

**From:** [Lucie Timmers](#)  
**To:** s 9(2)(a); s 9(2)(a) (AT)  
**Cc:** s 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Auckland Harbour Bridge Incident  
**Date:** Friday, 18 September 2020 6:10:28 PM  
**Attachments:** [AHB Bridge Strike - Key messages - 18.09.20 - 4.30pm.docx](#)  
[image002.jpg](#)  
[image003.jpg](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)  
[image005.jpg](#)  
[image006.jpg](#)

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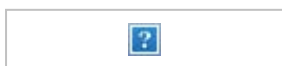
Hi team,

Here's an approved set of key messages to use in our various comms channels. These will be updated and distributed before midday each day.

Many thanks,

Lucie

**Lucie Timmers / Principal Advisor**  
Te Waka Kotuia Engagement and Partnerships  
s 9(2)(a)  
E [lucie.timmers@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:lucie.timmers@nzta.govt.nz) / w [nzta.govt.nz](http://nzta.govt.nz)



---

**From:** s 9(2)(a) @jtoc.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Friday, 18 September 2020 4:50 PM  
**To:** Lucie Timmers <Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz>; s 9(2)(a) @jtoc.govt.nz>; s 9(2)(a) @at.govt.nz>  
**Cc:** s 9(2)(a) @jtoc.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Auckland Harbour Bridge Incident

Hi Lucie,

I'm really sorry that the last email didn't come through.

s 9(2)(a) is our Real Time Operations Travel Information Team Leader and is a key contact for you (email above); cell s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a) is the key contact at Auckland Transport (email above); cell TBC.

If you need to call us 24/7 please contact Duty Team Leader on s 9(2)(a).

s 9(2)(a) – Lucie's number is s 9(2)(a)

Thanks so much  
s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a)  
Group Manager  
Auckland Transport Operation Centre (ATOC)

DDI s 9(2)(a)  
E s 9(2)(a) [@jtoc.govt.nz](mailto:s 9(2)(a)@jtoc.govt.nz)



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## **Auckland Harbour Bridge Recovery - Key Messages – 21.09.20**

- There's been heavy congestion on the Auckland motorway network and local roads this morning as customers start the working week with the Auckland Harbour Bridge operating at 50% capacity. Today's congestion has been as we expected and shows the importance of people changing their usual travel patterns.
- Four lanes of the bridge's centre span are closed after two trucks were blown over by 127 kph wind gusts on Friday morning, causing significant damage to the bridge superstructure.
- Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency is still urging people to consider working from home if possible. For those who must travel we encourage you to leave your cars at home and use public transport. We also advise motorists to use the Western Ring Route, via SH20, SH16 and SH18 as an alternative to SH1 and the bridge.
- While the Auckland Harbour Bridge only has two lanes open in each direction, this is also having a knock-on effect across the network. There were long queues north of the Auckland Harbour Bridge, with SH1 southbound at its worst queueing back to Constellation Drive. SH1 northbound at its worst was queued back to the Victoria Park Tunnel.
- On the Western Ring Route, SH18 was congested along its length with city-bound queues on SH16 back to Westgate.
- Local roads were also congested, with delays of up to an hour.
- By 10:30AM, congestion had eased across the network except for southbound SH1 traffic on the North Shore queueing from Northcote Road to the harbour bridge. At 10:30 it was about five minutes quicker to travel to the city centre via the Western Ring Route.

### **Bus priority lane to North Shore on SH1 before the bridge**

- Waka Kotahi and Auckland Transport are implementing a bus priority system that will be put in place before evening peak traffic on State Highway 1 northbound to the Auckland Harbour Bridge. The priority lane is to reduce congestion for buses to the North Shore and provide more reliable journeys for customers.
- This bus priority system will allow buses to access the SH1 northbound on-ramp at Fanshawe Street via a new priority lane, allowing buses to bypass the queuing traffic. This priority lane onto the motorway will then merge with the general state highway traffic.
- Drivers need to take extra care and look out for merging buses on their right-hand side.

- To improve safety for both bus and motorway traffic at this new bus merge point, the Curran Street northbound on-ramp onto SH1 is closed to all traffic. Motorists who would usually use the Curran Street onramp are advised to follow the sign-posted detour route to the Fanshawe Street northbound on-ramp.
- The bus priority lane and Curran Street on-ramp closure will be in place until the Auckland Harbour Bridge is fully operational again, potentially a number of weeks away.
- The bus priority lane is one of many initiatives Waka Kotahi and Auckland Transport are implementing to ensure public transport remains a reliable and convenient option during this time.
- Auckland Transport (AT) is confident in its available passenger capacity on buses for the coming week ahead as buses are only 50% full compared to normal pre-COVID passenger levels. AT is also planning to increase bus frequency outside of peak hours so that more customers can take advantage of the 30% off-peak fare discount. Ferries are operating as usual and have spare seating capacity.
- The joint operations centre managed by Waka Kotahi and Auckland Transport is working 24/7 monitoring the network and managing traffic lights and other systems to optimise traffic flows.

### **Update on the Auckland Harbour Bridge recovery**

- Waka Kotahi is committed to doing everything possible to re-open the centre lanes of the Harbour Bridge as quickly as possible to allow extra vehicles across the bridge.
- Waka Kotahi bridge engineers are making great progress on both a temporary and permanent solution to fix the bridge damage, however this is an incredibly complex process.
- Waka Kotahi is now confident it has a temporary solution to repair the damaged strut which will allow one extra lane in each direction to be opened on the centre span of the bridge.
- Current plans indicate work on the bridge to install the temporary solution will begin overnight on Tuesday 22 September.
- This is a complex undertaking and has never been done before so the bridge team must do extensive testing on the bridge before opening it up to live traffic.
- This includes mathematical peer review by independent experts which we are doing in parallel to the construction of the temporary piece.
- Once the temporary fix is in place there will be real life testing with heavy vehicles to ensure it performs to the design specifications and requirements.
- Only then will a final decision be made about whether the temporary fix is suitable to allow the re-opening of additional lanes.

- Once that decision has been made it is expected that two extra lanes on the centre-span of the bridge (one northbound and one southbound) could be open to traffic later this week.
- To enable this to happen, the southbound lanes of the Auckland Harbour Bridge into the city centre will be closed overnight on from Tuesday 22 September.
- In parallel, the team is working on a permanent repair of the damage to re-open all lanes on the Harbour Bridge, however this work will take some time and is weeks away from installation.
- Repair work may not be visible on the bridge however there are teams working to design and peer review the replacement parts for both the temporary and permanent solution, source the materials, manufacture the part and plan for installing it.
- The bulk of this time is in the design, calculation and peer review of the new strut in relation to how it will impact on the performance of the whole bridge. This includes careful calculations on how to re-balance its load-bearing function.
- The new modelling is necessary because the materials of the new structure will not exactly match those that were installed 60 years ago.
- While the damaged component of the structure is important, there is no risk to the structural integrity or overall safety of the Harbour Bridge.
- The north and southbound clip-on lanes continue to be safe to use as they have their own supporting structure.

**From:** [Lucie Timmers](#)  
**To:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) (AT)  
**Subject:** RE: Teams Call  
**Date:** Friday, 18 September 2020 6:20:48 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.jpg](#)

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Yes, no problem. Can you invite Darryl too?

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**From:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) <[s 9\(2\)\(a\)@jtoc.govt.nz](mailto:s 9(2)(a)@jtoc.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Friday, 18 September 2020 5:20 PM  
**To:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) (AT) <[s 9\(2\)\(a\)@at.govt.nz](mailto:s 9(2)(a)@at.govt.nz)>; Lucie Timmers <[Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** Teams Call

Are you guys available for a 5-10min teams call at 5.30pm tonight?

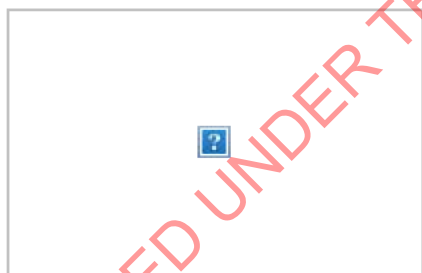
Lucie – happy if you want to include Darryl. Just want to discuss media release that has gone out and a small issue that we have raised with Neil W, Andrew Allen and Wayne Oldfield.

Cheers

[s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)

[s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)  
Group Manager  
Auckland Transport Operation Centre (ATOC)

DDI [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)  
[jtoc.govt.nz](#)



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**From:** s 9(2)(a) (AT)  
**To:** s 9(2); Lucie Timmers; Darryl Walker  
**Subject:** RE: Truck crashes into Auckland Harbour Bridge, closing four lanes  
**Date:** Saturday, 19 September 2020 11:15:44 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)  
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[image010.png](#)  
[image011.png](#)  
[image012.png](#)  
[image013.png](#)

Hi s 9(2)

Definitely agree about next week details and we're all aligned there. After explaining the situation, her and s 9(2)(a) were only referencing a follow-up release tonight so close after the other one when it wasn't inaccurate in Stacey's view. As we sort out next steps, we definitely agree customers will need to know about next week peak and centre lanes closures, and they're supportive of that.

Cheers,  
s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a) | **Senior Media Advisor**  
Auckland Transport  
20 Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland 1010  
**M** s 9(2)(a)  
s 9(2)(a) [@at.govt.nz](mailto:s 9(2)(a)@at.govt.nz) | [www.at.govt.nz](http://www.at.govt.nz)



cid:image007.png@01D60104.2DCF0FD0

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**From:** s 9(2)(a) <s 9(2)(a)@jtoc.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Friday, 18 September 2020 8:14 p.m.  
**To:** s 9(2)(a) (AT) <s 9(2)(a)@at.govt.nz>; Lucie.Timmers <Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz>; Darryl Walker <Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Truck crashes into Auckland Harbour Bridge, closing four lanes

Thanks s 9(2)

My concern is the peak next week. With this closure likely to be in place for most of next week, we need to manage expectations for our PT journeys across the bridge during the peak periods. We need to ensure customers know their journeys will be impacted given the centre lanes will reduce traffic next week.

Can I please ask that you ensure s 9(2) is aware of this and that the advice from s 9(2)(a) is that we do release something tonight?

Cheers

s  
9(2)

---

**From:** s 9(2)(a) (AT) <s 9(2)(a)@at.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Friday, 18 September 2020 6:53 PM  
**To:** s 9(2)(a)@jtoc.govt.nz; Lucie Timmers <Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz>; Darryl Walker <Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Truck crashes into Auckland Harbour Bridge, closing four lanes

Hi everyone,

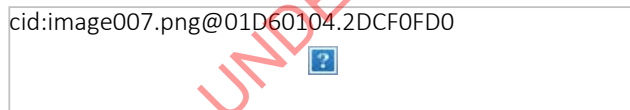
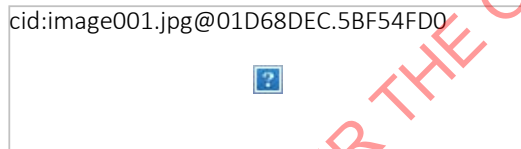
Was great meeting you all this evening via phone. Apologies again for the rough audio on my end.

We had a chat with s 9(2)(a) on our end and after she had a look at the media release that was already sent out (thanks again for sharing that), she said that it wasn't incorrect and would prefer to just keep it at that for tonight. There were some delays with that bus, maybe 15 or 20 minutes on average, but since it was to be expected and now we're past peak we don't see it being much more of an issue. Sending out another release that is similar in nature would likely just add more confusion and/or a disconnect in that we aren't aligned. So the suggestion is to just let the existing media release stand for tonight and if any media have follow-ups we can reiterate the messaging.

Cheers,

s  
9(2)

s 9(2)(a) **Senior Media Advisor**  
Auckland Transport  
20 Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland 1010  
**M** s 9(2)(a)  
s 9(2)(a)@at.govt.nz | www.at.govt.nz



---

**From:** s 9(2)(a)@jtoc.govt.nz  
**Sent:** Friday, 18 September 2020 6:00 p.m.  
**To:** s 9(2)(a) (AT) s 9(2)(a)@at.govt.nz; Lucie.Timmers <Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz>; Darryl Walker <Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** FW: Truck crashes into Auckland Harbour Bridge, closing four lanes

Hi Team,

Thank you so much for joining me at such short notice, and for agreeing to join the future meetings. Keep an eye out on your email invites for the meetings.

Attached is the media release we discussed.

Actions:

- s 9(2) will draft a media release for tonight to update customers on the Northern Busway impact – the



physical busway is unaffected as outlined by Waka Kotahi however the journey times have been impacted due to the reduction in lanes across the Harbour Bridge. If we could also mention that double decker bus services have been reinstated across the Auckland Harbour Bridge

- Going forward you guys will align messaging between AT and Waka Kotahi
- Going forward s 9(2) will proof read media messages

Thanks so much guys

Cheers

s 9(2)

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**From:** Neil Walker HNO <[Neil.Walker.hno@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Neil.Walker.hno@nzta.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Friday, 18 September 2020 5:14 PM

**To:** s 9(2)(a) <[s9\(2\)\(a\)@jtoc.govt.nz](mailto:s9(2)(a)@jtoc.govt.nz)>; Wayne Oldfield <[Wayne.Oldfield@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Wayne.Oldfield@nzta.govt.nz)>; s 9(2)(a) <[s9\(2\)\(a\)@at.govt.nz](mailto:s9(2)(a)@at.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Fw: Truck crashes into Auckland Harbour Bridge, closing four lanes

For discussion with Darryl and Lucie

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**From:** Darryl Walker <[Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Friday, 18 September 2020 4:49 PM

**To:** Neil Walker HNO <[Neil.Walker.hno@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Neil.Walker.hno@nzta.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** FW: Truck crashes into Auckland Harbour Bridge, closing four lanes

## MEDIA RELEASE

18 September 2020



### Truck crashes into Auckland Harbour Bridge, closing four lanes

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency advises Auckland motorists that there will be significant reduction in the capacity of the Auckland Harbour Bridge for several days and potentially up to several weeks after damage to the bridge superstructure this morning.

A southbound truck carrying a shipping container was blown sideways by sudden wind gusts up to 127 kph just after 11AM and hit the bridge superstructure. The truck righted itself and carried on.

"The truck striking the bridge has damaged the superstructure, with a steel upright sheared off," says Waka Kotahi Senior Journey Manager, Neil Walker.

"Our first assessment of the structural damage is that a permanent fix will be a long term process and the four lanes across the centre span of the bridge will remain closed to traffic for at least several days and potentially weeks."

"Congestion on the road network is inevitable as we assess the damage and the necessary repairs. Waka Kotahi recommends customers consider working from home and if they do need to travel into and out of the CBD they consider alternative travel options, such as taking public transport, including the Northern Busway which is not affected," says Neil Walker.

If you do need to travel motorists are urged to use the Western Ring Route (SH20, SH16

and SH18) around the harbour. The Western Ring Route has been carefully planned and constructed to be used as an alternative to the Harbour Bridge, especially for trucks and heavy vehicles.

"We are looking at whether we can make a temporary repair, but we won't know if it's possible until we investigate further over the weekend. While part of the bridge structure has been damaged, we have no concerns about its overall integrity and safety."

On average, more than 170,000 vehicles cross the Auckland Harbour Bridge on weekdays, with the configuration of the eight lanes changed four times a day to adjust to peak time traffic flows. With the four centre span lanes closed and only the clips on open, there will be just two lanes in each direction.

The north and southbound clip on lanes are safe to use as they have their own supporting structure. The clip ons remain open today, but traffic is backed up and long delays are expected.

"Waka Kotahi understands this will cause inconvenience and disruption of and thanks motorists for their patience. We're working to ensure the bridge can be back in operation as quickly

**Plan ahead for a safe, enjoyable journey. Keep up to date with:**

- COVID-19 services update: [nzta.govt.nz/COVID19](https://nzta.govt.nz/COVID19)
- Traffic updates: [journeys.nzta.govt.nz/traffic](https://journeys.nzta.govt.nz/traffic)
- Facebook Auckland: [facebook.com/nztaakl](https://facebook.com/nztaakl)
- Facebook Northland: [facebook.com/nztanorthland](https://facebook.com/nztanorthland)
- Twitter: [twitter.com/WakaKotahiAkNth](https://twitter.com/WakaKotahiAkNth)
- Journey planner: [journeys.nzta.govt.nz](https://journeys.nzta.govt.nz)
- Phone: 0800 4 HIGHWAYS (0800 44 44 49)

**For more information please contact:**

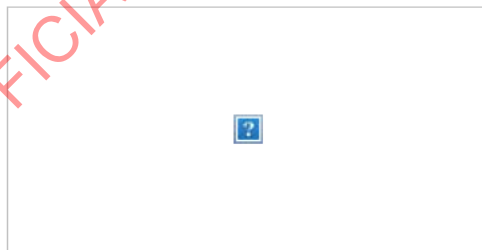
Darryl Walker  
Media Manager  
Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency

**T:** 09 969 9824

**M:** 021 374 334

**E:** [Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz)

**W:** [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz)

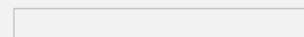


Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency works to create transport solutions for all New Zealanders – from helping new drivers earn their licences, to leading safety campaigns to investing in public transport, state highways and local roads.

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**From:** s 9(2)(a) (AT)  
**To:** [Lucie Timmers](#)  
**Cc:** [Darryl Walker](#)  
**Subject:** AT statement to the Herald  
**Date:** Saturday, 19 September 2020 2:33:31 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Hi Lucie,

Thanks for the call. As mentioned, here is what we just sent to the Herald about PT capacity. It was approved s 9(2)(a).

*Auckland Transport is confident in its available passenger capacity for next week as we have been sitting at around 50% of normal pre-COVID levels. We will not be adding more vehicles as we don't have any additional buses due to our ongoing bus rail replacement programme.*

*Our team looked into how many additional passengers we could carry with existing capacity in our routes that go across Harbour Bridge:*

- For next Monday morning 7:00 to 08:59:
  - Inbound the Northern Busway has an excess of 7000 seats with current service
  - Inbound Onewa Rd has an excess of 2500 seats with current service
- For Monday outbound 16:00 to 17:59:
  - Northern Busway has an excess of 6500 seats with normal service
  - Onewa Rd has an excess of 3000 seats with normal service

*Note the above figures are for seats only, and about 10% more could be added with standing room. We are also planning to increase frequency outside of peak hours so that more customers can take advantage of our 30% off-peak fare discount. Ferries are operating as usual and have spare seating capacity.*

*We ask customers to travel off-peak if they can, plus plan ahead and allow extra time for their journey as there might be delays from joining the queues to cross the bridge. Also AT reminds customers to wear a face covering.*

Cheers,

s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a) | **Senior Media Advisor**

Auckland Transport

20 Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland 1010

M s 9(2)(a)

[at.govt.nz](#) | [www.at.govt.nz](#)

**From:** [Lucie Timmers](#)  
**To:** s 9(2)(a) (AT)"  
**Cc:** s 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Auckland Harbour Bridge Incident - today's key messages  
**Date:** Saturday, 19 September 2020 3:30:43 PM  
**Attachments:** [AHB Bridge Strike - Key messages - 19.09.20 - 1.24pm.docx](#)  
[image001.jpg](#)  
[image007.jpg](#)  
[image008.jpg](#)  
[image009.jpg](#)  
[image010.jpg](#)

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Hi all,

Here are this afternoon's set of approved key messages to push out via our various channels.

Many thanks,

Lucie

**Lucie Timmers / Principal Advisor**  
**Te Waka Kotuia Engagement and Partnerships**  
M s 9(2)(a)  
E [lucie.timmers@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:lucie.timmers@nzta.govt.nz) / w [nzta.govt.nz](http://nzta.govt.nz)



---

**From:** s 9(2)(a) <[s 9\(2\)\(a\)@jtoc.govt.nz](mailto:s 9(2)(a)@jtoc.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Friday, 18 September 2020 4:50 PM  
**To:** Lucie Timmers <[Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz)>; s 9(2)(a) <[s 9\(2\)\(a\)@jtoc.govt.nz](mailto:s 9(2)(a)@jtoc.govt.nz)>; s 9(2)(a) <[s 9\(2\)\(a\)@at.govt.nz](mailto:s 9(2)(a)@at.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** s 9(2)(a) <[s 9\(2\)\(a\)@jtoc.govt.nz](mailto:s 9(2)(a)@jtoc.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** Auckland Harbour Bridge Incident

Hi Lucie,

I'm really sorry that the last email didn't come through.

s 9(2)(a) is our Real Time Operations Travel Information Team Leader and is a key contact for you (email above); cell s 9(2)(a).

s 9(2)(a) is the key contact at Auckland Transport (email above); cell TBC.

If you need to call us 24/7 please contact Duty Team Leader on s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a) – Lucie's number is s 9(2)(a)

Thanks so much

s  
9(2)  
(a)

Group Manager  
Auckland Transport Operation Centre (ATOC)

DDI s 9(2)(a)



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## Bus priority bull run - 21.09.20 – as of 9:33am

### Key messages:

- Recent damage to the Auckland Harbour Bridge resulting in the closure of four traffic lanes on the bridge has caused significant congestion and delays on the state highway and local road network.
- We expect more customers to be relying on public transport, especially the Northern Express bus services between the city centre and North Shore.
- As a result, to provide better reliability and to reduce congestion for buses on the Northern Motorway (SH1), a bus priority system will be implemented before today's evening peak travel (Monday 21 September).
- This bus priority system will allow buses to access the SH1 northbound on-ramp at Fanshawe Street via a new priority lane, allowing buses to bypass the queuing traffic.
- This priority lane onto the motorway will then merge with the general state highway traffic on SH1 so drivers need to take extra care and look out for buses merging on their right-hand side, just before the Auckland Harbour Bridge approach.
- To improve safety for both bus and motorway traffic at this new bus merge point, the Curran Street northbound on-ramp onto SH1 is currently closed to all traffic.
- The bus priority lane and Curran Street on-ramp closure will be in place until further notice.
- Customers who usually use the Curran Street northbound on-ramp should use the Fanshawe Street on-ramp as an alternative.
- Waka Kotahi understands the inconvenience the on-ramp closure may cause as we try to manage the additional demand for bus services and recommends allowing extra time for your journey.
- This is one of many initiatives Waka Kotahi and Auckland Transport are implementing to ensure public transport remains a reliable option during this time, including reduced off-peak fares for public transport users.

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**From:** [Darryl Walker](#)  
**To:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) (AT)  
**Subject:** RE: Engineers assess damage to Auckland Harbour Bridge after truck strike  
**Date:** Saturday, 19 September 2020 7:16:14 PM  
**Attachments:** [image012.jpg](#)  
[image013.jpg](#)  
[image014.png](#)  
[image018.png](#)  
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[image026.png](#)  
[image027.png](#)  
[image028.png](#)  
[image029.png](#)  
[image030.png](#)  
[image031.png](#)

Sure

---

**From:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) (AT) <[s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)@at.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Saturday, 19 September 2020 5:24 PM  
**To:** Darryl Walker <[Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** FW: Engineers assess damage to Auckland Harbour Bridge after truck strike

Afternoon Darryl, could you please add me to this distribution list. I am working with Josh on this.

[s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)

[s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) | Group Manager Communications  
20 Viaduct Harbour  
Auckland 1010  
M [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)  
[at.govt.nz](mailto:at.govt.nz) | [twitter@akltransport](https://twitter.com/akltransport)

final Email-Signature1



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**From:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) (AT)  
**Sent:** Saturday, 19 September 2020 4:56 p.m.  
**To:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) @at.govt.nz  
**Subject:** FW: Engineers assess damage to Auckland Harbour Bridge after truck strike

Not sure if you're on this distribution list. But just in case here you go.

[s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) | Senior Media Advisor  
Auckland Transport  
20 Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland 1010  
M [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)  
[s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) @at.govt.nz | [www.at.govt.nz](http://www.at.govt.nz)



cid:image007.png@01D60104.2DCF0FD0



**From:** Darryl Walker <[Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Saturday, 19 September 2020 4:49 p.m.

**To:** Darryl Walker <[Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Engineers assess damage to Auckland Harbour Bridge after truck strike



## MEDIA RELEASE

19 September 2020



### Engineers assess damage to Auckland Harbour Bridge after truck strike

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency is urging motorists to adjust their travel plans and usual patterns to avoid significant disruption caused by the closure of four lanes on the Auckland Harbour Bridge.

Congestion remains heavy on both the Auckland Harbour Bridge, surrounding state highways and local roads following yesterday's incident where two trucks were blown over causing significant damage to the bridge.

Waka Kotahi is focussed on doing everything possible to re-open the centre lanes of the Harbour Bridge as quickly as possible however they will potentially remain closed for a number of weeks.

Bridge engineers are working on options for a temporary and more permanent solution to the damage that has been caused. This work is ongoing and will take time.

"Overnight investigations revealed the impact has damaged a load-bearing upright strut of the bridge overarch" says Waka Kotahi Senior Journey Manager Neil Walker.

"The upright strut is fixed to the bridge top and bottom with a series of bolts. These bolts have sheared off and left the strut detached at the bottom. The strut is bent and twisted at the point it was hit."

The damaged strut is important to the structure of the bridge as it helps support its weight. Bridge engineers are assessing how to repair or replace the strut, while also checking if other struts were damaged, given they've had additional load transferred to them. The sheared end of the damaged strut has been temporarily bolted back on to the bridge.

Repair work may not be visible on the bridge deck and will involve manufacturing the bridge parts off-site.

While the damaged component of the structure is important, there is no risk to the structural integrity or overall safety of the Harbour Bridge.

All four centre lanes remain closed and customers are urged to avoid unnecessary travel and use the Western Ring Route via SH16, SH18 and SH20 as an alternative to the Harbour Bridge. While the Western Ring Route was carefully planned and constructed to be used as an alternative to the Harbour Bridge, especially for trucks and heavy vehicles, it will now also experience congestion and delays with the additional traffic volumes that would have been on the Harbour Bridge.

That means people who do have to travel should allow plenty of time for their journeys on both routes. Waka Kotahi recommends customers consider working from home where possible from Monday. If they do need to travel into and out of the CBD, they consider

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alternative travel options, such as taking public transport.

The Northern Busway will be operating and buses are safe to use the clip on lanes, however buses will be delayed as they join the queues to cross the bridge, so passengers should plan ahead and allow extra time for their journey.

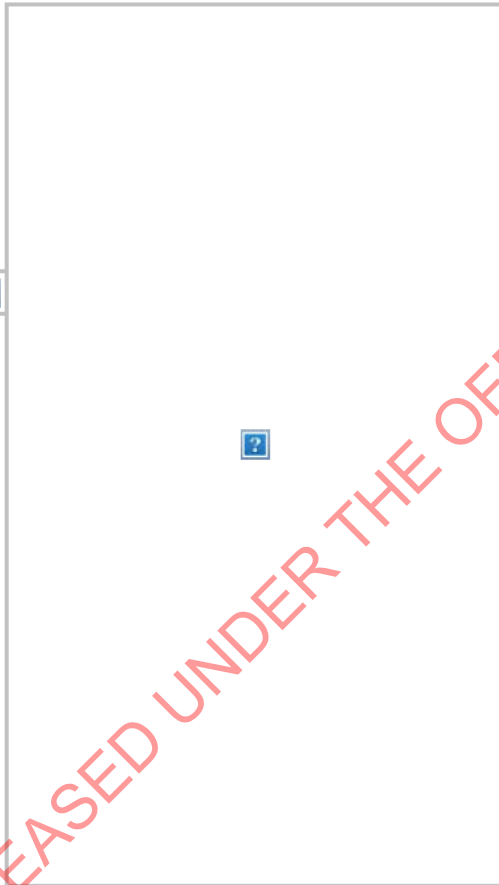
Yesterday, a truck carrying a shipping container was blown sideways by sudden wind gusts up to 127 kph and hit the bridge superstructure. The truck righted itself and carried on. At about the same time, a northbound truck was blown by wind gusts across two lanes and toppled over the moveable lane barrier and became stuck.

The north and southbound clip-on lanes remain open and are safe to use as they have their own supporting structure, however traffic is still backed up and long delays are expected throughout the weekend and into next week.

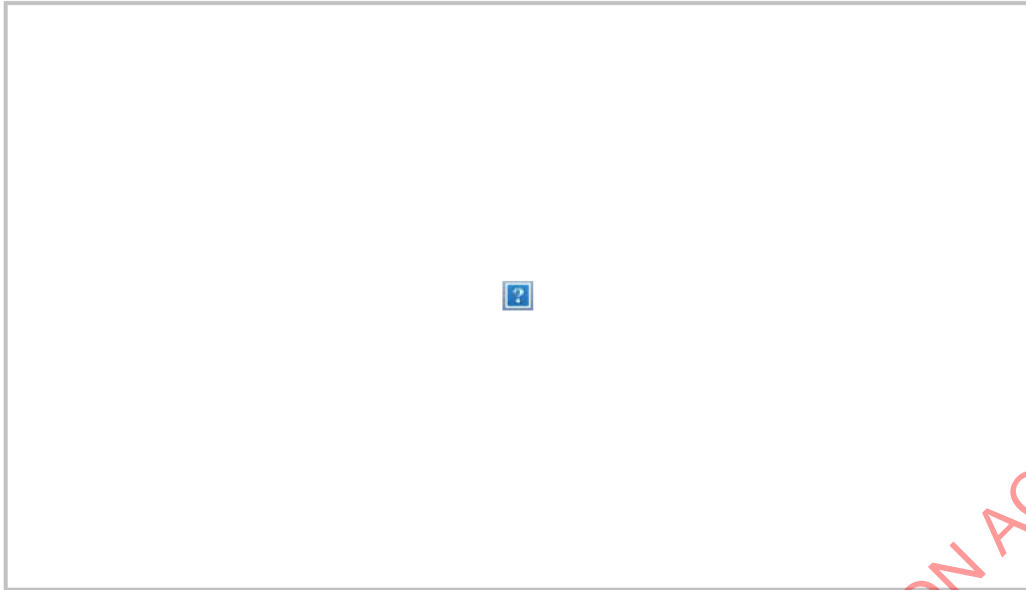
"We understand the economic significance of the Auckland Harbour Bridge to help support the movement of people and freight within the region and throughout the rest of New Zealand".

On average, more than 170,000 vehicles cross the Auckland Harbour Bridge on weekdays, with the configuration of the eight lanes changed four times a day to adjust to peak time traffic flows.

Waka Kotahi understands the inconvenience and disruption the closure of lanes is having on motorists and thanks them for their ongoing patience. We're working to ensure the bridge can be back in operation as quickly as possible.



**Caption: The bridge strut bent out of shape after being hit by a truck on the Auckland Harbour Bridge**



**Caption: The bracket where the bridge truss has been sheared away, breaking the bolts holding it in place**

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- Traffic updates: [journeys.nzta.govt.nz/traffic](https://journeys.nzta.govt.nz/traffic)
- Facebook Auckland: [facebook.com/nztaakl](https://facebook.com/nztaakl)
- Facebook Northland: [facebook.com/nztanorthland](https://facebook.com/nztanorthland)
- Twitter: [twitter.com/WakaKotahiAkNth](https://twitter.com/WakaKotahiAkNth)
- Journey planner: [journeys.nzta.govt.nz](https://journeys.nzta.govt.nz)
- Phone: 0800 4 HIGHWAYS (0800 44 44 49)

**For more information please contact:**

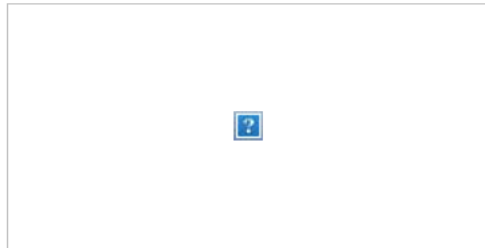
Darryl Walker  
Media Manager  
Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency

**T:** 09 969 9824

**M:** 021 374 334

**E:** [Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Darryl.Walker@nzta.govt.nz)

**W:** [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz)

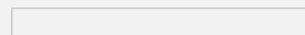


Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency works to create transport solutions for all New Zealanders – from helping new drivers earn their licences, to leading safety campaigns to investing in public transport, state highways and local roads.

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**From:** s 9(2)(a) (AT)  
**To:** Lucie Timmers; Darryl Walker  
**Subject:** Tomorrow peak and media release  
**Date:** Sunday, 20 September 2020 12:32:44 PM  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg  
image002.png

---

Hi both,

Hope you're doing well today.

A couple of things...

Firstly, AT's ELT has a board meeting at 1pm and ahead of that was wondering if they could report that NZTA was planning on fronting the inbounds tomorrow about traffic in the city during peak times? Just how things are looking, delays, etc. I figured you will be, but they just wanted me to double check.

Secondly, we were already getting a few requests for media interviews following the bridge tour that s 9(2)(a) Shane have decided to do our own standup after all to get them done in one shot. The plan now is to send out our media release early afternoon (maybe around 1pm or 1:30pm) and then let media know about availability at 3:30pm on Tamaki Drive. s 9(2)(a) staff Shane for this one.

I just have a media release going through some early fact checks and approvals, then I'll let you guys have eyes on it after that.

Cheers,

s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a) | **Senior Media Advisor**  
Auckland Transport  
20 Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland 1010  
**M** s 9(2)(a)  
s 9(2)(a) @at.govt.nz | [www.at.govt.nz](http://www.at.govt.nz)



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We all have an important part to play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. [Find the latest information and advice from Auckland Transport](#). For the latest news from the Ministry of Health go to the [Unite Against Covid-19 website](#).

**From:** s 9(2)(a) (AT)  
**To:** s 9(2)(a); Lucie Timmers  
**Cc:** s 9(2)(a) (AT)  
**Subject:** RE: St Marys Bay Buslane  
**Date:** Sunday, 20 September 2020 3:58:08 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.jpg](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)

---

Thanks, s 9(2)(a)

Also, is it possible to get s 9(2)(a) (cc'd) added to the two meeting groups as well going forward (ops briefing and EAT briefing)?

She's going to be helping me going forward with getting the wider comms to the necessary teams at Auckland Transport so we can move quickly as things change.

Many thanks,

s 9(2)

s 9(2)(a) | **Senior Media Advisor**  
Auckland Transport  
20 Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland 1010  
**M** s 9(2)(a)  
@at.govt.nz | [www.at.govt.nz](http://www.at.govt.nz)



cid:image007.png@01D60104.2DCF0FD0



---

**From:** s 9(2)(a) @jtoc.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Sunday, 20 September 2020 2:29 p.m.  
**To:** Lucie Timmers <Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz>; s 9(2)(a) (AT)  
s 9(2)(a) @at.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** St Marys Bay Buslane  
**Importance:** High

Hi Lucie s 9(2)(a)

Hopefully you can make it to the 16:00 to briefing as we will be confirming the St Marys Bay northbound bus priority lane. Just got a couple of things to finalise but we will need support with comms.

Thank you

s 9(2)(a)

Manager - Real Time Operations  
Auckland Transport Operations Centre (ATOC)  
DDI s 9(2)(a)



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**From:** [Lucie Timmers](#)  
**To:** [Darryl Walker](#); [Steve Mutton](#); s 9(2)(a) (AT); [Steve Mutton](#); s 9(2)(a) [Andrea Williamson SDD](#); s 9(2)(a) ; [N11S - National Travel Information Service](#)  
**Cc:** s 9(2)(a) [Sarah Azam](#); s 9(2)(a) [\(Auckland Transport\)](#); s 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** AHB - key messages on bus priority lane and Curran Street on-ramp  
**Date:** Monday, 21 September 2020 11:26:17 AM  
**Attachments:** [Bus priority - comms plan and key messages 21.09.20.docx](#)  
[image009.jpg](#)  
[image010.jpg](#)  
[image011.jpg](#)  
[image012.jpg](#)

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Hi all,

A new bus priority lane onto the motorway at Fanshawe Street is being rolled out today, before the afternoon travel peak. As a result the Curran St on-ramp is currently closed.

Attached are some approved key messages to use when communicating with stakeholders and the media. Could you push these out to your key stakeholder groups and comms channels?

Many thanks,

Lucie

**Lucie Timmers / Principal Advisor**  
Te Waka Kotuia Engagement and Partnerships  
M s 9(2)(a)  
E [lucie.timmers@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:lucie.timmers@nzta.govt.nz) / w [nzta.govt.nz](http://nzta.govt.nz)



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## Auckland Harbour Bridge – Truck Strike

### Key messages – as of 12pm, 19 September

- Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency is urging motorists to adjust their travel plans and usual patterns to avoid significant disruption caused by the closure of four lanes on the Auckland Harbour Bridge.
- Congestion remains heavy on both the Auckland Harbour Bridge, surrounding state highways and local roads following yesterday's incident where two trucks were blown over causing significant damage to the bridge.
- Waka Kotahi is focussed on doing everything possible to re-open the centre lanes of the Harbour Bridge as quickly as possible however they will potentially remain closed for a number of weeks.
- Bridge engineers are working on options for a temporary and more permanent solution to the damage that has been caused, this work is ongoing and will take time.
- Overnight investigations revealed the impact has damaged a load-bearing upright strut of the bridge overarch. The upright strut is fixed to the bridge top and bottom with a series of bolts. These bolts have sheared off and left the strut detached at the bottom. The strut is bent and twisted at the point it was hit.
- The damaged strut is important to the structure of the bridge as it helps support its weight. Bridge engineers are assessing how to repair or replace the strut, while also checking if other struts were damaged, given they've had additional load transferred to them.
- The sheared end of the damaged strut has been temporarily bolted back on to the bridge.
- Repair work may not be visible on the bridge deck and will involve manufacturing the bridge parts off-site.
- While the damaged component of the structure is important, there is no risk to the structural integrity or overall safety of the Harbour Bridge.
- All four centre lanes remain closed and customers are urged to avoid unnecessary travel and use the Western Ring Route via SH16, SH18 and SH20 as an alternative to the Harbour Bridge. While the Western Ring Route was carefully planned and constructed to be used as an alternative to the Harbour Bridge, especially for trucks and heavy vehicles, it will now also experience congestion and delays with the additional traffic volumes that would have been on the Harbour Bridge.
- That means people who do have to travel should allow plenty of time for their journeys on both routes.

- Waka Kotahi recommends customers consider working from home where possible from Monday and if they do need to travel into and out of the CBD, they consider alternative travel options, such as taking public transport.
- The Northern Busway will be operating and buses are safe to use the clip on lanes, however buses will be delayed as they join the queues to cross the bridge, so passengers should plan ahead and allow extra time for their journey.
- Yesterday, a truck carrying a shipping container was blown sideways by sudden wind gusts up to 127 kph and hit the bridge superstructure. The truck righted itself and carried on. At about the same time, a second northbound truck was blown by wind gusts across two lanes and toppled over the moveable lane barrier and became stuck.
- The north and southbound clip-on lanes remain open and are safe to use as they have their own supporting structure, however traffic is still backed up and long delays are expected throughout the weekend and into next week.
- We understand the economic significance of the Auckland Harbour Bridge to help support the movement of people and freight within the region and throughout the rest of New Zealand.
- On average, more than 170,000 vehicles cross the Auckland Harbour Bridge on weekdays, with the configuration of the eight lanes changed four times a day to adjust to peak time traffic flows.
- Waka Kotahi understands the inconvenience and disruption the closure of lanes is having on motorists and thanks them for their ongoing patience. We're working to ensure the bridge can be back in operation as quickly as possible.



**From:** [Steve Mutton](#)  
**To:** [Andrea Williamson SDD](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Auckland Harbour Bridge - Lane Closures May Be Too Extreme // Suggestion  
**Date:** Monday, 21 September 2020 11:27:04 AM

---

As discussed for your action please.

Can you please send Richard a holding statement so he knows we have his email.

Thanks  
Steve

**Steve Mutton** / Director Regional Relationships, Upper North Island  
Engagement & Partnerships  
M + s 9(2)(a)

---

**From:** Shane Ellison (AT) <Shane.Ellison@at.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Monday, 21 September 2020 11:15 AM  
**To:** Steve Mutton <Steve.Mutton@nzta.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** FW: Auckland Harbour Bridge - Lane Closures May Be Too Extreme // Suggestion

Hi Steve

Can I pass this one onto you please?

Thanks, Shane

---

**From:** s 9(2)(a) @gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, 21 September 2020 11:11 a.m.  
**To:** Shane Ellison (AT) <[Shane.Ellison@at.govt.nz](#)>  
**Cc:** [phil.goff@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:phil.goff@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)  
**Subject:** Auckland Harbour Bridge - Lane Closures May Be Too Extreme // Suggestion

Hi Shane

I did some back of envelope calculations comparing the static loads of:

Four lanes loaded with heavy trucks (T):

=====  
^ T T T T ^ (damaged side, ^ denotes support )

Two lanes loaded with cars (C):

=====  
^ C C ^ (damaged side)

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If the lanes and supports are all equally spaced and the mass of a car (C) is 2 tonnes and the mass of a truck (T) is 44 tonnes then the static load of the cars on the damaged side is only 1.36% of the load of the 4 heavy trucks.

Two lanes of car traffic is a whole lot less load than 4 lanes of heavy trucks ( which is where the design limits have to be set otherwise the bridge will fall over ).

The real world is more complex ( eg I have not considered the weight of the bridge itself ) but the incremental static load presented by two lanes of cars will be a very small percentage of the rated load capacity of the bridge.

At a time when everyone will have "liability anxiety" the numbers suggest one should not be too paranoid.

Realistically, if you can't run two lanes of cars on the bridge now then you may not be able to run the heavy trucks, cranes and equipment needed to fix the bridge onto the bridge either in which case Auckland is really in a bind !!

Best Regards

s 9(2)(a)

PS :

The one slightly concerning issue is the multiple bolt failures that occurred. What role did metal fatigue play in their failure under shock load ? Are they designed to fail in such situations ? How would they perform under the much greater loads of earthquake stress ?

On 21/09/2020, at 9:15 AM, Shane Ellison (AT) <[Shane.Ellison@at.govt.nz](mailto:Shane.Ellison@at.govt.nz)> wrote:

Hi s 9(2)(a)

Thanks for your email and your suggestions. The Harbour Bridge is part of the State Highway network managed by Waka Kotahi – the New Zealand Transport Agency who are assessing the damage, the impact on the bridge, and of course safety implications.

I'll pass on your feedback to them.

Regards, Shane

---

**From:** s 9(2)(a) @gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, 20 September 2020 9:22 p.m.  
**To:** Shane Ellison (AT) <Shane.Ellison@at.govt.nz>  
**Cc:** phil.goff@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz  
**Subject:** Auckland Harbour Bridge - Lane Closures May Be Too Extreme // Suggestion

Dear Shane

The damaged beam is bent and has reportedly been partially reattached at its base, albeit one assumes with fewer bolts.

It should be noted that while the beam is no longer tensioned as part of the mesh to which it normally belongs, its absence is unlikely to be critical.

Bridges are built with redundancy.

Since the bridge did not fail at the time of the damage during high wind loads with the load from heavy vehicles and congested traffic, it is highly likely that it would be possible to introduce a light traffic load to the two lanes on the central span of the bridge which are most distant from the damaged beam.

A light traffic load would be defined as small passenger vehicles only ( no buses or trucks ) travelling at modest speeds ( eg 50 km/h ) flowing freely ( not stationary ) with a two car length following distance.

The safety envelope could be expanded by removing the median barrier altogether which removes a significant weight from the bridge structure ( or perhaps relocating it to the extreme edge of the bridge away from the damaged beam ).

**Intuitively:**

The bridge is engineered to allow four heavy trucks of up to 44 tonnes to be stationary in each of the middle lanes adjacent to the damaged beam with traffic of any type stationary around them.

Remove two entire lanes of traffic closest to the damaged beam. This dramatically reduces the static load on the bridge and in particular on the arches on the side of the damage.

Reduce the density of the traffic in the two lanes furthest from the damaged beam by a factor of three ( a two car length gap ).

Eliminate all heavy vehicles from the traffic on those lanes.

It's obvious with such a strategy that the bridge would be operating well within tolerances.

It's likely to be safe even with the damaged beam.

It is suggested that you ask consulting engineers to assess such a scenario and be **realistic** in assessing their guidance rather than seeking to avoid an imagined theoretical worst case risk.

There's a better than even chance authorities have over-reacted by closing all four lanes.

Best Regards

s 9(2)(a)

Auckland

m: s 9(2)(a)

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**From:** [Lucie Timmers](#)  
**To:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) (AT); [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) (AT); [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) NTIS – National Travel Information Service; [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Darryl Walker](#); [Neil Walker HNO](#); [Wayne Oldfield](#); [Andrea Williamson SDD](#); [Sarah Azam](#)  
**Subject:** AHB - Today's key messages  
**Date:** Monday, 21 September 2020 2:46:32 PM  
**Attachments:** [AHB Bridge Strike - Key messages - 21.09.20.docx](#)  
[image009.jpg](#)  
[image010.jpg](#)  
[image011.jpg](#)  
[image012.jpg](#)

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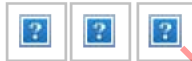
Hi all,

Today's AHB key messages attached - please share with stakeholders and comms channels.

Many thanks,

Lucie

**Lucie Timmers / Principal Advisor**  
Te Waka Kotuia Engagement and Partnerships  
M [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)  
E [lucie.timmers@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:lucie.timmers@nzta.govt.nz) / w [nzta.govt.nz](http://nzta.govt.nz)



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## Auckland Harbour Bridge – Truck Strike

### Key messages – as of 4:30pm, 18 September

- Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency advises that there will be a significant reduction in the capacity of the Auckland Harbour Bridge for several days and potentially up to several weeks after damage to the bridge superstructure this morning.
- A southbound truck carrying a shipping container was blown sideways by sudden wind gusts up to 127 kph just after 11AM and hit the bridge superstructure. The truck righted itself and continued to drive off the structure.
- At about the same time a second northbound truck was blown by wind gusts across two lanes and toppled over the moveable lane barrier and became stuck. The truck has since been righted and the driver was uninjured.
- The truck striking the bridge has damaged the superstructure, with a steel upright sheared off. The centre span lanes of the bridge, including four traffic lanes (two lanes in each direction) are closed.
- Recent assessments of the structural damage indicate that a permanent fix will be a long-term process and the four-lanes across the centre span lanes of the bridge will remain closed to traffic for at least several days and potentially weeks. While the damaged component of the structure is important, there are no concerns for the overall safety of the Harbour Bridge.
- The north and southbound clip-on lanes remain open today and are safe to use as they have their own supporting structure, however traffic is backed up and long delays are expected.
- Customers should use the Western Ring Route via SH16, SH18 and SH20 as an alternative to the Harbour Bridge. The Western Ring Route has been carefully planned and constructed to be used as an alternative to the Harbour Bridge, especially for trucks and heavy vehicles.
- Congestion on the state highways and local roads is inevitable as we assess the damage and the necessary repairs. Waka Kotahi recommends customers consider working from home and if they do need to travel into and out of the CBD, they consider alternative travel options, such as taking public transport, including the Northern Busway which is unaffected.
- We understand the economic significance of the Auckland Harbour Bridge to help support the movement of people and freight within the region and throughout the rest of New Zealand.

- Waka Kotahi is focussed on doing everything possible to re-open the centre lanes of the Harbour Bridge as quickly as possible and will be working continuously until the matter is resolved.
- The health and safety of workers and customers using the bridge is paramount when managing this recovery and we will only re-open the central lanes of the bridge when we are fully confident in its structural integrity.
- On average, more than 170,000 vehicles cross the Auckland Harbour Bridge on weekdays, with the configuration of the eight lanes changed four times a day to adjust to peak time traffic flows.
- Waka Kotahi apologises for the inconvenience and disruption, and thanks motorists for their ongoing patience. We're working to ensure the bridge can be back in operation as quickly as possible.

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**From:** [Lucie Timmers](#)  
**To:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) (AT); [Sarah Azam](#)  
**Cc:** [Darryl Walker](#)  
**Subject:** RE:  
**Date:** Monday, 21 September 2020 7:40:28 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)

---

Yes I think there is scope for joint releases if we can all push through our approvals processes.

And thanks for your offer [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) we'll share the media release tomorrow for you to share amongst your stakeholders and comms channels.

---

**From:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) @at.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Monday, 21 September 2020 6:13 PM  
**To:** Lucie Timmers <[Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz)>; Sarah Azam <[Sarah.Azam@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Sarah.Azam@nzta.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** FW:

Also let me know what we can do to help re the closure on Tuesday night

---

**From:** [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) (AT)  
**Sent:** Monday, 21 September 2020 6:10 p.m.  
**To:** Lucie.Timmers <[Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Lucie.Timmers@nzta.govt.nz)>; 'Sarah Azam' <[Sarah.Azam@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Sarah.Azam@nzta.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:**

Hi both, our senior folk are keen to explore joint releases. I explained that I didn't want to hold up getting the bull run/Curran St one out this morning as our processes take ages. But as the situation stabilises do you think there is scope?

T

[s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) | **Group Manager Communications**  
20 Viaduct Harbour  
Auckland 1010  
M [s 9\(2\)\(a\)](#)  
at.govt.nz | twitter@akltransport

final Email-Signature1



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**From:** [Darryl Walker](#)  
**To:** [DARRYL WALKER; s 9\(2\)\(a\) \(AT\); s 9\(2\)\(a\) \(AT\)](#)  
**Subject:** Temporary fix for Auckland Harbour Bridge to start tomorrow night  
**Date:** Monday, 21 September 2020 3:58:14 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)  
[image007.png](#)  
[image008.png](#)  
[image010.png](#)  
[image011.png](#)  
[image003.jpg](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image013.jpg](#)  
[image015.png](#)

This is about to go out.

Cheers

## MEDIA RELEASE

21 September 2020

### Temporary fix for Auckland Harbour Bridge to start tomorrow night

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency is committed to doing everything possible to re-open the centre lanes of the Auckland Harbour Bridge and is working to start installing a temporary fix to the damaged bridge strut on Tuesday night.

At the same time, traffic volume data shows motorists heeded Waka Kotahi advice to avoid using SH1 and the harbour bridge during morning peak hours today. Vehicle movements were also much higher on the alternate Western Ring Route.

Waka Kotahi General Manager Transport Services Brett Gliddon says bridge engineers are making great progress on both a temporary and permanent solution to fix the bridge damage, even though it is a very complex process.

"Waka Kotahi is now confident it has a temporary solution to repair the damaged strut which will allow one extra lane in each direction to be opened on the centre span of the bridge."

Four lanes on the bridge's centre span are closed after two trucks were blown over by 127 kph wind gusts on Friday morning, causing significant damage to the bridge superstructure. The bridge operated at 50% capacity over the weekend and this morning with long queues on each side.

Current plans indicate work on the bridge to install the temporary solution will begin overnight on Tuesday 22 September.

"This is a complex undertaking and has never been done before so the bridge team must do extensive testing on the bridge before opening it up to live traffic."

"This includes mathematical peer review by independent experts which we are doing in parallel to the construction of the temporary piece."

"Once the temporary fix is in place there will be real life testing with heavy vehicles to ensure it performs to the design specifications and requirements. Only then will a final decision be made about whether the temporary fix is suitable to allow the re-opening of additional lanes."

"Once that decision has been made it is expected that two extra lanes on the centre-span of the bridge (one northbound and one southbound) could be open up to traffic later this week."

To enable this to happen, the southbound lanes of the Auckland Harbour Bridge into the city centre will be closed overnight on Tuesday 22 September.

In parallel, the team is working on a permanent repair of the damage to re-open all lanes on the Harbour Bridge, however this work will take some time and is weeks away from installation.

Repair work may not be visible on the bridge however there are teams working to design and peer review the replacement parts for both the temporary and permanent solution,

source the materials, manufacture the part and plan for installing it, says Brett Gliddon.

"The bulk of this time is in the design, calculation and peer review of the new strut in relation to how it will impact on the performance of the whole bridge. This includes careful calculations on how to re-balance its load-bearing function."

The new modelling is necessary because the materials of the new structure will not exactly match those that were installed 60 years ago.

While the damaged component of the structure is important, there is no risk to the structural integrity or overall safety of the Harbour Bridge. The north and southbound clip-on lanes continue to be safe to use as they have their own supporting structure.

#### **Many motorists avoided the bridge and took the Western Ring Route**

Traffic volume data shows nearly 11,000 vehicles from the North Shore crossed the Auckland Harbour Bridge this morning between 6:00AM and 10:00AM. That was 16,000 or 60% less than at the same time last week.

Vehicles heading northbound over the bridge during this time totalled about 11,500 or 30% less than at the same time last week.

Over the weekend Waka Kotahi urged people to consider working from home if possible. We encouraged those who had to travel to leave their cars at home and use public transport. We also advised motorists to use the Western Ring Route, via SH20, SH16 and SH18 as an alternative to SH1 and the bridge.

"This is clearly what has happened and we thank Auckland motorists for the way they have responded to our call," says Brett Gliddon.

Vehicles travelling southbound on Upper Harbour Drive (SH18) between 6:00AM and 10:00AM totalled 11,600, 53% or 4,000 more than the previous week.

Just over 11,000 vehicles travelled north on Upper Harbour Drive, 14% more than last week.

After 10:30 congestion began to ease across the Auckland network, but at 3:00PM this afternoon traffic southbound across the bridge is queuing back to Esmonde Road.

#### **Plan ahead for a safe, enjoyable journey. Keep up to date with:**

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- Phone: 0800 4 HIGHWAYS (0800 44 44 49)

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Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency works to create transport solutions for all New Zealanders – from helping new drivers earn their licences, to leading safety campaigns to investing in public transport, state highways and local roads.

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