



Submission on New Zealand Transport Agency SH6 Blenheim to Nelson Safety Improvements

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For more information please contact:
Jane Murray
NMH Public Health Service
Email: jane.murray@nmdhb.govt.nz
Phone: (03) 543 7805

Introduction

1. Nelson Marlborough Health (Nelson Marlborough District Health Board) (NMH) is a key organisation involved in the health and wellbeing of the people within Te Tau Ihu. NMH appreciates the opportunity to comment from a public health perspective on the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) SH6 Blenheim to Nelson Safety Improvements.
2. NMH makes this submission in recognition of its responsibilities to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and the Health Act 1956.
3. Given that NMH staff regularly travel this road to undertake activities within the community and at the various NMH facilities situated across Nelson and Blenheim, this submission also incorporates the views of staff on road safety along this route.

General support

4. When accidents occur on this stretch of road, NMH resources are used, this puts the financial burden on the health sector and an emotional burden on our staff. Therefore NMH strongly supports NZTA's goal of improving safety on State Highway 6 between Blenheim and Nelson. NMH submitted on the 2017 consultation on safety and is pleased to see the range of safety options proposed that may reduce the number of crashes on this stretch of road.
5. NMH supports the
 - a. installation of flexible road safety barriers and side barriers in high-risk sections of road
 - b. additional turnaround areas, and support the "jug handle" turnaround bays at Glen and Cable Bay Roads which give people a safe place to turn around without crossing two lanes of traffic
 - c. widening of centrelines and passing lanes as this will reduce the number of serious crashes
 - d. widening road shoulders to give cyclists more space
 - e. installation of rumble strips
 - f. installation of motorcycle underlay rails between Rai Valley and Hira
 - g. intersection safety improvements such as the installation of the Marlborough Airport roundabout and the Intersection speed zone at SH6/Rapaura Road.
6. NMH notes that during the consultation many people, including NMH, requested the reduction of speeds along the route. NMH supports the proposed speed review for the Blenheim to Nelson route because speed affects the likelihood and impact of all crashes. Small reductions in impact speeds greatly increase the chances of surviving

a crash. The Ministry of Transport's Safer Journey report¹ states that there is a 10% probability of death for car drivers in frontal impact collisions travelling at 70km limit compared with 30% probability for car drivers travelling at 95km/h and 50% probability for drivers travelling at 105 km/h. NMH is supportive of the objectives of the Ministry of Transport's Safer Journey Strategy to improve roads so that each type of road has recognisable and distinctive set of self-explaining features such as signage, lane width, road markings and speed limits. This will encourage people to travel at speeds that best fit the design and function of the road.²

7. NMH would like to see speeds reduced around schools in particular Clifton Terrace School where many vehicles fail to slow down at the 80km zone. Anecdotally one of NMH's regular nominated van drivers stated he is often tailgated and as a result the tailing vehicle misses seeing the speed reduction signs and becomes impatient. Further consideration needs to be given to lowering the speed limit and the placement of more visible signage along this road in order to reduce the number of accidents.
8. The stretch of road between Rai Valley and Renwick is often used by farming vehicles travelling at lower speeds. NMH staff have noted that there are a lack of passing opportunities and as a result, staff have witnessed impatient motorists overtake dangerously on corners and yellow lines. This puts both these motorists and others at risk. NMH recommends that consideration is given to creating additional passing facilities such as passing lanes or slow vehicle bays for slower drivers to utilise. The installation of such sites needs to also include appropriate signage.

Conclusion

9. NMH strongly supports NZTA's goal of improving safety on State Highway 6 between Blenheim and Nelson and thanks NZTA for the opportunity to comment on existing issues from both a public and staff safety point of view.

Yours sincerely



Peter Bramley
Chief Executive
Peter.bramley@nmdhb.govt.nz

¹ <http://www.saferjourneys.govt.nz/assets/Safer-journeys-files/SaferJourneyStrategy.pdf> page 19

² Ibid page 14