

Lower speeds on the Picton to Christchurch alternate route until State Highway 1 reopens

Lower speeds will remain on the Picton to Christchurch alternate route until State Highway 1 (SH1) reopens, after which speed limits will be reviewed again.

The NZ Transport Agency consulted on a proposal to convert the current speed limits introduced under emergency legislation on the alternate route after the November 2016 earthquake to permanent limits. This was necessary because emergency speed limits expire after six months, but SH1 will not be restored until the end of the year.

Submissions feedback showed:

- » Public support for permanent lower speed limits through most townships where speeds of 50-60km/h were proposed.
- » Limited public support for permanent lower speeds on the open road where speeds of 80km/h were proposed.

- » General support from councils representing communities, and groups representing motorists and the freight industry until SH1 is restored, but several requests for speed limits to be reviewed again once SH1 is fully operational.

Reverting to pre-earthquake speed limits on some parts of the alternate route while SH1 remains closed would be irresponsible given the ongoing road safety risks. The Transport Agency has instead made a bylaw to keep the current speed limits in place, but will review them again once SH1 becomes fully operational.

Proposals included a section of the Lower Buller Gorge and SH7a towards Hanmer not included in the emergency rule. These proposals received low support, so speeds will not be reduced on these roads.

You can find out more at www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/consultations/picton-to-christchurch-alternate-route-speed-limits

