

18 September 2024

s9(2)(a)

REF: OIA-16312

Dear s9(2)(a)

### Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 31 August 2024 requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I will respond to your questions in turn below.

- 1) What percentage of median barriers in New Zealand use MASH TL3 wire rope?**
- 2) What percentage of median barriers in New Zealand use alternatives to MASH TL3 wire rope?**

Our asset information, such as the data on median barriers, is stored in our Road Assessment and Maintenance Management (RAMM) database. NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) only holds the breakdown of median barriers installed by high-level classifications, as set out in the following table:

Type	% of total
Concrete (rigid)	26%
Guard rail (semi-rigid)	12.24%
Wire rope (flexible)	60.99%
Other	1.08%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Please note that the above data excludes any median barriers installed on the local road network.

We are unable to provide a further breakdown of the types of wire rope barriers as requested in questions 1 and 2 as the data in RAMM is not stored to the level of granularity you requested. I am therefore refusing these parts of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the Act as the information requested is not held by the department or Minister of the Crown or organisation and there is no reason to believe it is held by another government agency.

In refusing these parts of your request, I can confirm that any new permanent installations and full replacements of existing installations on the state highway network after April 2019 were tested and evaluated against the Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware (MASH) protocol, which replaced the National Cooperative Highway Research Project Report 350 (NCHRP350) protocol.

- 3) What plans are there to upgrade median barriers that use MASH TL3?**  
**4) What is the estimated timeframe for these upgrades?**

In response to questions 3 and 4, there is no set timeframe for median barrier upgrades. The implementation of median barriers as a critical safety intervention is prioritised on corridors with higher traffic volumes, speed and collective risk. This addresses the greater risk of death or serious injury crashes associated with head-on crashes and run-off road/loss of control type crashes. As part of the prioritisation, further consideration is also given to community engagement, alignment with other work and construction complexity.

Given the constrained funding environment NZTA is operating under, we aim to invest our limited funding in a way which will achieve the greatest overall safety benefits across the entire state highway network. NZTA seeks to balance the upgrade or replacement of existing barriers with the need to install barriers at sites which currently have no median or side barriers at all, many of which have high crash rates.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to refuse parts of your request. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

In line with NZTA policy, this response will soon be published on our website, with personal information removed.

If you would like to discuss this reply with NZTA, please contact the Ministerial Services team by email to [official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely



**Andrew Clark**  
National Manager Maintenance & Operations