

11 November 2024

s9(2)(f)(iv)

REF: OIA-16679

Dear s9(2)(f)(iv)

### Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 13 October 2024 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) relating to Pekatahi Bridge on State Highway 2 (SH2) near Whakatāne:

1. *How many one lane bridges remain on State Highways in NZ? And in the North Island.*
2. *How many one lane bridges are on the length of SH2?*
3. *What is the NZTA policy on replacement of one lane bridges to dual lanes?*
4. *The RLTP on Pg 22 recognises the link which includes the Pekatahi Bridge as critical for future growth – given that forecast growth for the Whakatane spatial plan is likely to be near Awakeri and on the Plains what forward planning is required to replace this one-lane bridge?*
5. *How does this apply to Pekatahi bridge?*
6. *Where does it sit on the priority list in the RLTP?*
7. *What is the projected replacement cost of this bridge?*
8. *How does a one lane bridge on a SH fit within the realms of resilience and readiness for the Tairāwhiti and Eastern Bay communities.*
9. *How much money has been spent on maintenance of this bridge in the past 10 years?*
10. *What further maintenance plans exist for the bridge in cost and timing?*
11. *What is the median delay for vehicles on the bridge waiting for oncoming traffic?*
12. *Given this bridge has been closed recently and the only other route has been through Whakatane township, what has been the effect of the heavy transport through the town in terms of delays and traffic volume?*
13. *If there is any other information you can share for this I would really appreciate it – this way I can gain a better understanding of the issues for the bridge and its potential replacement.*

For the sake of clarity, I will respond to each of your questions in turn.

1. *How many one lane bridges remain on State Highways in NZ? And in the North Island.*

According to the Bridges and Structures Management Database, there are 173 single lane bridges in New Zealand. 79 of these are in the North Island.

2. *How many one lane bridges are on the length of SH2?*

There are 2 single lane bridges on SH2.

3. *What is the NZTA policy on replacement of one lane bridges to dual lanes?*

Our bridge replacement programme is assessed nationally and reviewed as part of our 3 yearly National Land Transport Programme process. Bridge replacements are prioritised according to the age and condition of the bridge and suitability for current traffic volumes.

4. *The RLTP on Pg 22 recognises the link which includes the Pekatahi Bridge as critical for future growth – given that forecast growth for the Whakatane spatial plan is likely to be near Awakeri and on the Plains what forward planning is required to replace this one-lane bridge?*

The additional river crossing business case to support growth components of the Whakatāne Spatial Plan refers to a Whakatāne District Council project and would not include Pekatahi Bridge on SH2. The additional river crossing referred to is envisaged within the Whakatāne township area.

5. *How does this apply to Pekatahi bridge?*

As noted above, Pekatahi Bridge would not be within the scope of this work.

6. *Where does it sit on the priority list in the RLTP?*

Assuming this question refers to replacing the Pekatahi Bridge with a dual-lane bridge, a project to do that does not appear in the RLTP.

7. *What is the projected replacement cost of this bridge?*

NZTA does not have a present day estimate for the cost of replacing the Pekatahi Bridge, therefore this aspect of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information you have requested does not exist.

8. *How does a one lane bridge on a SH fit within the realms of resilience and readiness for the Tairāwhiti and Eastern Bay communities.*

The NZTA's structures team does not have any concerns given there are 2 alternative bridges over the Whakatāne River, on SH2 and State Highway 30 (SH30). There are Emergency Management Plans in place which address the resilience in the event of a natural disaster. If you require more information on this, please contact the Bay of Plenty Regional Council or Whakatāne District Council Emergency Management.

9. *How much money has been spent on maintenance of this bridge in the past 10 years?*

The following table shows the amount spent on maintenance for Pekatahi Bridge, (including relevant professional services costs) since 2014.

Year	Cost (\$)
2014	49,596.78
2015	303,236.53
2016	93,952.11
2017	93,952.11
2018	3,663,095.20
2019	101,423.14
2020	56,330.62
2021	153,266.70
2022	15,757.22
2023	86,515.58
2024	131,965.39

*10. What further maintenance plans exist for the bridge in cost and timing?*

The 2024-27 National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) has approved \$70,000 to accommodate for ongoing plank repairs and traffic management of the site. A further \$80,000 has been approved for professional services to design, procure, and supervise the replacement of all the wearing planks along the full length of the bridge deck in the 2024-27 NLTP duration.

*11. What is the median delay for vehicles on the bridge waiting for oncoming traffic?*

NZTA has not measured the median delay for vehicles waiting to go over Pekatahi Bridge, and therefore this aspect of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act as this information you have requested is not held by NZTA, nor do we believe it is held by any other Government agency.

*12. Given this bridge has been closed recently and the only other route has been through Whakatane township, what has been the effect of the heavy transport through the town in terms of delays and traffic volume?*

The SH2 Pekatahi Bridge detour directs traffic via roads on the outskirts of Whakatāne (Hinemoa Street and Arawa Road). It does not direct traffic through Whakatāne township. Whakatāne District Council also has a bylaw where heavy traffic is prohibited from travelling through Whakatāne and Ōhope urban areas (unless they hold a permit or meet special criteria). Information about the SH2 detour route is available at the following link: [www.nzta.govt.nz/media-releases/sh2-pekatahi-bridge-closure-for-maintenance/](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/media-releases/sh2-pekatahi-bridge-closure-for-maintenance/).

In terms of traffic volumes, when all roads are operating as normal (i.e. no detour), approximately 15,300 vehicles enter Whakatāne from SH30 per day, with an estimated 1,270 (8.3%) of those being heavy vehicles. The SH2 Pekatahi Bridge section of road has approximately 2,100 vehicles travelling per day with an estimated 450 (21.5%) of those being heavy vehicles.

*13. If there is any other information you can share for this I would really appreciate it – this way I can gain a better understanding of the issues for the bridge and its potential replacement.*

- The current SH2 Pekatahi Bridge was built for road-rail so has narrow-spaced very deep steel beams, precluding the option of widening it to 2 lanes.
- The NZTA structures team is currently investigating the opportunity to increase scour protection around Pekatahi Bridge
- Stopping times at the traffic controlled single lane bridge is minimal and traffic is intelligently controlled through vehicle detection to minimise disruption.
- To minimise disruption and delays to SH2 traffic, and due to the wearing planks on the bridge needing repairs frequently and randomly, we have a continuing programme of bridge repairs that are scheduled to be undertaken during school holidays to reduce disruption and while traffic volumes are lower.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision on 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 me by email at [andrew.corkill@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:andrew.corkill@nzta.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely



**Andrew Corkill**  
Director Regional Relationships, Waikato/Bay of Plenty