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Traffic Control Devices (Kura/School Signs) Amendment 2021
Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency
Private Bag 6995
Marion Square
Wellington 6141
rules@nzta.govt.nz

Phone +64 3 433 0300

Web www.waitaki.govt.nz

Office 20 Thames Street
Private Bag 50058
Oamaru 9444
Waitaki District
New Zealand

Waitaki District Council submission: Traffic Control Devices (Kura/School Signs) Amendment 2021

Waitaki District Council (WDC) appreciates the opportunity to contribute to New Zealand's regulatory framework applicable to land transport rules.

The Waitaki district reaches inland from the Waitaki River mouth, up the Waitaki River Valley, through Ōhau to the top of the Ahuriri River Valley. It extends south to Ōamaru, and down the east coast beyond Palmerston to Flag Swamp. It covers a large land area (7,152 km²). The Waitaki district has a population of ~23,200 (2020). Ōamaru is the main town centre of the district and the seat of Council and home to over 50% of the district's population.

The Waitaki district's population is increasing in size and diversity. Māori and Pasifika populations are growing particularly rapidly in the region, and Waitaki is home to one of New Zealand's largest populations of Pacific peoples per capita, and one of the fastest growing Pasifika populations in the country.

WDC as a local authority is responsible for maintaining and developing a safe, effective, efficient, accessible, affordable and fit for purpose local roading network. Over 85% of the roads within the Waitaki District are owned and operated by Council, with Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency operating the remaining 15% on state highways. The district's roading network is rural, low volume, and comprised of more unsealed roads than sealed roads. Approximately 70% of traffic travels on 20% of roads in the Waitaki district.

Key submission points

WDC makes the following points of submission on the consultation questions:

1. Do you have any feedback on the proposed design of the new Kura School traffic sign?

WDC understands that it is Government's commitment to introduce bilingual signages to New Zealand's roads.

WDC supports the introduction of te reo Māori into everyday situations. However, WDC considers that this extra signage could be a distraction, has the potential to confuse drivers, and may work against the Road to Zero Strategy.

WDC would also like to note that with the return of international tourists to New Zealand's roads in a post-Covid environment, there could be some misunderstanding in interpreting bilingual signage. WDC recommends that education / information is supplied visiting international drivers to raise their understanding of bilingual signage.

2. Do you have any feedback on the use of italics or bold to differentiate te reo Māori from English?

WDC considers that the bold font meets the criteria set out on page 11 in the overview document. It is slightly different, allowing it to differentiate languages. It is also similar enough to allow for the equality of languages.

3. In your opinion, which of the two options (italic or bold) seems clearer to read and quicker to understand?

WDC considers that the bold "Kura", is easier to read. It is unknown what level of te reo Māori understanding exists with road users in the Waitaki district. As such, the ability to understand "Kura" is not possible to comment on. It is not until a motorist who only understands English has read the second "School" word would know that Kura means school.

4. What benefits or impacts would these changes have on you or your organisation?

WDC considers that with the introduction of new signage, it allows our organisation an opportunity to review how well our schools are sign posted to ensure that they are visible to motorists.

5. Do you support our proposed approach to align the timing of the Kura School sign with the proposed Speed Rule changes?

Yes, WDC considers that it makes sense to use a positive change to align the introduction of new signage.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Land Transport Rule: Traffic Control Devices (Kura/School Signs) Amendment 2021.

For any enquiries, please contact:

Jason Evered, Road Safety Coordinator – Waitaki District Council
jevered@waitaki.govt.nz
03 433 0300

Yours sincerely



Mike Harrison

Roading Manager – Waitaki District Council