

vehicle dimension & mass



New high productivity motor vehicle routes proposed for investment

Identifying high productivity motor vehicle (HPMV) routes as a priority for investment has been a focus of the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA), local government and the road transport industry over the past 12 months.

This work has now reached a significant milestone with a proposed investment programme now developed that will provide increased access to about 4500 kilometres of New Zealand's road network for HPMVs.

The HPMV routes proposed for improvement work have been evaluated and prioritised according to the expected efficiencies and productivity gains as a result of moving more freight with fewer truck movements on these key routes. The wider transport benefits, such as improved safety and environmental outcomes, have also been included in the initial economic assessments.

About \$60 million will be spent on high priority HPMV routes during the 2012-15 National Land Transport Programme (NLTP). Three quarters of this, \$45 million, will be used to strengthen 40 structures on proposed state highway HPMV routes. The remaining \$15 million will be used to strengthen bridges on local roads, subject to local councils including these upgrades within their land transport programmes.

The focus of the proposed investment programme is on key freight routes that carry above 100,000 tonnes of freight annually. A significant proportion of these high volume freight routes are nationally and regionally strategic routes within the upper North Island. The investment will also focus on key feeder routes that provide access to and from areas that have significant and ongoing freight movements such as ports and processing facilities.

To date, the routes we have approved have provided HPMV access to approximately 1500 kms of the total road network with minimal investment. By 2016, NZTA estimated HPMV vehicles will have access to about 6,000 kilometres of New Zealand's roading network.

Maps of proposed HPMV routes for investment, together with some questions and answers, are available on the NZTA website at www.nzta.govt.nz/HPMV.

Outcome available of the monitoring evaluation and review of the VDM Rule implementation

How well the Vehicle Dimension and Mass Rule Amendment 2010 (VDM Rule) has been implemented since it came into effect a year ago has been the focus of a recently released independent review.

The review was commissioned by the Ministry of Transport (MoT) and the NZTA. Included on the review team were representatives from Local Government NZ and the Road Transport Forum, and a broad range of stakeholders were consulted.

The review was to determine if the anticipated results from the VDM Rule amendment have been achieved, including the economic benefits, and areas for improvement.

Some of the key findings were:

- National economic benefits resulting from the introduction of the VDM Rule amendment to 1 May 2011 range from \$1.5 million to \$4.6 million. These gains have been made with no capital investment and are in line with expectations of the original business case when the VDM Rule amendment was considered.
- Over-length permits have generated the highest economic returns with 67% of permits approved in the first year. Higher mass permits have generated a more modest return, due mainly to route restrictions.
- The potential productivity gains are in the order of a 20% reduction in trips for the same freight task under higher mass permits and a 14% reduction in trips for over-length permits.
- This reduction in truck movements had economic, safety and environmental benefits.
- Key barriers to the uptake of higher mass HPMV permits, as identified by operators, include network availability, higher road user charges (RUC) payments, uncertainty over the future make-up of RUC for HPMVs, and high infringement costs if permit conditions are breached.

There are several ongoing improvements that the NZTA has identified for further attention. Investing in strengthening bridges will be critical to resolving route availability and will result in increased benefits over time. See page 1 for how the NZTA is proposing to do this.

We are also focused on improving customer service and ensuring consistency in auditing and compliance. Some of the improvements already underway include:

- Developing a manual for industry, councils, police and NZTA staff to provide standard operating procedures for HPMV permitting. These procedures will provide nationally consistent information, standardise permitting conditions and provide advice for compliance and auditing.
- Continuing to work with local councils on infrastructure costs.
- Enhancing NZTA's maps to provide greater certainty for operators for vehicle configuration and route availability. The NZTA will also establish some service levels for the permitting process value chain to ensure appropriate monitoring of the progress of applications.

The NZTA is also considering some new options to improve the way we and our local road partners deliver heavy vehicle permitting to our customers in the road transport industry.

New HPMV application form and quick access to the HPMV website

We have developed a new HPMV application form. We've taken the old form and made it more user-friendly so that it retains your details and validates your input. This means you won't have to re-enter the same information each time and the validation should prevent you from submitting an incomplete or incorrect application.

It has pre-populated drop-down lists with common information such as truck type and loads. Once completed, you simply click 'send' and it will be automatically attached to an email to the Permitting Issuing Officer where the route originates. This new form will help with accuracy and speed up processing times. To access the form go to www.nzta.govt.nz/HPMV.



For more information

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