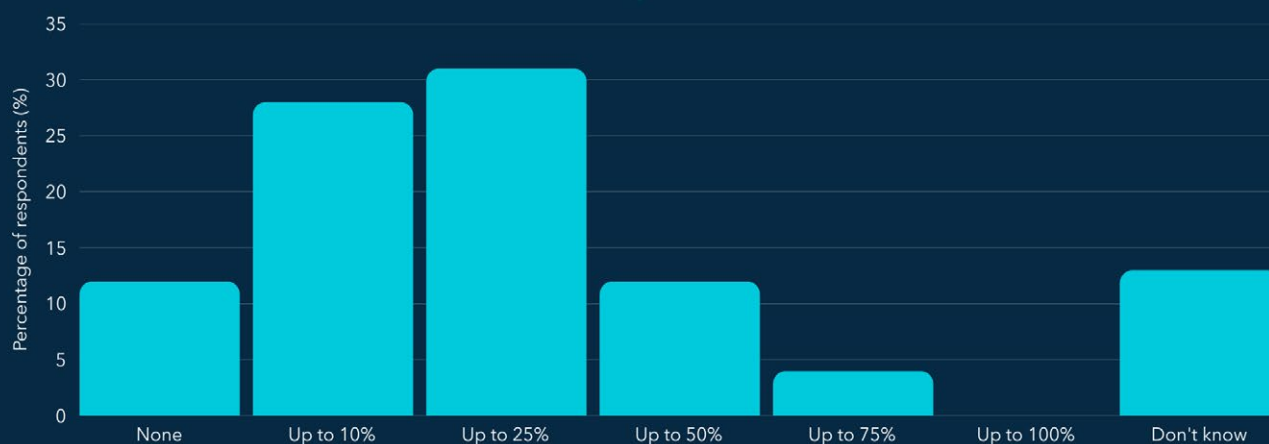
In the past 12 months, have you or your drivers assisted in a roadside incident or crash?



Survey of 194 road freight industry participants completed by Research NZ

## 2025 National Road Freight Survey

What percentage of your business's current road freight drivers do you expect will retire/leave the industry in the next 5 years?



New Zealand's roads were nearly universal. The vast majority (93%) agreed that poor road maintenance is putting truck drivers and other road users at risk. A significant number also believed that regional roads and bridges are neglected (84%), and that delays in replacing the Cook Strait ferries pose a major risk (79%).

Among those who listed the roading network as a top concern, 39% identified greater accountability as the most effective solution. Many expressed a desire to move away from lowest-price contract models in favour of a focus on quality and accountability:

"Stop taking the cheapest price for roading contracts. It should be about the value and quality of work. Make contractors – and those awarding contracts – more

accountable for outcomes."

These results validate our ongoing push for improved road maintenance and increased funding for both state highways and local roads. We have recently written to every regional council in New Zealand, identifying priority freight routes and infrastructure to be addressed in the next 10-year National Land Transport Programme.

### What does the public think of truck drivers?

Many in the industry believe that public sentiment toward professional road freight drivers is negative. However, this perception isn't supported by representative polling of 1,000 New Zealanders conducted by Research NZ.

Of the nine key issues presented in the survey, public perception and

industry reputation were ranked among the top three concerns by only 9% of respondents. Still, 50% of those surveyed said their drivers regularly experience abuse from the public, and 67% disagreed with the statement that public opinion of the industry has improved in recent years. As a result, nearly half (49%) believed the public holds a negative view of professional drivers – while only 20% believed the public viewed them positively.

In contrast, the general public painted a more favourable picture:

- 52% said they view professional road freight drivers positively;
- Only 7% expressed a negative view.

These results suggest that a vocal minority may be giving operators a misleading impression of

broader public sentiment. It's encouraging to see such widespread public support for truck drivers, and Transporting New Zealand will be highlighting this in our advocacy – especially as we push for better public facilities for drivers and policies that support the long-term sustainability of freight businesses.

### Health, safety, and wellbeing and workforce challenges

The industry is faced with some important workforce challenges, including those relating to the health, safety and wellbeing of drivers.

Forty-two percent of industry respondents rated the health, safety, and wellbeing of drivers as an issue of concern.

The need for purpose-designed rest stops for drivers (78%) and the need

**"CONCERNS ABOUT THE STATE OF NEW ZEALAND'S ROADS WERE NEARLY UNIVERSAL. THE VAST MAJORITY (93%) AGREED THAT POOR ROAD MAINTENANCE IS PUTTING TRUCK DRIVERS AND OTHER ROAD USERS AT RISK."**



to achieve good work-life balance for drivers (72%) were identified as being of high priority.

Several other workforce challenges were identified:

- **Workforce gaps** – 80% of industry respondents stated they had employed drivers in the last two years. However, 22% said they had experienced difficulties finding drivers who were suitable.

In order to fill workforce gaps, many had employed drivers new to the industry (45%), while one-quarter had employed overseas drivers (27%).

- **Workforce development** – nearly all industry respondents who had

employed drivers in the last two years stated the drivers they had employed lacked some skill or training (91%).

Most frequently, this related to their technical driving ability (67%) or their skill or training relating to vehicle maintenance, load securing and route planning (66%).

- **Drivers exiting the industry** – almost one-half of industry respondents indicated that “up to 25%” or more would retire or leave the industry in the next five years (47%).

Members can download a full copy of the 2025 Road Freight Survey at [www.transporting.nz](http://www.transporting.nz).



**“IT’S ENCOURAGING TO SEE SUCH WIDESPREAD PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR TRUCK DRIVERS, AND TRANSPORTING NEW ZEALAND WILL BE HIGHLIGHTING THIS IN OUR ADVOCACY – ESPECIALLY AS WE PUSH FOR BETTER PUBLIC FACILITIES FOR DRIVERS AND POLICIES THAT SUPPORT THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF FREIGHT BUSINESSES.”**



WYNN WILLIAMS

## It takes more than logistics to get from A to B!

Running a transport business gets more complicated by the day. Make sure you're across your legal and compliance obligations so you can focus on staying on the road.

For all your business related legal advice, including employment, health & safety, TSL and insurance issues, contact [amanda.douglas@wynnwilliams.co.nz](mailto:amanda.douglas@wynnwilliams.co.nz) +64 3 379 7622



# GET READY, SOUTH ISLAND – THE ROAD FREIGHT SEMINAR IS COMING!

**Saturday, 28 June | Chateau  
on the Park, Christchurch**

This is the event of the year for the South Island road freight industry – and you're invited! Packed with powerhouse speakers, real-world insights, and unbeatable networking opportunities, the 2025 South Island Road Freight Seminar is not to be missed.



Phil Thompson

## What's On:

- **Phil Thompson** – International director of Protect and global expert in self-protection. He'll keep you on the edge of your seat with practical tools for awareness and de-escalation in high-risk situations.
- **Charlaine Barnfather** from Safe Business Solutions tackles the real HR and staffing issues affecting your business.
- Fulton Hogan's **Bryan Pidwerbesky** brings expert knowledge behind the science and engineering of road construction in New Zealand.
- **Plus:** Industry updates, economic insights, and breakout sessions that dive deep into sector challenges, advocacy, and succession planning.
- While we were looking forward to rally champ Hayden Paddon giving a presentation at the Seminar, he is now away racing in Europe. However, we are thrilled to welcome Hayden's team manager **Matthew Bowater** who will share an exclusive look at what it takes to prepare a car for competition at the highest level. From race-day logistics and car setup to strategy, teamwork, and the relentless pursuit of performance, you'll learn how a dedicated team powers Hayden's success. Hayden's rally



Bryan Pidwerbesky



car will also be on display—a rare opportunity to get up close to the machine built to perform on the world stage.

- **Celebrate** people and firms for their contribution to the industry in our Awards section at the IVCS Awards Dinner on Saturday.

## Make Connections That Count

Start the weekend right at the Teletrac Navman Networking Drinks on Friday, 27 June. Catch up with industry peers at the HW Richardson Group Networking Drinks on Saturday. Then celebrate the best in the business at our Awards Dinner that evening.

## Stay Where the Action Is

We've secured exclusive delegate accommodation rates at Chateau on the Park – the seminar venue.

**Check out all the booking details on the website.**

Register online, nominate people for Awards and book your accommodation at: <https://www.transporting.nz/2025-south-island-road-freight-seminar>

**We can't wait to  
see you there!**

**Register Now**





# FERRY ANNOUNCEMENT WELCOME BUT UNCERTAINTIES REMAIN

■ By David Killick

**T**ransporting New Zealand has welcomed the announcement by Minister for Rail Winston Peters outlining the design brief for replacing the Interislander Cook Strait ferries. However, we made it clear that the lengthy delay in coming to a decision was regrettable. Also, some of

the details including the cost, remain unclear.

You can read the minister's full announcement [here](#).

The new ferries are badly needed. KiwiRail's existing Interislander fleet is nearing the end of its serviceable life, and in recent years, the ferries have been bedevilled by numerous problems. In January, 2023,

the Kaitaki lost power outside Wellington Harbour, and June last year, the Aratere ran aground in the Marlborough Sounds. There have been other failures, too, including gearbox problems putting the Kaitaki out of action in March 2023.

KiwiRail's Interislander ferries have not been the only ones affected;

problems have also hit Bluebridge. [Here is a full list](#) of recent problems.

Peters announced that two new ferries will be built, and that they would be rail-enabled. They will be substantially larger than the existing ferries, which are approaching the end of their working life, but smaller than the previous





*The proposed iReX ferries would have been substantially bigger than the current ones. The project was axed because of budget cost overruns.*

designs commissioned under the iReX project.

Finance Minister Nicola Willis cancelled the iReX (Inter-Island Resilient Connection) project at the start of 2024, citing a budget blow out of \$3 billion – up from \$1 billion to \$4 billion.

Willis said the cancellation would save money, despite a likely \$300 million fee for breaking the contract with South Korean shipbuilders Hyundai. The reason for the saving is down to portside infrastructure costs. Originally, new facilities would have to have been built in both Wellington and Picton. Now, only the Picton side will need substantial upgrading.

Transporting New

Zealand Head of Policy and Advocacy, Billy Clemens, says the infrastructure costs accounted for about 80 per cent of the total iReX project. However, he points out that port facilities will still need upgrading, and members have identified the need for more parking space in Picton.

“The freight task is steadily increasing. Vehicles need to access Wellington and Picton more efficiently.”

After the iReX cancellation, it took until December for another announcement to be made – which turned out only to be that another announcement would not be made until March this year.

Originally, the iReX

ferries were planned to be in operation by 2024-25, which was then extended to 2025-26. Peters said the new ferries will begin operations by Christmas 2029 – three to four years later than originally expected.

How much they will cost is uncertain because it is not known who will build them. Hyundai is likely to be in the mix again along with other shipbuilders in Europe or Asia. We expect a decision will be made probably by the end of this year.

The decision to make the ferries rail-enabled makes sense and avoids double-handling at either end from rail to truck and back again.

It is not clear, however, how many trucks the new ferries will accommodate.

(See graphic.) The announcement specified “2.4km of lanes for cars, trucks, and rail wagons”. We understand that total commercial vehicle lane metres will increase from 4,380 vehicle lane metres to 4,800 vehicle lane metres.

It’s logical to assume the capacity will be between the current ferries and the iReX mega ferries.

The question inevitably arises why the iReX designs could not have simply been scaled back, rather than abandoned altogether. That possibility has now long disappeared in the wake of subsequent decision-making. Nevertheless, a decision, finally, is welcome.

“It is positive that the road freight industry has





*The Interislander ferry Aratere runs aground in the Marlborough Sounds in June 2024.*



*The Interislander ferry Kaitaki had about 850 people on board when it lost power outside the entrance to Wellington Harbour in January 2023.*

## **Delay in replacing Cook Strait Ferries major risk for industry and economy**

Our 2025 National Road Freight Survey shows that 79 per cent of road freight industry participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “the delay in replacing the Cook Strait ferries is a major risk for the road freight industry and New Zealand economy”. (See cover story.)

“We recently met with Minister Peters, the Minister for Rail, and reiterated our position that competition must be maintained across the Cook Strait connection, there must be capacity for the forecast growth in the domestic freight task, and maintaining the frequency of services must be a priority,” says Clemens.

“The results of the National Road Freight Survey confirm what we’ve been hearing consistently from our members and industry sector groups – the Cook Strait connection is

some certainty around the Cook Strait connection,” says Clemens. “This includes a Christmas 2029 deadline for delivery of two new vessels, the fact they will be rail enabled, and that combined passenger and commercial vehicle lane metres will increase from 4,380 vehicle lane metres to 4,800 vehicle lane metres.

“However, it is frustrating for many of our road freight members that it’s taken so long to get to this point, and that scheduled delivery now sits close to the end of the

current fleet’s natural design life.

“The government cannot afford further delays. This tight timeframe makes bipartisan support for the current project particularly important.”

Transporting New Zealand also warns that procuring rail-enabled vessels will mean the government has to keep a close eye on the project budget. Few other countries still use this design of ferry.

“Transporting New Zealand hasn’t taken a fixed

view on rail-enablement vs rail-compatibility, but we have noted that Ministry of Transport advised the government in December 2023 that the rail-enabled iReX ferries and the associated land-side infrastructure were a key factor in the project’s cost escalation.”

Transporting New Zealand believes it is essential that decisions take future demand and resilience into account, and is not about just cutting costs.

a real priority for the road freight industry.

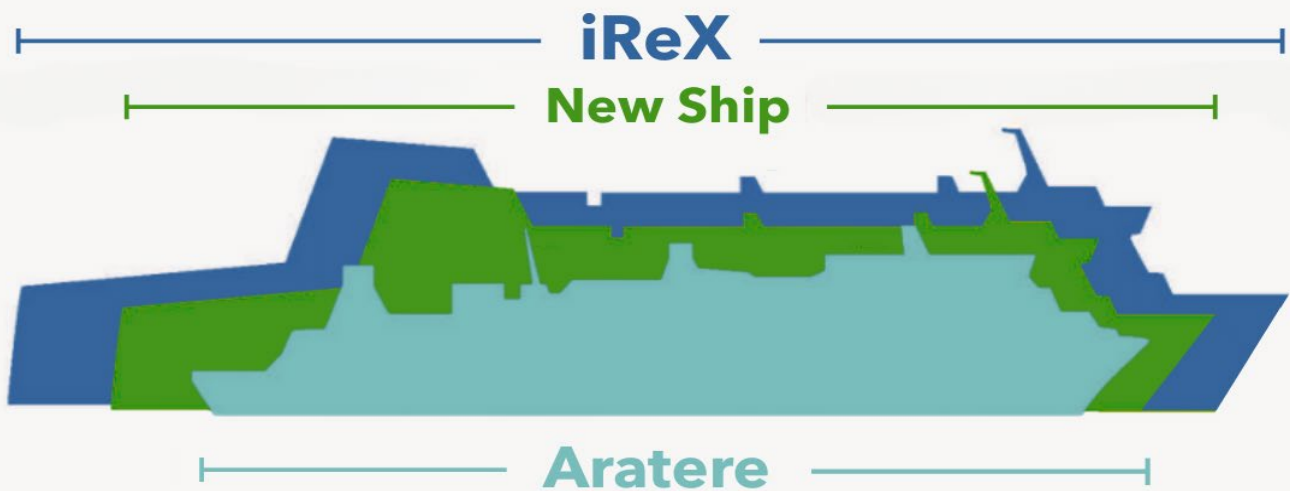
“Approximately \$30 billion in freight crosses the Strait each year, so it is essential to have a safe and resilient connection between the islands. This is particularly vital for carriers who carry livestock and other time-sensitive freight. It’s also

particularly important to the Mainland, with most freight travelling south.”

Transporting New Zealand looks forward to continuing to work with the Minister for Rail, Ministry of Transport, and KiwiRail to ensure a resilient Cook Strait Connection.

**“THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT AFFORD FURTHER DELAYS. THIS TIGHT TIMEFRAME MAKES BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR THE CURRENT PROJECT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT.”**

– Billy Clemens, Transporting New Zealand Head of Policy and Advocacy



	Aratere	iReX	New Ferries
Length	185 metres	220 metres	200 metres
Beam	20.5 metres	30.8 metres	28 metres
Service Speed	19.5 kt	20 kt	20 kt
Passengers	650	1910	1500
Rail wagons	30	42	40
Trucks	25	62	?
Cars	240 (cars only)	170 (plus trucks) 652 (cars only)	2.4km of lanes for cars, trucks, and rail wagons





# YOUNG DRIVERS RELISH ROLE

By David Killick

**L**ucas McGregor is chuffed to be driving a truck. The 18-year-old has joined Conroy Removals, based in Christchurch. He says the role has always been his ambition.

"I've always been around trucks. They've been in the family since I was born – most of them drive. I went to the careers people [at Rolleston College] and said that's what I

wanted to do."

Lucas says there are many pluses.

"You get to tour the whole country and get paid to look at views all day."

Lucas has his Class 2 and does linehaul. He is training for his class 4 and 5, doing backing and loading up the trailer.

Sydney Sangster, who just turned 22, has also joined

*Mark Carter, Conroy Group South Island Operations Manager, centre, with young drivers Lucas McGregor, right, and Sydney Sangster.*





What  
moves  
you?

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*Lucas McGregor says trucks have always been in the family and he has always wanted to drive.*



*Sydney Sangster has her class 2 and class 4 and 5L licences.*







Conroys. For her, truck driving is also in the blood.

"My dad used to drive trucks. I like driving and wanted to get into the industry."

Sydney has her class 2 licence as well as her class 4 and 5L. She says there are various options she might like to look at in the future, including linehaul and mining.

Conroy Group South Island Operations Manager, Mark Carter, says it is important for the freight industry to encourage more young people to join.

"My belief is if we could get four to five a year, we are progressing the future. We can't do it without the people we've got for training. It's about our people [like senior driver Craig Aitchison] helping."

He says if young people want to move on later, they will help them find somewhere where they will be looked after.

"Give them the time. Give them a good grounding, they will come back."



**"YOU GET TO TOUR THE WHOLE COUNTRY AND GET PAID TO LOOK AT VIEWS ALL DAY."**

— Lucas McGregor, truck driver



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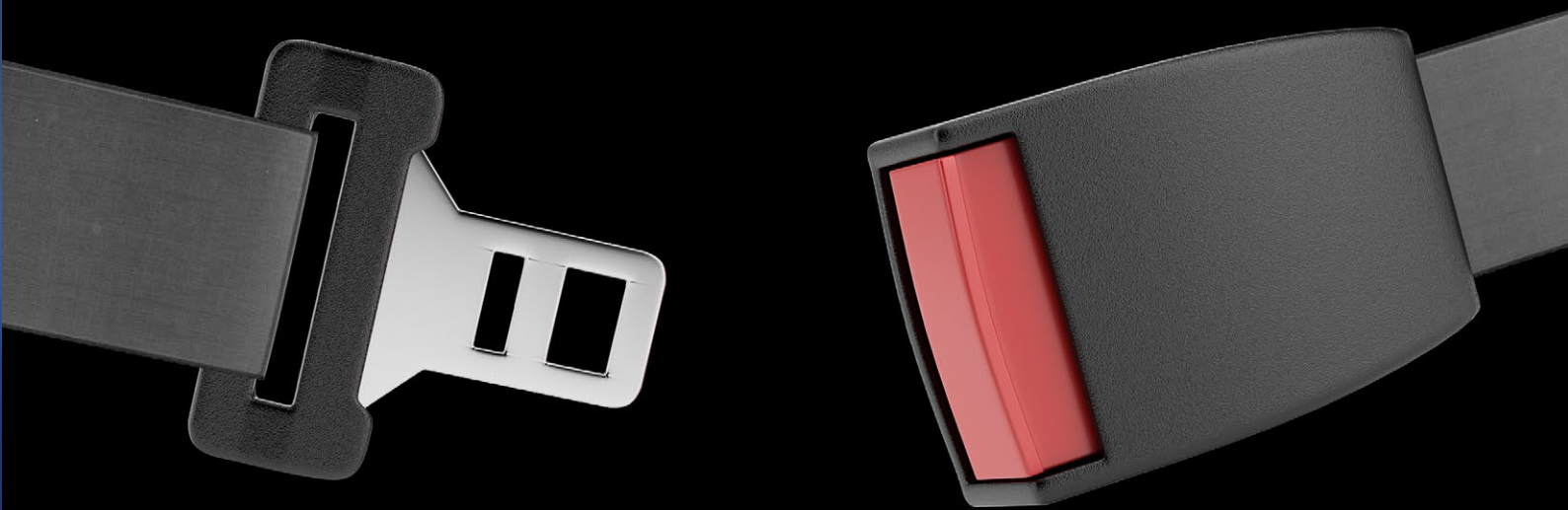
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# RESPONDING TO THE TRUCK DRIVER SHORTAGE

By Rowan Everton

In recent years, the road freight industry has experienced a serious deficit of skilled drivers.

According to research commissioned by Transporting New Zealand, the sector was short an estimated 3,449 drivers in 2022. This figure may be an underestimate, as a lack of drivers puts firms off from buying more trucks.

The government responded to Transporting New Zealand's advocacy by putting in place a temporary

residence pathway to attract overseas drivers to New Zealand.

Announced in April 2023, the pathway allowed migrant drivers who primarily operate vehicles requiring class 4/5 licences to stay in the country permanently, rather than leave after two or three years as is usual under the Accredited Employer Work Visa (AEWV).

While we advocated for the pathway to be open to class 2 and 3 drivers as

well, we acknowledged that the shortage of class 4 and 5 holders was the most important.

In April 2024, Immigration Minister Erica Stanford announced immediate changes to the AEWV scheme, including the closure of the work-to-residence pathway for drivers. MBIE reasoned the temporary measure had fulfilled its purpose as the demand for more truck drivers had been met.

We now have data

from MBIE showing what happened over the residence pathway period, and what's happened since it was closed.

## Applications were already slowing; steeper decline after announcement

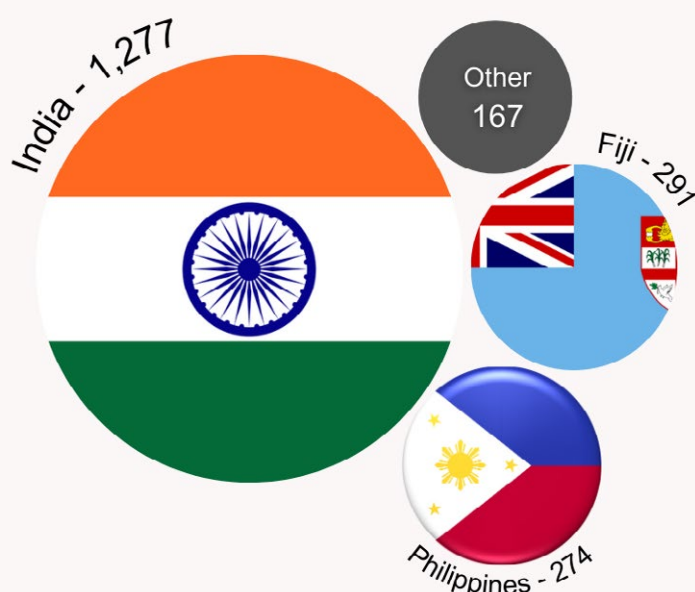
MBIE's figures show that after a peak at the beginning of 2024, applications to be a truck driver in New Zealand were slowing month by month.

Upon the announcement that migrant drivers on an AEWV would no longer have a pathway to residency, there was a sharp fall in applications, down to a low of just 11 in June. Previously, "Truck Driver (General)" was the second largest occupation under the AEWV in 2023.

## Significant number from India, Fiji and Philippines

India was by far the most common country of origin for truck drivers entering New Zealand on an AEWV. Fiji and the Philippines also delivered significant numbers of drivers.

Migrant drivers are relatively young compared with the local workforce. Most have been aged 31 to 40, closely followed by



Origin of Approved Truck Driver AEWVs (July 2023 - December 2024)

those aged 20 to 30. Having younger people entering the industry is good news, particularly when much of the local workforce is nearing retirement within the next two decades. The average age of a truck driver is 54, according to available data.

## Keeping migrant drivers safe

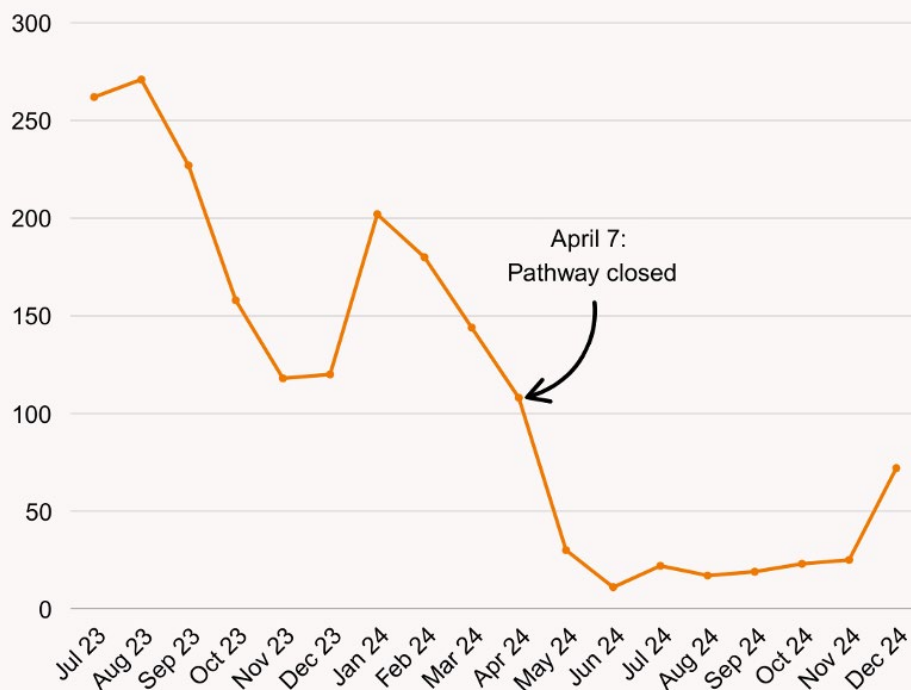
One of the reasons the Immigration Minister said the pathway would end was due to concerns about worker exploitation. It is essential that all employers do their due diligence when hiring migrant drivers, particularly from labour hire agencies. Transporting New Zealand supported the transport sector agreement and the good work it did during acute post-Covid shortages. We continue to advocate for the government to reactivate it in the event of any future shortages.

Immigration is a valuable supplement to the driving workforce, but it's never going to be a sustainable alternative to developing the local workforce. That's why Transporting New Zealand supports the recent changes to driver licensing rules, more driver training in schools, and encouraging our members to get their drivers enrolled in MITO courses to invest in their professional development.

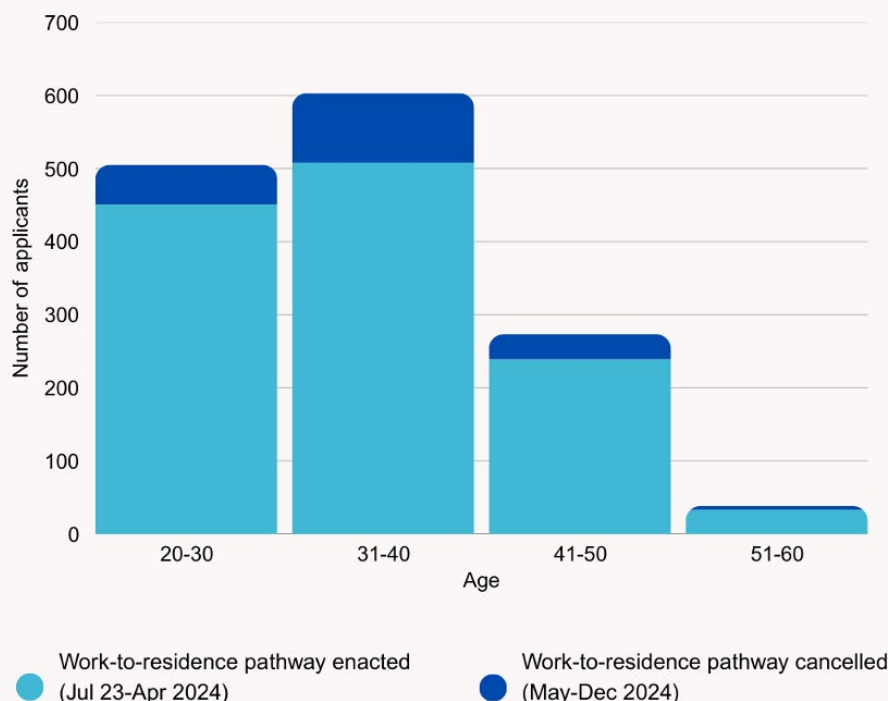
Prioritising diversity and inclusion can also help businesses attract more staff with a range of skills, among other benefits.

Check out our [Diversity Toolbox](#) which is full of free resources about recruiting a diverse local workforce.

Approved Truck Driver AEWV applications

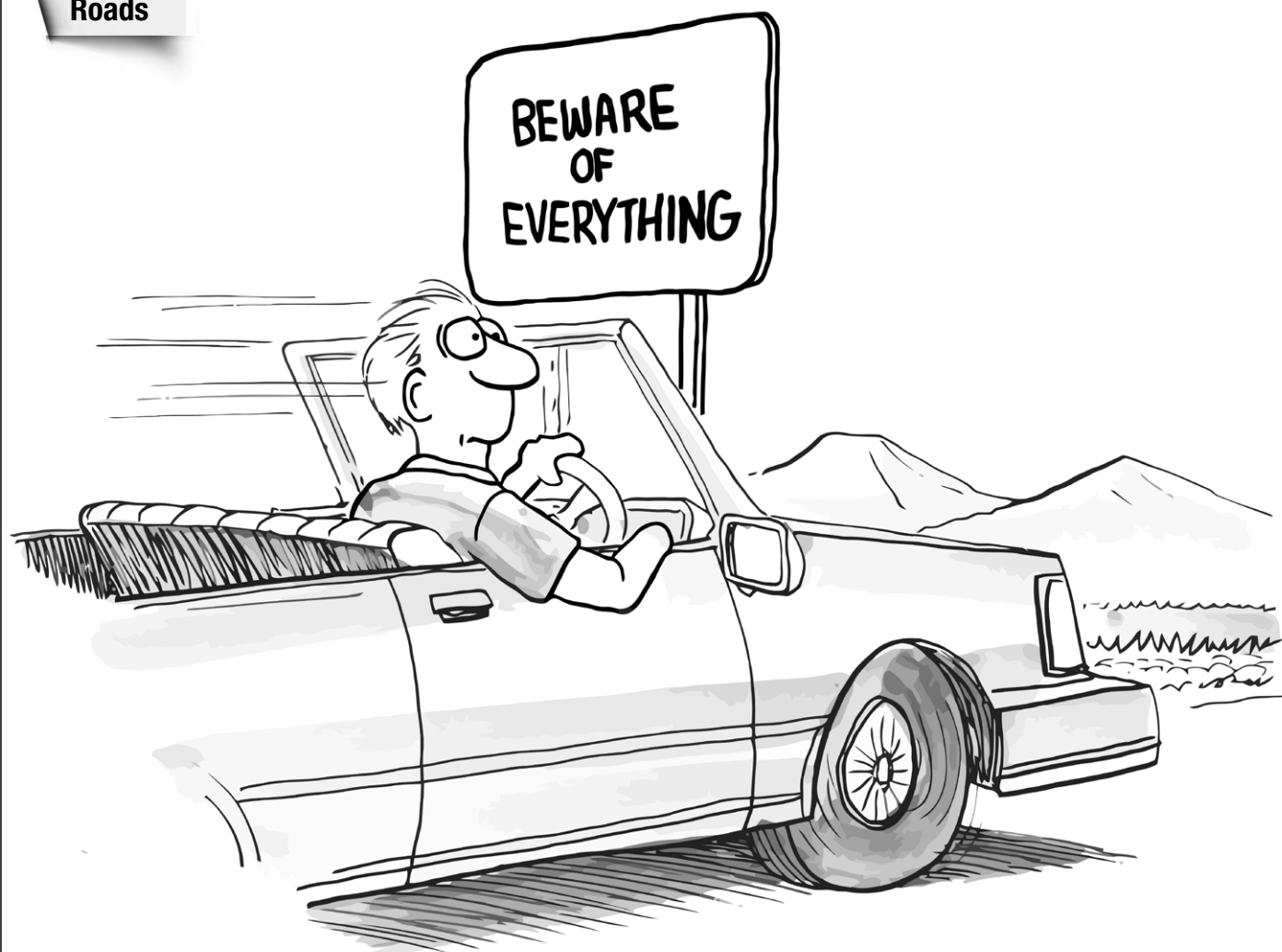


Approved Truck Driver AEWVs by age (July 2023 - December 2024)



**“HAVING YOUNGER PEOPLE ENTERING THE INDUSTRY IS GOOD NEWS, PARTICULARLY WHEN MUCH OF THE LOCAL WORKFORCE IS NEARING RETIREMENT WITHIN THE NEXT TWO DECADES.”**





# DASHCAMS CAPTURE ATROCIOUS DRIVING

**D**ashcam footage supplied by Transporting New Zealand members has captured some hair-raising near-misses between trucks and other vehicles on New Zealand roads.

Transporting New Zealand has been calling for members to submit footage of dangerous driving, highlighting the need for all road users to observe safe speeds, pass and merge safely, and observe

appropriate following distances.

Transporting New Zealand chief executive, Dom Kalasih, says the footage shows just how dangerous impatient and reckless driving can be, and says that impatient driving is endangering lives.

"Truck drivers spend more time on the roads than almost anyone else. Transporting New Zealand is consistently hearing concerns from our road

freight members about incidents of impatient and unsafe driving they're seeing while going about their work.

"The roads are the workplace for truck drivers, and that's a workplace where a moment's impatience or inattention can shatter lives forever."

Kalasih says the maximum speed limit for heavy vehicles is 90 km/h, even on sections of road with 110 km/h speed limits, requiring

patience from all road users when overtaking and merging.

"Please be patient and wait until there's a passing lane or a clear section of road before overtaking.

"Think about how far you have to go to get clear of a truck and possibly a trailer. The combined length of both can be up to 23 metres – that's a significant distance to cover and you need a safety gap at the other side."

Transporting New Zealand

has shared three videos where disaster was narrowly avoided.

Kalasih says that impatient or reckless driving is never worth the risk.

"It's not worth risking your life or anybody else's for the sake of saving a few minutes. That's how horrible wrecks happen."

### Not the foggiest

There's a van, a plan, and no visibility. You can almost hear the paint squeak as the over-taking vehicle ducks in. Submitted by a freight operator in Taupo. See the video [here](#).

### Hairy moment for stock truck driver

This video was recorded near Waipawa in the Hawke's Bay. A stock truck is carrying a load of bulls and has to swing wide to get into a driveway. Just as one of the team mentions what a tricky spot it is with some people trying to pass on the outside, a ute driver decides they will try a different approach. Some dialogue has been redacted. See the video [here](#).

### No room for error

As a passing lane finished, an SUV driver decides to overtake on a yellow line. This incident took place about 10 minutes outside of Rotorua. You can see the video [here](#).

### Reporting dangerous driving

If you believe someone's driving is dangerous enough to be life-threatening, call the Police on 111.

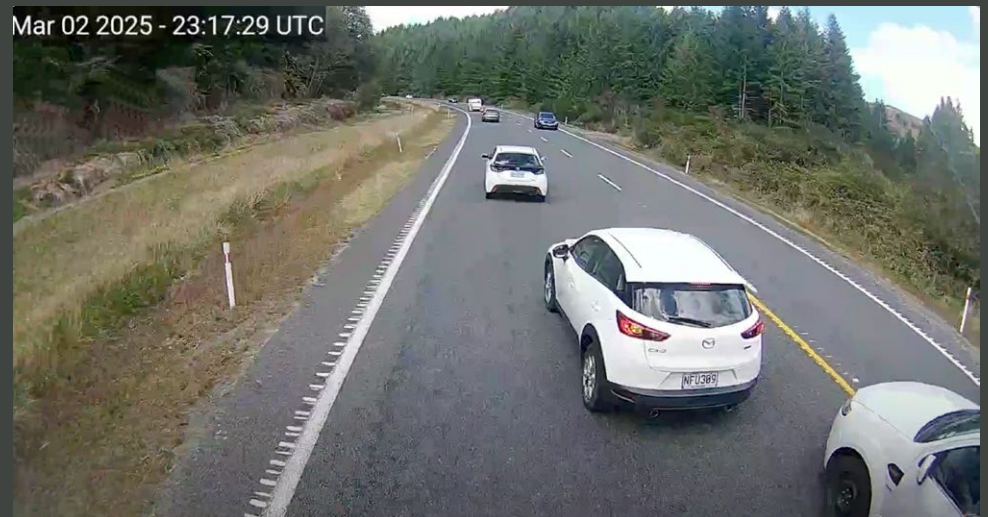
You can call 555 from a mobile phone to report road incidents which are urgent but not life-threatening.



Mar 14 2025 - 01:59:08 UTC



Mar 02 2025 - 23:17:29 UTC



**"THE ROADS ARE THE WORKPLACE FOR TRUCK DRIVERS, AND THAT'S A WORKPLACE WHERE A MOMENT'S IMPATIENCE OR INATTENTION CAN SHATTER LIVES FOREVER."**

– Dom Kalasih, Transporting New Zealand chief executive



# DRIVER LICENCE CHANGES WILL BENEFIT ROAD TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

**P**roposed changes to driver licensing rules will help encourage more young people to become truck drivers – something that will become increasingly important in coming years as the current workforce continues to age.

In announcing the changes last month, Transport Minister Chris Bishop said they would remove the need for new drivers to take a second practical test to get their full licence. Other proposed changes include toughening up alcohol restrictions and reducing the number of demerit points required before a driver can have their licence suspended.

Transporting New Zealand chief executive Dom Kalasih says that attracting more young drivers is critical for the future of the industry. A large proportion of truck drivers are older, many of them over 60, and as they retire that will lead to a driver shortage, which in turn will hurt the economy.

Other countries are also facing this issue.

In our National Road Freight Industry survey, all industry respondents ranked workforce challenges as one of the top issues facing the industry – 94 per cent of respondents agreed that the industry needed to attract more young people. There was also general agreement the current heavy vehicle driver licensing system makes it too difficult for new entrance to join the road freight industry.

Kalasih says getting their class one licence is the essential first step for young drivers progressing on to more specialised heavy vehicle licences, but fewer young people have been getting their licences compared with decades ago. He supports any move that makes it easier for young people to get their licence.

However, Kalasih agrees with the AA that safety is the number one priority

and that the details of the proposed changes must be carefully examined. He welcomes the road transport industry being involved in consultation before the changes are introduced in the middle of next year.

## Research supports change

Research evidence indicates that several GLS (graduated licensing system) components, not currently in New Zealand, can reduce crash risk research:

- a minimum learner period of 12 months
- mandatory hours for supervised driving (logged)
- zero-alcohol restrictions during the learner and restricted phase (regardless of age)
- harsher sanctions for traffic offences
- a hazard perception test and a restricted driver licensing age of 18.

While there are notable road safety benefits, there

is less published evidence that high-powered vehicle restrictions, mobile phone restrictions, and an extended restricted period have an impact on crash risk.

(This does not mean they are nor worthwhile, however. Mobile phone use, in particular, has been identified as a major risk factor on our roads.)

Only one study supported an exit test at the end of the restricted phase; most jurisdictions have abandoned these tests. While speed increases the risk of crashing and the severity of crash outcomes, there is inconsistent research supporting maximum speed limits during the learner/restricted phase. The display of plates during the restricted phase may be useful for the enforcement of restrictions but there are no clear links to crash outcomes.

While there is no evidence that competency-based driver training



# How does New Zealand's **driver licensing system** compare internationally?

The AA Research Foundation examined **driver licensing systems** in different countries and highlighted key differences with New Zealand.

The research leads to **five big questions** that we need to consider to ensure our novice drivers are in the best position to safely achieve a licence to drive in New Zealand.



## Research Foundation





### 1 Is our learner period long enough?

Most Australian states require a longer learner period, typically 12 months, compared to New Zealand's six months.

1

2

### 2 Should we require more supervised practice?

Some countries require learner drivers to complete a certain number of supervised practice hours, but New Zealand does not have this requirement.



### 3 Do we need a hazard perception test?

A hazard perception test is used in some countries to assess a learner driver's ability to identify and react to potential hazards on the road.

3

4

### 4 Would tougher penalties help?

Less experienced drivers face more risk of losing their licence for committing a traffic offence in many other countries. Would this lessen risky behaviour?



### 5 Zero alcohol until full licence?

Could a zero alcohol limit for all drivers on a learner or restricted licence reduce risks of impaired crashes?

5

To read the full report go to:  
[aa.co.nz/about/aa-research-foundation/programmes](https://aa.co.nz/about/aa-research-foundation/programmes)

## The sad stats

18-24 year olds have the highest rate of road deaths in New Zealand.

They are nearly three times as likely to die in a road crash as 18-24 year olds in Australia.

\* International Transport Forum Road Safety Annual Report 2023





and assessment is more beneficial for road safety outcomes than a practical driving test, it may provide an alternative licensing assessment process that is preferred by some drivers with different learning styles.

Transporting New Zealand's Head of Policy & Advocacy, Billy Clemens, says our General Freight Working Group is focussing on putting together proposals for streamlining the heavy vehicle licensing graduated licensing system, particularly making it easier and faster for young drivers to get qualified and driving larger vehicles (in a safe and well-regulated way).

### Tougher tests overseas

The AA Research Foundation examined driving test in several other countries and highlighted the differences with New Zealand. (See the chart.)

One country that has much tougher driving tests is Germany. Although the country is famous for having Autobahns with no speed restrictions, the reality is that Germans take their

driving very seriously and are very disciplined drivers.

Only some Autobahns have no speed restrictions. These are usually six lane motorways, which are much safer. On other secondary roads, Germans will drive cautiously and slowly, watching out for other road users at all times.

Getting your driver's licence in Germany is neither easy, nor cheap, according to a report on the German news channel DW. German law dictates that you must attend at least 21 hours of theory classes and have 12 practical special training drives. These include motorway driving and night-driving. You also have to complete a first aid course. Only qualified instructors can teach you; you can't let your mum and dad take you for a spin.

The cost: according to the report, an eye-watering €3,500 (\$NZ6,725).

To see what's required to get your driver's licence, see [the video on Germany's driving test](#).

One benefit is a much lower fatality rate of 3.3 deaths per 100,000 population in Germany.

Although New Zealand's road fatality rate fell to its lowest rate in decade at the end of 2024, about five per 100,000 – that was substantially higher. The

Europe-wide rate, according to DW, is 6.6; in the US, 8; and 14.6 worldwide. Australia had 4.54, according to international data.

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# TR GROUP EXPANDS HYDROGEN TRUCK RANGE

**T**R Group has launched its hydrogen 50-tonne prime mover with a customer event at Hampton Downs Racetrack, produced in partnership with Global Bus Ventures (GBV), K1W1, and Toyota New Zealand.

This truck offers a practical zero-emissions solution for heavy freight transport and can operate with conventional trailers and loads. It has comparable refuelling times with diesel and will align with normal operator driving hours and schedules.

In other the words, this hydrogen fuel cell truck can operate like a conventional diesel truck – just without the emissions.

The 50-tonne GBV hydrogen prime mover is based on the well-known DAF CF 530, with a zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell conversion by local experts GBV. The truck's energy comes from two Toyota 85kW fuel cells (170kW total), a 124kWh battery system, and 52kg of onboard hydrogen storage, providing 450-500km of driving range. (Driving range depends on the driver,

routes, and environmental conditions.)

Power is delivered by a 350kW/2400Nm electric motor paired with a 6-speed gearbox, providing superior pulling power.

GBV has been producing heavy vehicles for over 50 years and is renowned for its electric heavy vehicle innovation. Today, the company stands as New Zealand's leading hydrogen vehicle integrator. GBV is best known for introducing New Zealand's first hydrogen heavy vehicle, the Auckland Transport hydrogen bus, and more







*The TR Group range includes 16 hydrogen 50-tonne prime movers, four Hyundai Xcient FCEV rigid chassis trucks, as well as several CH2NGE dual-fuel truck options.*

recently, for designing and supplying the hydrogen-electric power systems for the America's Cup chase boats.

"This prime mover represents several years of R&D, making its launch into commercial operation a significant milestone for the company," says GVB

executive vice president, Mike Parker.

Toyota New Zealand CEO, Tatsuya Ishikawa, says: "Toyota's ongoing work with hydrogen technology in New Zealand aligns with its global commitment to carbon neutrality. From heavy-duty commercial vehicles to



## WHY GREEN HYDROGEN?

Efficient heavy transport is about moving the most freight with the fewest trucks possible while staying within legal driving limitations. Green hydrogen is the only zero-emission solution that operates just like a diesel truck. A driver of a hydrogen truck can start a 12-hour shift, drive for 5.5 hours, take a driver break, then drive for another 5.5 hours. With a quick 15-minute refuel as needed, a driver swap allows the cycle to repeat – ensuring continuous, efficient operation.







*TR Group's 50-tonne GBV hydrogen prime mover is based on the well-known DAF CF 530, with a zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell conversion by local experts GBV.*

hydrogen-powered marine vessels and off-grid generators, Toyota is demonstrating that hydrogen is more than just a fuel – it's a key part of the clean energy future. Through its investments and collaborations, Toyota New Zealand is helping to build a robust hydrogen ecosystem that will benefit both businesses and communities across the country. Through our diverse efforts, Toyota New Zealand is bolstering the domestic hydrogen industry while also demonstrating the versatility and potential of hydrogen technology in creating a

sustainable energy landscape."

TR Group's general manager, Brendan King, says: "Having been on the decarbonisation journey for several years now, and with over 60 battery-electric trucks and New Zealand's first commercial heavy hydrogen truck, we are delighted further to expand our hydrogen truck options for our customers. This includes 16 hydrogen 50-tonne prime movers, four Hyundai Xcient FCEV rigid chassis trucks, as well as several CH2NGE dual-fuel truck options."

The 20 zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell trucks are

part of a government-supported programme alongside Hiringa Energy, which already has three hydrogen fuel stations operating, with one more under construction. The government support enables the first 20 zero-emission hydrogen trucks to be offered at competitive lease rates.

Hiringa Energy co-founder and chief executive, Andrew Clennett, says having a New Zealand-based truck integrator now makes hydrogen more viable than ever.

"Hydrogen is ultra-fast, reliable and available now. The Hiringa refuelling network covers 95 per





**“THIS HYDROGEN  
FUEL CELL TRUCK  
CAN OPERATE LIKE  
A CONVENTIONAL  
DIESEL TRUCK –  
JUST WITHOUT THE  
EMISSIONS.”**



*Hyundai's Light Hydrogen Truck*



*Demonstrating the dual-fuel  
technology.*



*Hydrogen fuel cells.*





Photo: Keith McGuire



Hiringa Energy's presentation generates plenty of interest in green hydrogen and the refuelling rollout.





cent of North Island freight routes, allowing transport operators to reduce carbon emissions without impacting productivity. This meets the growing customer demand for decarbonised supply chains. We congratulate TR Group and GBV on this milestone achievement and look forward to having these trucks on the network."

Hyundai New Zealand is delighted to support the increased use of Hydrogen FCEV trucks in New Zealand with an additional four Xcient heavy duty trucks to complement the success of the first Hyundai truck, operated by NZ Post contractor, Shea Transport. With 180,000kms already on the clock, the truck is operating seamlessly in the NZ Post network, having already saved 201 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> to date.

# REAL PASSION FOR CUTTING-EDGE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

■ By Keith McGuire

I was fortunate enough to attend the recent TR Group Hydrogen Truck launch day held at Hampton Downs on March 27.

There were a number of vehicles on display at the launch including the two stars of the show, which some people got to drive or ride in:

- Hyundai Xcient FCEV – hydrogen fuel cell-EV rigid truck;
- Global Bus Ventures, Toyota – FCEV hydrogen fuel cell-EV truck, tractor unit.

Various dual-fuel options in a range of small and large trucks have been out in the market for some time now.

These were mostly CH<sub>2</sub>NGE vehicle technologies – dual diesel/hydrogen with the hydrogen tanks fitted behind the cab, developed in partnership with the HW Richardson Group. This technology gives operators certainty as the truck can run on just diesel when required. The companies involved are looking at enhancements to retrofit designs to give more options to fit hydrogen tanks to existing vehicles.

It was fantastic to see the range of real options that are coming to the market and New Zealand is leading the way in innovation.

It was also great to see the real passion among the people there on the day, both those at the cutting edge of design, development, and build, but also the significant interest from the many industry operators who came along to see this up close and first hand. There was very strong interest at both sessions.

There was also a lot of interest in getting behind the wheel of these new diesel/hydrogen dual-fuel vehicles and even a smaller fully electric truck, with a couple of areas set up to experience it all.

TR Group is leading the way and is keen to talk to operators about their total lease solution, so if you're interested, get in touch with the team at TR to discuss the options available now.

I have to give a special shout out to the TR Group team and everyone else involved in this fantastic industry showcase event. The future of this technology for the industry is looking great for everyone on this journey to lower-emissions vehicles.

One thing I did note on the day is that these are very efficient but also very quiet – in fact, almost too quiet, which could be a concern in some situations, particularly in busy urban environments.



Hydrogen vehicles in action at Hampton Downs. Photo: Keith McGuire





# RESTRUCTURING DOS AND DON'TS

■ By Kathryn Evans

## **I need to restructure my business to cut costs. How do I go about this?**

Businesses are entitled to structure their businesses in accordance with their needs. They are also entitled to alter those structures to ensure that those business needs continue to be met. To do that, you should

ensure that you follow a robust restructuring process.

Restructuring can only occur for genuine business reasons. It cannot be used as a means to dismiss an employee for misconduct or poor performance.

It is important to remember that employees have an entitlement to information relied on as

part of the restructuring process, including to ensure that they are able to provide feedback on the proposal. For example, where there is a financial need to undertake a restructure, a business should consider providing an appropriate level of financial data or projections to any affected employees for comment. If the financial information

is found to be incorrect or inaccurate, this could invalidate the process and any decisions reached. (*Grace Team Accounting v Brake*, 2014.)

Courts will often not be inclined to accept an employer's reasoning at face value without testing its genuineness. In *Totara Hills Farm v Hamish Davidson*, two farm managers were



made redundant to cope with lost income due to a drought. (*Rittson-Thomas t/a Totara Hills Farm v Davidson*, 2013.) On inquiry, the farm was able to provide limited evidence to support its claims regarding its financial position and the court found overall that the reasons provided were disingenuous.

A proper restructure process must also be followed. Where changes are likely to have a substantial impact on affected employees' roles, the duty of good faith requires employers to consult with affected staff and provide them with the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes before any final decisions are made.

Consultation should

commence at an early stage before any final decisions are made. Impacted employees should be provided with information in writing regarding the proposed changes, and any supporting information. They must then be provided a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed changes, with the employer being required to genuinely consider all feedback provided before reaching any decisions.

A 2023 Employment Relations Authority decision clearly demonstrates what happens when this consultation does not take place. (*Kereopa-Rerekura v Cruz Bar Ltd*, 2023.) The case concerned a security guard who was made redundant while he was isolating due to Covid-19.

The employer claimed that the economic conditions cause by the virus had made the employee's position redundant. No process of consultation was entered into, with the employer merely sending an email detailing its decision. The employer also failed to consider any redeployment options. The authority considered that the employer had not provided the employee with proper consultation and the employee was awarded \$15,000 as compensation, together with additional payments of around \$3,000 for lost wages and notice.

When it comes to restructuring, the law places emphasis on protecting affected employees. Often, the reality is that no matter how careful an employer

is, there is always a risk of impacted employees raising personal grievances. It is therefore crucial to seek sound advice when you are looking to restructure as this can mitigate getting into costly legal disputes down the line.


**Our depot office was recently burgled, which has prompted us to consider installing CCTV cameras. Are there any legal requirements I need think about?**

It is acceptable to install CCTV monitoring for security purposes. However, it is important that employers are aware of the privacy implications that the





If you are a member of Iā Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand and would like to discuss the implications of this article on your business, or have an employment, health and safety related or other legal question, please submit it to Wynn Williams Employment Team, **kathryn.evans@wynnwilliams.co.nz** and **katrina.pfeifer@wynnwilliams.co.nz** and **amanda.douglas@wynnwilliams.co.nz** with the subject line: Transporting NZ Ask a Lawyer. Feel free to also make use of Wynn Williams' Legal Helpline, in which the first 15 minutes are free for Transporting NZ members, by calling Kathryn, Katrina and Amanda on **(03) 379 7622**.



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use of surveillance in the workplace may have.

The Privacy Act 2020 has a number of information privacy principles (IPPs) that businesses need to comply with. Guidance from the Office of the Privacy Commissioner (OPC) suggests that there may not be a breach of IPPs where an employer has clear policies and procedures that set out that work computers will be subject to monitoring.

Accordingly, employers looking to introduce CCTV into the workplace should have a robust policy in place setting out information concerning the use of the cameras. These policies should clearly set out the purpose for which the footage is collected. Practical matters should also be addressed, such as when the cameras will operate, who will be able to access

the footage, and how long the footage will be retained for.

When looking to introduce any policy, this should be provided to employees for consultation. After receiving feedback, it might be appropriate for adjustments to be made before circulating a final policy. It would also be best practice to record the use of CCTV in your individual employment agreements going forward. We recommend seeking specific advice on this issue. If you would like assistance with this, we would be more than happy to discuss it with you.

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## Testimony

### **Sarah Thompson** **RD2 Thames**

"I've had the BP card now for about six months — the fuel savings are amazing. We have saved a heap in the short time we have been members and the staff in our local BP service station are awesome. I highly recommend getting this great discounted fuel."





# EMPLOYEE VERSUS CONTRACTOR

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## WHERE THE LAW STANDS IN 2025

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■ By Maisie Guy and Ruth Williams, Ford Sumner Lawyers





**K**eeping up with changes in employment law is essential for protecting your business and staying compliant in a changing legal landscape. This article breaks down key developments around hiring contractors vs. employees, so you can make informed decisions that protect and strengthen your business.

In 2024, the Court of Appeal held that four Uber drivers were employees, not contractors, when they were logged into the Uber driver app. While this result only impacts the four drivers in the proceedings, it represents a shift in

how the courts view the employment relationship and whether, despite what a written agreement may say, a contractor on paper could in reality be an employee.

(This decision is currently being appealed by Uber to the Supreme Court, in the hopes of overturning the ruling that drivers are employees.)

This is a significant decision, as being an employee allows workers to access minimum entitlements under the Employment Relations Act 2000 such as holiday pay, sick leave, and the ability to raise personal grievances. In reaching this decision, the

Court applied the “section 6 test” which determines the true nature of the relationship, whether a worker is an “employee”.

### **Legal Test: true nature of the relationship**

The section 6 test includes analysing the:

1. intention of the parties, and whether the intention was to create an employment relationship;
2. control the business had on the work the person performed, including hours of work and tasks performed;
3. integration of the worker in the operations of the

business, and whether they are fundamental to the business. This will include looking at the location of performing work, availability to work, access to business systems;

4. fundamental/reality of whether the worker is in business on their own account.

In a recent Employment Court case, *Brown v Clinician Holdings Limited* [2025] NZEmpC 48, the Court determined that the “true nature” of a relationship can change over time. In that case, the worker was initially and legitimately engaged as an independent contractor.



“WHATEVER TYPE OF WORK RELATIONSHIP YOU CHOOSE, BUSINESSES SHOULD ENSURE THAT NOT ONLY IS IT RECORDED IN A WRITTEN AGREEMENT, BUT THE AGREEMENT REFLECTS THE REALITY IN PRACTICE.”

However, the court found that by applying the section 6 test, and analysing the intention of the parties, the “true nature of the relationship” had changed over time from independent contractor/principal to employer/employee.

Shortly after the Uber decision was published, the government announced plans to amend the legislation, in the hopes of providing greater certainty for contractors and businesses.

Proposed gateway test

The proposed change to the act is in the form of a gateway test which establishes criteria to determine if a worker is a contractor. If the working arrangement meets the four factors in the gateway test, the individual will be considered a contractor, and will not be able to challenge their employment status under section 6 of the Act.

If one or more of the four factors in the gateway test is not met, then the existing section 6 test will be applied to determine if the worker is an employee.

The criteria to pass the gateway test are:

1. A written agreement explicitly stating a worker is an independent contractor;
2. The business does not restrict the worker from working for another business;
3. The business does not

require the worker to:  
a) be available to work on specified times of day(s) or for a minimum number of hours; or  
b) the worker can sub-contract the work; and

4. The business does not terminate the contract if the worker does not accept an additional task or engagement.

If all the above criteria are met, the worker will be considered a contractor per their written agreement.

If you are considering hiring workers and are

unsure what arrangement would suit your business best, the graphic on this page shows some general hallmarks of the differences between an employee and a contractor.

Whatever type of work relationship you choose, businesses should ensure that not only is it recorded in a written agreement, but the agreement reflects the reality in practice.

Currently, section 6 remains the legal test for determining the nature of the relationship.

Whether there is a higher degree of control over the worker, integration of the worker into the business’s operations, and the facts indicate the parties intended there to be a relationship in the nature of employment, are all relevant. A “contractor” on paper could be deemed an “employee” if put to the current test.

If businesses are looking to engage independent contractors, the written independent contractor agreement should be

Employee	Contractor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employee owes duties of loyalty and fidelity to the employer/business.</li><li>• Employer has control over work i.e. hours, pay, availability and work tasks.</li><li>• Employee entitled to Holidays Act 2003 entitlements and other statutory leave entitlements.</li><li>• Ability to raise a personal grievances under the Employment Relations Act 2000.</li><li>• Dispute resolution avenues available under the Act, such as mediation services with MBIE.</li><li>• Greater control over outgoings/overheads.</li><li>• Less flexibility to scale a business workforce in response to change in demand.</li><li>• Employer to provide equipment and material to employees to perform work.</li><li>• Termination of employment must conform with good faith obligations including substantive and procedural fairness.</li><li>• Employer pays employee’s PAYE.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Worker supplies own material/equipment.</li><li>• No statutory leave or Holidays Act 2003 entitlements.</li><li>• No need to train up a contractor as they will come with skills.</li><li>• No long-term commitment of hiring permanent employees.</li><li>• Contractor can decline work.</li><li>• Termination of contract determined by the written agreement.</li><li>• Contractor can determine their own hours and pay (subject to negotiation).</li><li>• Disputes around invoices/pay can arise.</li><li>• No duty of fidelity as contractors are free to perform work for other businesses.</li><li>• Worker responsible for Tax obligations.</li></ul>



recorded in writing, and as a form of future proofing, should contain the elements of the control test in the event that law came into force.

If you are seeking advice about your contractors or employees, or require assistance in drafting your

worker arrangements, the team at Ford Sumner can assist you. They are experts in employment law and navigating the employment relationship. Please do not hesitate to contact the Ford Sumner team for more information: Admin@fsl.nz.

## Disclaimer

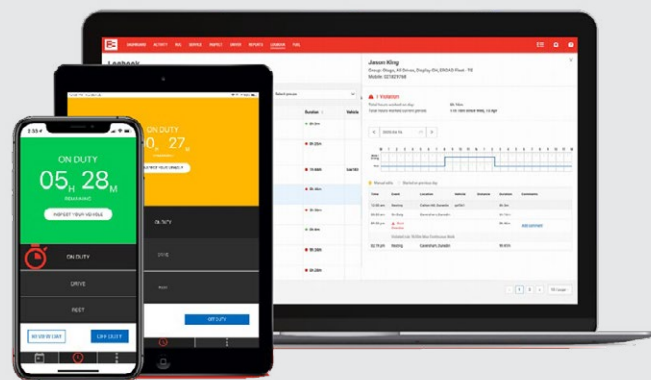
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# THE MOSS BOSS ON THE COAST

■ By Bill O'Byrne

One of Transporting New Zealand's more unusual members is more aquatic than asphaltic. At the moment, it doesn't even have a truck.

Bruce Truman owns and runs Supersphag, a two-and-a-half person operation not far from Greymouth. They harvest sphagnum moss from a swamp on a 160 hectare bit of land he owns, sending most of it to a US company, Creative Water Solutions, which uses it for natural water filters.

Sphagnum moss has strong antibacterial qualities which were recognised in World War 1 when moss-filled bandages were used to stop infection and promote faster healing among wounded soldiers. This same antibacterial quality was also found to be very useful in the filtering systems in swimming pools and spa pools.

Bruce says the moss petal products keep bacteria down, stopping the growth of biofilms (aka slime) building up on the sides of pools and hot tubs. This means fewer chemicals are needed to control bacteria.

However, a weird side effect of Covid has been that a lot of people in the US, who were a big chunk of the market, aren't using their pools so much, so things are a little quiet on that front.

While sphagnum moss is often used as a base for plants like orchids and carnivorous pitcher plants

and Venus fly traps, those gardening markets are also not in a growth phase, to use a moss term.

That's not to say there isn't a lot to do, even when the markets aren't being very demanding, Bruce says.

The company has been going since 1992, but the area's been farmed for moss since the 1980s. The land was earmarked for development, most likely as a dairy farm, so Bruce bought it.

There have been some run-ins with the local council about whether the moss could be harvested, given that it is on a wetland. The irony is that if it was left alone, Bruce says the overgrowth would eventually kill off the moss, and the land would dry out and revert to bush.

So after many years of stress, he's been allowed to keep on harvesting it. This is itself no easy job with it being harvested by fork and scrub cutters and put into bales, with the moss being dried, processed, and packaged at the factory.

The actual building doesn't look too much from the outside but is full of gear that Bruce and engineers have devised to process the moss for the horticultural and filter markets.

Supersphag refines moss waste to 95 per cent cristatum petals – no stems, dirt, or other species – and this is compressed into either cubes or slim A4-sized bricks destined for



*Bruce Truman, of  
Supersphag, in the factory  
near Greymouth with  
different moss products.  
(From Rural Delivery).*





*One of the pieces of gear that Bruce had built in recent years to make the water filter bricks, automatically: moss in, bricks out*



*Sphagnum moss petals.*

the horticultural and water filtration industries.

It's not just pools that use the moss to filter water. Bruce says moss filters are used in industrial-scale water cooling towers where they keep the water clear and free of algae, as well as preventing the build-up of scale.

He is proud that all the machinery in the factory has been custom made. Bruce was raised on a farm and his stepdad was an engineer, so he grew up with an attitude of build-it-yourself and how to fix stuff.

"We did a lot of experiments, which I really like doing. And all the plant and equipment that we've got in the factory is built the way we wanted it. We used to design things in the old school way – using chalk

marks on the floor – before computers came around. You make each other see what you're seeing in your head."

It's a process of constant improvement that has seen a very high level of purity for the filter products.

"I've always been driven to just keep improving. If you're not getting better, you're going backwards because your competition will be catching you up."

As a light vehicle member of Transporting New Zealand since 2006, Bruce says he has two big things he values about being a member.

One is the fuel discount for the digger he uses in his operations. It's a one-of-a-kind digger, a 22-tonne track base with Yanmah ViO5.5 tonne top.

The other thing he likes is the advocacy work



**“WE DID A LOT OF EXPERIMENTS, WHICH I REALLY LIKE DOING. AND ALL THE PLANT AND EQUIPMENT THAT WE’VE GOT IN THE FACTORY IS BUILT THE WAY WE WANTED IT.”**



*Bruce’s one-of-a kind-digger, a 22-tonne track base with Yanmah ViO5.5 tonne top, complete with tipping deck on the back. It was all put together at Dispatch Engineering in Greymouth, and carted by T Croft Ltd.*

that is done. For instance, membership manager Lindsay Calvi-Freeman has been working on trying to get the local council to look at the safety of a section on Taylorville Road, inland from Greymouth. Bruce has seen crashed cars or where they

have crashed quite regularly over the years.

Calvi-Freeman has had an Official Information Act request in with NZTA to see what the accident rate is actually like, so that is a work in progress.

Bruce still has things

he wants to do with the operation.

“I’m 58, but there’s a lot of things I want to accomplish here. I want to machine harvest before I finish.”

That might take a bit more inventiveness, but Bruce reckons that’s all part of the

fun. With a near five-year growth cycle for the moss, retirement is not close.

Here’s a [link to a Rural Delivery TV item](#) a few years ago about Bruce and the operation showing the harvesting and the factory side of things.



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# HEAVY METAL HAULAGE FAMILY FUN DAY

Kids of all ages turned out to get a close-up look at heavy machinery at the Heavy Metal Haulage Family Fun Day, at Te Kowhai in the Waikato, on March 22. Transporting New Zealand regional sector advisor, Keith McGuire, went along. He says it was fantastic to see so many young people having a fun time on the day – and that is important for the future of the industry.





*Visitors flocked to the Heavy Metal Haulage Family Fun Day at Te Kowhai.*



















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