

## **Safe System: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the goal of Safe System?**

It aims to improve the safety of roads and roadsides to significantly reduce the likelihood of crashes occurring and to minimise the consequences of crashes when they do. This requires a focus on reducing the highest risk crash types: head-on, run-off road, intersection crashes, and crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists. Mistakes are inevitable but deaths and serious injuries are not.

### **Whose idea was Safe System?**

It is part of a Government strategy called Safer Journeys. Along with our partners, the Police, ACC, Ministry of Transport and Local Government New Zealand, the Transport Agency is embedding the Safe System approach into road safety activities.

### **What does a Safe System strive for?**

- Roads and roadsides that are more predictable and forgiving of mistakes
- Speeds that suit the function and level of safety of the road, and the road users understand and comply with speed limits and drive to the conditions
- Safer vehicles which help prevent crashes and protect road users from crash forces
- Skilled and competent, alert and unimpaired drivers, who comply with road rules, choose safer vehicles, take steps to improve safety and demand safety improvements.

### **What do the statistics tell us?**

Head-on crashes account for 23 per cent of all fatal crashes. Yet more than 90 per cent of them could be avoided by having a median barrier.

Loss of control contributes to 40 per cent of all fatal crashes. These crashes would be less severe if there were median barriers present and roadside objects were protected or removed.

21 per cent of our fatal crashes occur at intersections (this figure includes some of the above types of crashes). These crashes can be prevented by using methods such as skid-resistant road surfaces and traffic calming.

### **How does the Transport Agency make roads like SH2 safer?**

Managing speed to safe levels is crucial to reducing deaths and serious injuries because the results of all crashes are strongly influenced by impact speed.

Most of SH2 between Pokeno and Mangatarata has a speed limit of 90km/h, recognising this stretch of highway currently is unsafe for 100km/h travel.

Road widening, land separation and central median barriers all help prevent head-on collisions. There are several ways to limit the number and seriousness of run-off road crashes. Improvements around access (driveways and intersections) have also proven to reduce crashes.

**Does the Safe System approach just shift the blame from road users?**

No, the Safe System approach doesn't take the road user out of the picture or diminish their responsibilities. Instead of laying the majority of blame on the road user, it recognises the need for all system designers and system users to share responsibility for what happens when a crash occurs.

**Why don't you upgrade SH2 as well as build the Waikato Expressway?**

Although there will always be a role for SH2 connecting Auckland to the Coromandel, East Waikato and also to the Bay of Plenty, SH2 is expected to become more of a light vehicle/tourist route over time rather than a major route for long-haul freight traffic. The anticipated growth in inter-regional freight traffic, especially north to south, is expected to switch to SH1 once the Waikato Expressway is completed in 2019.

**How can I have a say on the Safe System plan for SH2?**

After all options have been identified the Transport Agency will be seeking feedback from the public, including residents, landowners and anyone else who uses the road. We plan an open day in June 2014.