



SUBMISSION

Submission: Lane use improvements

To: NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi
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About Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand

Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand (Transporting New Zealand) is a national membership association representing the road freight transport industry. Our 1,200 members (with a combined fleet of 14,000 heavy vehicles) operate urban, rural and inter-regional commercial freight transport services throughout the country.

As the peak body and authoritative voice of the road freight sector, Transporting New Zealand helps trucking operators drive successful, safe, sustainable businesses. Our strategic priorities are:

- Providing one industry voice for advocacy
- Promoting the road freight transport industry
- Attracting talent and promoting workforce development
- Supporting our members and customers
- Sustainability, safety and responsible emissions reduction

New Zealand's road freight transport industry employs 33,000 people (1.2% of the total 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 and contributes 4.8 percent of New Zealand's GDP. Road freight transport accounts for 93% of the total tonnage of freight moved in New Zealand (MoT National Freight Demands Study 2018).

Transporting New Zealand submission on the lane use improvements consultation

- 1 Transporting New Zealand appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission on NZTA's lane use improvements consultation (relating to the Road User Rule). We have sought feedback from our membership on the proposals that has informed our recommendations.
- 2 Transporting New Zealand is generally supportive of several of the proposals in the consultation document which, in the main, reflect common practice. However, we query how practical it will be to enforce some other proposals, meaning they are more about signalling desired road user behaviour. Transporting New Zealand does not support the proposal relating to signage requirements for parking on berms.
- 3 There is nothing confidential in our submission and we permit it to be published in full.

Proposal 1: allow children to cycle on footpaths

- 4 Transporting New Zealand supports permitting children aged up to 12 years to ride their bikes on footpaths, and concur with the evidence that many young children already do this, so any subsequent Rule change will in effect be recognising this behaviour. Whilst there is a risk of young cyclists on footpaths being injured from cars reversing out of driveways – something which could be partially mitigated through driver education such as encouraging 'RIFO: reverse in, forward out' – on balance we consider young children are safer cycling on footpaths rather than on the road amongst cars and trucks (which have blind spots).

Proposal 2: set a minimum passing gap for vehicles

- 5 Transporting New Zealand cautiously supports this proposal insofar as it encourages good practice, however we think it will be difficult to enforce except perhaps after an incident. Further, not all of New Zealand's road network is wide enough to permit wide passing gaps for all traffic types e.g. passing tractors or farm machinery on narrow rural roads, so some enforcement discretion would need to be applied (we suggest a rule amendment may need to specify it only applies where the entire road width is wide enough to enable a passing gap of 1m or more). For that reason, Transporting New Zealand does not support a high penalty for a difficult-to-apply rule, and instead of a \$300 fine we suggest it should be in the order of \$100.

Proposal 3: allow e-scooters to use cycle lanes

- 6 As with proposal 1, Transporting New Zealand supports allowing e-scooters to use cycle lanes, in part because it is relatively common although the rules are unclear (so this will also provide clarity), and because it is safer to have vulnerable road users like e-scooters in dedicated lanes where available, rather than sharing the road with larger and faster vehicles.

Proposal 4: giving buses priority when leaving bus stops

- 7 Transporting New Zealand is also cautiously supports this proposal, because like the minimum passing gap it will be difficult to enforce without dedicated police enforcement, or by camera ANPR, and with the former it must be asked if enforcing this rule is a good use of Police resources, given it is not related to road safety. Nevertheless, were it to proceed, we

agree the infringement fee should be modest as proposed, and it must be supported by clear signage and communications to road users.

Proposal 5: clarify that signage isn't required for RCAs to prohibit parking on berms

- 8 Transporting New Zealand does not support this proposal; we firmly believe that any prohibitions on parking on berms must be supported by signage so that vehicle operators are aware of the prohibitions.
- 9 We are aware that the NZTA has tried multiple times via omnibus rule amendments to amend the Road User Rule so that road controlling authorities (RCAs) don't need to signpost any berm parking restrictions, and we understand this is mostly driven by Auckland Transport, and does not have widespread support amongst other RCAs.
- 10 Our concern with this proposal is that parking on berms can be common practice (much like some of the behaviour the rule amendments above propose to recognise). Vehicle owners need to know if a prohibition exists, and gazetting a bylaw is simply not enough. Moreover, there may be good reasons for parking on a berm. These may include that property owners maintain the berm outside their home, and thus may have a reasonable expectation that they can use it, and parking vehicles or trailers on berms removes them from the roadway which may improve traffic navigation and even safety (especially at night). In some regions, particularly rural communities, there may not be adequate on-street parking and it is preferable to park vehicles on the berm; this can also often apply outside rural sports grounds and community halls. It would be hugely problematic if, in the event the local RCA did want to prohibit berm parking in these communities, it failed to signpost any restriction.
- 11 However this is fairly unlikely given it is mainly Auckland Transport that has particular issue with both berm parking, especially berms under which water or sewerage services may run or where it may block footpaths, and the practicality of signposting all bylaws across the region. The solution is not to apply a blanket rule across the country when other RCAs do not have the same issues, but rather a targeted solution for Auckland.
- 12 Transporting New Zealand's view is that if parking on some berms is a problem because of concerns about damaging underground infrastructure, then issue a bylaw prohibiting it, and signpost that prohibition.
- 13 We would however support an amendment to the Road User Rule to clarify how much signage is required in each area subject to a bylaw, in order to address the existing confusion and inconsistency across RCAs.
- 14 If berm bylaws are envisaged to be permanent, we also think it would make sense for RCAs to communicate this to residential property owners through council newsletters issued with the rates bill.

ENDS