

MIN-3894: Howard League

15 June 2022

Provide information on the Howard League, the Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency relationship, their Driver Licensing programme and any further information as appropriate.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency's response:

The Howard League

- The Howard League for Penal Reform is a registered charity with branches across New Zealand. Amongst its aims are to reduce the size of the prison population and recidivism.
- To achieve this, the Howard League advocates for prison reform, and supports the rehabilitation of prisoners and those on probation with a range of services. These services span, health, employment, and literacy programmes.
- The Howard League also directly provides Driver Licensing programmes in an effort to keep offenders and young people off the pathway to prison.
- It is recognised that the lack of a valid driver licence can create employment and social barriers for those wanting to travel to work, access services or connect with whanau and friends. However, there are also issues for those who drive without a licence, or on the wrong class of licence, as they risk being apprehended for driving or other serious offences.
- Many of the unlicensed people are already in the justice system, whether on probation, on bail, in prison, or have accumulated offences which may eventually lead them deeper into the justice system.
- The Howard League offers various driving programmes from Community Corrections Centres in Kaitia, Kaikohe, Whangarei, Waitakere, South Auckland, Waikato, Tauranga, Eastern Bay of Plenty, Rotorua, Hawke's Bay, Gisborne, Wairoa, Taranaki, Whanganui, Palmerston North, Porirua and Christchurch.
- The programmes provide driver training, literacy support, support to obtain sufficient identification to apply for a licence and meets a range of other costs such as test fees. Their success in this work is highlighted by the event on 16 June 2022 recognising 10,000 licences obtained by the people supported by the Howard League.

Relationship with Waka Kotahi

- People who are taught to drive safely are less likely to suffer or cause road trauma (death and injury), so the work of organisations such as the Howard League is well regarded by Waka Kotahi.
- Waka Kotahi has supported the Howard League through the Community Road Safety Fund (CRSF) from the start of its work in this area in 2016. As the work of the Howard League has succeeded and grown, they have attracted funding support from others from time to time (Corrections, Provincial Growth Fund). However, Waka Kotahi has stayed connected with the Howard League during this time and have continued to provide support as needed, covering gaps not able to be funded by others.
- This includes the present funding of approximately \$1.725 million this financial year (excluding GST). This covers all current Howard League driving programmes across New Zealand.
- Waka Kotahi supports and appreciates the great work carried out by the Howard League.