



New Zealand Transport Agency's SH6 Blenheim to Nelson Speed Consultation

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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. NMH supports the proposed speed limit reductions. NMH continues to advocate that the legal speed limit is based on the road type rather than having the same open road speed limit for all roads. This submission follows our earlier submission on the safety improvements in March 2019.
5. Road crashes and injuries have major impact on people and communities. The average 2018 social cost is estimated at \$5.07 million per fatal crash, \$525,600 per serious crash, \$29,900 per minor crash, this includes estimated cost of loss of life and life quality, loss of output, medical cost, property damage costs and legal and court costs incurred.¹
6. Speed affects the likelihood and the severity of its consequences. Small reductions in impact speeds greatly increase the chances of surviving a crash. World Health Organisation states that an increase of 1 km/h in mean vehicle speed results in an increase of 4-5% of fatal crashes.² The Ministry of Transport's Safer Journey report³ 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.
7. NMH is supportive of the objectives of the Ministry of Transport's Safer Journey Strategy to improve the 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.

¹ <https://www.transport.govt.nz/mot-resources/road-safety-resources/roadcrashstatistics/social-cost-of-road-crashes-and-injuries/report-overview/>

² <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/254760/1/WHO-NMH-NVI-17.7-eng.pdf?ua=1>

³ <http://www.saferjourneys.govt.nz/assets/Safer-journeys-files/SaferJourneyStrategy.pdf> page 19

8. Speed also has adverse effects on levels of environmental and noise pollution, and the “liveability” of urban areas⁴. Lower vehicle speeds and volumes lead to reduced noise, vibration and emissions in the environment. Residents in neighbourhoods with good street environments tend to walk and cycle more, take public transport more and drive less than comparable households in other areas⁵ which has environmental impacts.
9. NZ is the third worst OECD country for road deaths of those aged 0–14 years. Maori children showed a disproportionately high rate of injury from motor vehicle traffic crashes, and Pacific Island children had the highest rate of non fatal injuries as pedestrians.⁶ In order to make our streets safer for those who are the most vulnerable in our communities, we must reduce road speeds.

Specific Comments

10. NMH supports the proposed speed limit changes in all areas as indicated within the consultation document.
11. NMH is particularly pleased that the speeds will be reduced around Clifton Terrace School as this was highlighted as an area of concern in our earlier submission this year.
12. NMH encourages NZTA to continue its infrastructure improvements in high risk spots on SH6 especially in regards to the installation of passing lanes and median barriers.

Conclusion

13. 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



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⁴ <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/254760/1/WHO-NMH-NVI-17.7-eng.pdf?ua=1>

⁵ <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/userfiles/transport-data/Traffic%20Calming.pdf>

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[http://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/05ED778EE1B2C6D6CC257F4C007A779C/\\$file/Safekids%20Aotearoa%20Databook%20CIP%20NZ%20and%20Prevention%20Strategies.pdf](http://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/05ED778EE1B2C6D6CC257F4C007A779C/$file/Safekids%20Aotearoa%20Databook%20CIP%20NZ%20and%20Prevention%20Strategies.pdf)