

# FAQs



## About the Programme

### What are the problems that need to be addressed along this section of State Highway 3 (SH3)?

The section of SH3 from Mt Messenger to the Awakino Gorge runs through rough, narrow and winding terrain creating challenges for the network's resilience, traveller safety as well as journey time reliability.

Working with key stakeholders, including local and regional councils and the SH3 Working Party, we have identified the following key issues:

- The narrow, windy lanes and lack of road shoulder causes a high number of crashes and an unforgiving environment results in deaths and serious injuries.
- When crashes do occur they often lead to lengthy delays.
- Natural events, such as slips, cause a high number of road closures, which combined with no suitable alternative route, results in significant delays and adverse economic impact.
- The lack of passing opportunities leads to driver frustration and a poor journey experience.

### What are the desired outcomes/objectives of the Programme?

The programme of work has identified a broad package of improvements aimed at balancing safety, resilience and journey experience outcomes. The objectives are to improve:

- Safety – by reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries from crashes by considering activities such as smoothing curves, widening shoulders, new passing opportunities, new pull over and rest areas.
- Resilience – by reducing the number and duration of road closures due to natural hazards and crashes.
- Drivers' journey experience – by reducing time delays and improving travel time reliability.

### **Why are improvements to SH3 important?**

SH3 provides an important regional link between Taranaki and the upper North Island, and the Mt Messenger to Awakino route is part of the direct link between New Plymouth and Hamilton.

Ensuring a safe, efficient, reliable and resilient transport network that connects the Taranaki and Waikato regions is vital. Both regions have export-led economies experiencing residential, industrial and economic growth.

### **What are the benefits you want to achieve by addressing these problems?**

Improved access, safety and travel time predictability along this route will have a significant positive impact on all road users. Expected benefits include:

- Emergency services can respond to situations faster.
- Freight companies will have quicker, easier and more reliable journeys which will save time, lower costs, and mean less wear and tear on their vehicles.
- More tourism opportunities as people can access the region more easily and safely.
- All road users will have a safer and more pleasant driving experience with a smoother ride, new passing opportunities and rest stop areas.
- Indirect boost to the economy – with jobs potentially being created by the significant investment in roading infrastructure and businesses having the confidence to invest and hire people.
- Supports the growing population and makes the region more attractive and liveable.

## **Community Consultation on Options**

### *Route options*

#### **Why are you including options that are not bypasses for the Awakino and Mt Messenger bypass projects?**

Our investigation findings to date show that bypass options for the projects can deliver the significant improvements required. However we are seeking public feedback about the non-bypass options because it helps us to understand the full range and nature of the environmental and community effects. This allows us to consider the benefits of the bypass and the non-bypass options.

### *SH3 safety, resilience and journey improvements*

#### **Why do we need these series of improvements?**

This section of SH3 has frequent crashes resulting in high instances of deaths and serious injuries. Road closures due to slips and crashes are common and detour routes are long and/or unsuitable. Driver frustration and unpredictable travel times also result in poor journey experience.

### **How do you know what kind of improvements are needed?**

We have identified the problems by analysing historical crash and road closure data, along with talking to key stakeholder and community groups. The improvements are focused on solutions ranging in scale and complexity.

### **How do you decide which improvements are the most suitable?**

Improvements must be prioritised according to greatest need. We will assess all potential options in relation to the cost, benefits, social, operational, environmental and cultural impacts. This process allows us to deliver the best package of work to address the identified problems.

#### *Giving feedback*

### **How can I have my say on the proposals?**

We want to know what you think about these options.

You can provide feedback by:

- sending a submission to the Awakino Gorge to Mt Messenger Programme team at [SH3@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:SH3@nzta.govt.nz) or PO Box 5084, Wellington 6145
- coming along to one of our **community drop-in sessions**
- using the **electronic feedback form**

### **When does the consultation close?**

The consultation period ends on Friday 6 January 2017.

#### *Next steps*

### **What happens next?**

We will provide a consultation report early in 2017. The consultation feedback will be combined with technical findings to help shape the selection of options and final designs. We expect to announce the preferred options in 2017 and there will be an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on them. Further design work will be carried out and resource consents would then be prepared and lodged.

### **When does construction occur?**

Construction for each project is estimated to occur during:

- 2017 to 2019 – Safety and resilience improvements Project
- 2018 to 2020 – Awakino Tunnel bypass Project
- 2018 to 2020 – Mt Messenger bypass Project.

## Funding

### How are the projects funded?

The available funding for the Programme is \$114 million-\$135 million and comprises:

- Mt Messenger bypass Project (\$80-\$90 million of Crown funding through the Accelerated Regional Rooding Package)
- Awakino Tunnel bypass Project (\$9-\$15 million of Crown funding through the Accelerated Regional Rooding Package)
- SH3 safety, resilience and journey improvements (\$25-\$30 million through the National Land Transport Programme 2015-18).

### What is the purpose of the Accelerated Regional Rooding Package and why is it necessary?

In June 2014 the Government announced funding to accelerate a three-part package of regionally important state highway projects.

Many of these projects have been delayed in the past. However the projects are important to their respective regions and will address economic efficiency, safety, and resilience issues for regional networks.

The package included the Mt Messenger and Awakino Tunnel projects as eligible for funding to finalise investigation and consenting work.

In January 2016 the Government announced an update to the package. It provided additional funding of up to \$115 million for the construction of a number of key projects including the bypass projects at Mt Messenger and Awakino Tunnel.

For more questions and answers about the Accelerated Regional Rooding Package see the **Ministry of Transport's webpage**.



#### More information

For programme updates please visit [nzta.govt.nz/ag2mm](http://nzta.govt.nz/ag2mm)

If you would like to join our database for e-newsletter updates, please email [SH3@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:SH3@nzta.govt.nz)