

TRAFINZ First XV - Interventions to Reduce Death and Serious Injury

The number of people dying and being seriously hurt on our roads has increased by over 50% since 2013. There are a range of factors behind this, but death and injury levels are rising far faster than population or the distances we travel. We can and must take concerted action to reduce this trend. TRAFINZ has set out the key initiatives we consider should be taken. Collectively we consider that over time these initiatives will dramatically reduce death and injury on our roads. Simply catching up with the best performing nations in the world would cut death rates by 2/3^{rds} saving some 250 lives a year – every year. We should aspire to do even better than that.

Structural

1. Develop a comprehensive Transport Strategy in collaboration with key stakeholders, within which Safety is a vital component. Ensure all the key transport documents (GPS/Investment Assessment Framework/ Economic Evaluation Manual) are aligned with promotion of safe mobility. This concept can also be allied to environmental, health, social and economic benefits.
2. Adopt Vision Zero - to demand and inspire action, to recognize that this is everyone's issue, that we are all part of the solution, and that we can all make a difference. Many or most of our community still holds the outdated 'blame the road user' mindset, which cannot improve safety outcomes. Set interim targets to drive action. Require 'system owners' to develop their own 'Safe System Plan' setting out what they plan to do to progressively eliminate death and serious injury within their sphere of influence.
3. Ensure that there is a dynamic Vision Zero safety leadership structure that is linked to all the key stakeholders from the Minister down. Such safety champion organisation(s) and position(s) should be independent but publicly accountable for driving Vision Zero and for holding others in central and local government and the private sector to account for safety performance.
4. Invest in education of practitioners, decision makers (including politicians), fleet operators, professional road users and in grass roots road safety education. Only with wider understanding will we achieve safety results.
5. Work with Local Government, relevant Government agencies, and developers to ensure that our towns and cities are designed and retrofitted with liveability and safety as vital components. This fits closely with national health, social and economic aspirations, and encouraging active transport.

Safe Roads and Roadsides

6. Significantly increased and accelerated investment in highest risk roads and intersections. This would equally include State highways and local roads. NZTA the AA and private sector have done excellent work in prioritising risk areas so we know where to target the resources. We would see many more median and edge barriers, rumble strips, and intersection redesigns. Review the funding arrangements (FAR) to ensure financial constraint does not prevent especially smaller local authorities from delivering better safety outcomes.
7. Particularly in the urban context, focus on safety, convenience and accessibility for active users (pedestrians and cyclists). This would be required as part of local authorities 'safe system plans' supported by other 'system owners' such as NZ Police as required. Speed and safe design are key components. Accessibility and an ageing population will require footpaths of a reasonable surface standard to minimise the personal and health system risks of trips and falls, and allow all citizens to participate as fully as possible in social and economic life. Issues with emerging technologies potentially competing for footpath space need to be resolved.

Safe Speeds

8. Accelerate the implementation of the Speed Management Guide. Speeds should be safe for the given environment, and set with human physiology in mind. Require road controlling authorities to review speed limits of at least 10% of their networks per year, starting with the highest risk roads. This is likely to require NZTA resource support for NZTA as a road controlling authority, and for TLAs, and other road controlling authorities such as DoC. It will also require significant focus on education and information provision to 'take the public with us'.
9. Provide for a greatly increased network of safety cameras including single point and point-to-point speed cameras, combined speed and red light cameras, variable speed limit and "no lane changing" compliance. Determine the best organisational structure to manage cameras, enforcement, processing and appeals.

Safe Vehicles

10. Significantly raise the safety provided by used imported vehicles. The average age of the New Zealand fleet is 14 years, meaning we miss out on many of the huge benefits of newer technology. This includes everything from collision avoidance technology to airbags, seat belt warning systems, and alcohol interlocks. Age and quality restrictions on imported vehicles are options. Actively incentivise the exit of older less safe vehicles including improving consumer information. In time AVs have potential to significantly reduce road trauma and New Zealand needs to stay involved in this emerging technology.
11. Encourage safer forms of transport. This includes encouraging a greater proportion of freight being carried on rail or ship where this is economic and practical. Heavy trucks are involved in approximately 1 in 4 fatal and serious crashes and this proportion is rising, and can be expected

to rise further with growing freight movement. It also includes encouraging greater use of public passenger transport. Passengers on public transport are some 20 times safer than when travelling in private cars. We have already covered safer active modes especially in urban areas above.

Safe Use

12. More rigorous standards and testing for motorcycle licences. This could include a time limit on motorcycle licenses and requiring a practical test to renew. (because many riders 'have a break' between owning a bike as a young person and then again at an older age) Include mopeds in motorcycle licensing framework. Continue to support motorcycle safety training programmes.
13. Review and support driver training and licencing, including its relationship to the education curriculum. Consider the circumstances in which 'refreshers' or retesting could be required. Fleet operators should be required as part of their safe system plans to demonstrate appropriate training and that drivers are not put under pressure to exceed safety parameters. Monitoring (eg telematics) should be encouraged as part of safe system plans.
14. Fundamental review of offences and penalties so that penalties are commensurate with risk, and act as deterrents. Consider warnings, suspended notices or opportunities to comply should for first time or "occasional" offenders to address any concerns about 'revenue gathering'. Also assess the risks and benefits of hypothecation of fines revenue
15. Ensure that the investment in road safety policing is well targeted, documented and monitored. Reduce substance abuse including by introducing compulsory roadside testing for drug impairment and increased targeted drink driving enforcement. Work with Police to increase alcohol enforcement (levels and effectiveness). Encourage the uptake of voluntary alcohol interlocks in commercial fleets to normalise interlocks and expand market.