

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

Road bridges represent a large financial investment and provide an essential service to the community and the economy in New Zealand. For the State Highway Network the National State Highway Bridge Asset Management Plan (1999) notes that "Transit New Zealand has carried out regular bridge inspection and maintenance programmes that have addressed defects in a timely manner. Therefore the condition of the existing bridge asset is very good and the maintenance needs are low". Sound asset management practice to maintain, operate and develop the bridges is essential for their continued safety and durability.

This manual provides the basis for the management, inspection and maintenance of bridges on both the State Highway network and Local Authority roads. The objective of the manual is to provide engineers and other personnel responsible for inspection and maintenance with a ready reference to recommended procedures. It has been written for New Zealand needs and available technology and gives advice on evaluation and maintenance of specific materials and bridge parts. The manual is intended to be a useful and practical document for bridge inspection and maintenance personnel. It specifically excludes detail on specialist testing and evaluation but where necessary the need to employ specialists is identified, and comprehensive bibliographies are included for further reference.

## 1.2 REVISION AND UPDATING

The manual was originally published in 1991 and was provided in a loose leaf form to allow addition of new sections and updating of existing sections to meet future needs. No Sections had been revised prior to the 2001 revision.

The manual was completely revised and reprinted in 2001. The revision takes account of materials and practices which have come into common use since the manual was first issued, updates references and is presented in a more user-friendly format. The loose leaf format has been retained so sections can be revised when required.

## 1.3 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Transit New Zealand (1999): "National State Highway Bridge Asset Management Plan".