



Will be considered to be released with redactions

**MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE**

<b>Subject</b>	Ministerial Visit to Coromandel
<b>Date</b>	14 February 2023
<b>Briefing number</b>	BRI-2710

Contact(s) for telephone discussion (if required)				
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David Speirs	Director Regional Relationships (Waikato/Bay of Plenty)	Section 9(2)(a)	Section 9(2)(a)	✓
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**Action taken by Office of the Minister**

- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen by Minister
- ☐ Agreed
- ☐ Feedback provided
- ☐ Forwarded to
- ☐ Needs change [please specify]
- ☐ Withdrawn
- ☐ Overtaken by events

14 February 2023

**Hon Michael Wood – Minister of Transport**

## Ministerial Visit to Coromandel

### Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with an update on the Thames-Coromandel Roads impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle and the upper North Island flooding events ahead of your visit to the region on Wednesday, 15 February 2023.

### Background and context section

2. As at midday, 14 February 2023, there is currently no way in or out of the Coromandel. All major arterial roads are closed, leaving the peninsula cut off.
3. Gale force winds and heavy rainfall have caused major slips, surface flooding and extremely hazardous driving conditions around the East Waikato region.
4. The Karangahake Gorge is closed and may be for some time today. State Highway 29 (SH29) over the Kaimai Range on the Bay of Plenty side is also closed due to a number of trees falling across the state highway.
5. Across the Waikato, there are numerous state highway closures and additional warnings about hazards on highways which signal things like trees down, surface flooding and other obstacles.
6. Thames Coromandel District Council Mayor, Len Salt, declared a state of emergency in the district on Friday, 3 February 2023 due to vulnerable communities and people, and the potential for land slips and further erosion. The three main state highways between western and eastern Coromandel Peninsula were compromised due to significant weather.

### State Highway closures in Coromandel and East Waikato

7. SH25 Kopu to Thames OPEN TO ONE LANE
  - The Kauaeranga Spill Way outside the Thames Airfield is flooded, but traffic management is now in place and the road is open to one lane.
8. SH25 Thames to Waiomu: CLOSED
  - A slip has closed SH25 at Ngarimu Bay.
  - Due to numerous slips, surface flooding, fallen vegetation and detritus on the road, extreme caution is advised on the rest of this section of SH25.
9. SH25 Coromandel to Kūaotunu: CLOSED
  - Fully closed due to slips on the Coromandel / Whangapoua Hill and immediately west of Kūaotunu.

## 10. SH25 Kūaotunu to Whitianga: COMPROMISED

- Stream levels at Wharekaho are fluctuating and extreme caution must be exercised if travelling between Wharekaho and Whitianga.
- Due to numerous slips, surface flooding, fallen vegetation and debris on the road, extreme caution is advised on the rest of this section of SH25.

## 11. SH25 Whitianga to Tairua: OPEN but essential travel only

- A fallen tree is blocking one lane at Whenuakite.
- Due to slips, surface flooding, fallen vegetation and debris on the road, extreme caution is advised on the rest of this section of SH25.

## 12. SH25 Tairua to Hikuai: CLOSED

- Fully closed between Tairua and Hikuai due to flooding. Multiple fallen trees are also blocking the road between the Hikuai River Bridge and Hikuai Settlement Road.

## 13. SH25 Hikuai to Whangamata OPEN but essential travel only

- Due to small slips, surface flooding, fallen vegetation, and debris on the road, extreme caution is advised on this section of SH25.

## 14. SH25 Whangamata CLOSED

- A fallen tree is blocking the SH25 Whangamata Bypass. A local road detour is available but is suitable for light vehicles only.

## 15. SH25 Whangamata to Waihi: CLOSED

- Fallen trees are SH25 at the Whangamata Golf Course.
- Due to small slips, surface flooding, fallen vegetation, and debris on the road, extreme caution is advised on the rest of this section of SH25.

## 16. SH25A - FULLY CLOSED

- Existing slip

## 17. SH2 Mangatarata to Paeroa – OPEN but essential travel only

## 18. SH2 Paeroa to Waihi including Karangahake Gorge: CLOSED

- The SH2 Karangahake Gorge is fully closed due to numerous small slips, fallen trees, surface flooding and debris on the road. It will not reopen until areas of concern have been inspected, and initial clean-up operations have been completed.

## 19. SH2 Waihi to Athenree Gorge: CLOSED

- A fallen tree is blocking SH2 at the Ford Road intersection south of Waihi.

20. SH26 Tatuani to Te Aroha: OPEN but essential travel only
21. SH26 Te Aroha to Paeroa-Tahuna Road: OPEN but essential travel only
  - A significant amount of water and debris across the road north of Te Aroha.
  - Due to surface flooding, fallen vegetation and hazards on the road, extreme caution is advised on the rest of this section of SH26.
22. SH26 Paeroa-Tahuna Road to Paeroa: CLOSED
  - Closed for operation of flood protection scheme in Paeroa.
23. SH26 Paeroa to Kopu: OPEN but essential travel only
  - Due to surface flooding, fallen vegetation and debris on the road, extreme caution is advised on this section of SH26.
24. SH27 Mangatarata to Te Poi: OPEN but essential travel only
  - Due to a large number of fallen trees blocking lanes, surface flooding, and debris on the road, extreme caution is advised on the rest of this section of SH27.
25. SH26 Morrinsville to Tatuani: CLOSED
  - Local road detour available
  - Fallen trees are blocking SH26 at the Murray Oaks reserve immediately east of Morrinsville.
26. SH29 Kaimai Ranges CLOSED
  - Closed on Bay of Plenty side of Ranges due to fallen trees

#### **Update on existing slip at closure on SH25A**

27. Waka Kotahi recognises the impact the closure of SH25A is having on people. We are taking the situation very seriously and working to address the issues.
28. The site is still active, with road material, earth, and debris continuing to fall into the gully.
29. Waka Kotahi is working through solutions for the long-term fix. As the weather allows, the teams continue geotechnical assessments to determine the best way of rebuilding the road.
30. The site is complicated due to the geography and amount of road surface and earth lost in the collapse.
31. This will be a significant piece of work, and all solutions have relatively long construction periods. The ability to provide a temporary road during this period is unlikely but we continue to assess options.
32. While a solution is being investigated for SH25A, a plan is being developed for work on the rest of the network, it includes:

- Assessing how traffic and truck volumes will change around the Peninsula.
- Prioritising the clearing of drains and culverts in readiness for the next weather event.
- Destination signage changes to help visitors find the best way to their destination.
- Assessment of safety and capacity of one-lane bridges and critical intersections.
- Prioritised vegetation clearance to maintain a clear space for heavy vehicles.
- Careful planning of the timing and type of maintenance work such as chip sealing and resurfacing to minimise impacts on road users and adjacent landowners and communities.
- Monitoring travel times around the Peninsula to ensure that any causes of significant delay are identified and quickly acted on.

33. Our priority is safety, the safety of our people, and getting highways open as quickly as possible.

#### **Current state of Coromandel local roads**

##### **34. Latest closures**

- Sailors Grave Road is CLOSED due to a large slip
- Pumpkin Hill Road is CLOSED Due to a slip
- Victoria Street, Thames is CLOSED due to flooding and a large slip.

##### **35. Coromandel**

- Colville Rd is CLOSED in several places due to overslips
- Coromandel to Oamaru Bay is CLOSED
- Oamaru Bay to Amodeo Bay is CLOSED
- Amodeo Bay to Colville is CLOSED
- Colville to Port Jackson Road is CLOSED
- Kennedy Bay Road is CLOSED 4.7km from the start of the road.
- Te Kouma Road is CLOSED due to a large tree/slip blocking the road
- Waikawau Beach Road is CLOSED due to flooding
- Port Jackson Road is CLOSED due to multiple slips and dropouts
- Port Charles Road is CLOSED due to an overslip 10.7km from the start of the road

- Puriri Road is CLOSED due to a tree and slip.

#### 36. Mercury Bay

- Hot Water Beach Road is CLOSED Between SH25 and Parangi Road due to flooding
- Purangi Road is CLOSED Between Hahei Road and Cook Beach due to trees down
- The 309 Road is CLOSED roughly 2.5km and 13km from the Coromandel End. Two crews working from both ends to get this opened as soon as possible. No ETA on opening at this stage
- Matarangi Road is CLOSED due to a slip.

#### 37. Tairua Pauanui

- Hikua Settlement Road is CLOSED due to flooding
- Puketui Valley Road is CLOSED due to a slip.

#### 38. Whangamata

- Wentworth Valley Rd is CLOSED due to flooding.

#### 39. Thames

- Maramarahi Rd is CLOSED due to flooding
- Tapu - Coroglen Road is CLOSED and impassable for the foreseeable future. Location is 10km from Tapu. Additional slips have also come down blocking the road
- Kauaeranga Valley Road is CLOSED due to flooding
- Davey Street, Thames is OPEN.

#### 40. Other

- Blackjack Road is closed to all traffic except residential access
- Koputauaki Bridge, Colville Road – Traffic Management will be on standby on site as precaution for a dam breach event upriver of the bridge.
- OPEN TO ONE LANE
  - Tuatewa Road - Multiple Slips
  - Neavesville Rd – 1 lane section at the 4km mark.

### **Facts and Figures – Coromandel State Highways**

41. Coromandel Peninsula estimated population: 27,600.
42. 2022/23 Summer Renewal Programme: for the 281.2km listed below (approximately. 562.4 lane kilometres of road):

- Chipseal – 53.9 lane km
- Asphalt - 7.8 lane km
- Rehabilitation – 2.6 lane km.

43. The majority of the 2022/23 Summer Renewal Programme is complete, especially chipseal. Some asphalt sites are to be completed late February/early March 2023. The 2023/24 Summer Renewal Programme looks to be a similar size programme.

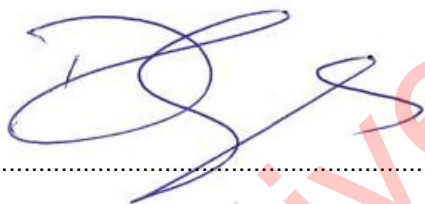
44. Number of one-way bridges - 12

45. Length of state highways: Total: 281.2km

- SH25 – 231km (from SH2/ SH25 intersection) – about 208km from Kōpū around to Waihi
- SH25A – 28.2km
- SH26 Paeroa to Kōpū – approx. 25km
- SH2 Paeroa to Waihi – approx. 20km

**It is recommended that you:**

1. **Note** the contents of this briefing



**David Speirs**

Director Regional Relationships (Waikato/Bay of Plenty)

**Hon Michael Wood, Minister of Transport**

Date: 2023