

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

Subject	Visit to the Marlborough region
Date	31 August 2022
Briefing number	BRI-2584

Contact(s) for telephone discussion (if required)				
Name	Position	Direct line	Cell phone	1 st contact
Brett Gliddon	General Manager, Transport Services	s 9(2)(a)	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Emma Speight	Director Regional Relationship (Greater Wellington and Top of the South)	s 9(2)(a)	s 9(2)(a)	

Action taken by Office of the Minister

- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen by Minister
- ☐ Agreed
- ☐ Feedback provided
- ☐ Forwarded to
- ☐ Needs change [please specify]
- ☐ Withdrawn
- ☐ Overtaken by events

31 August 2022

Hon Michael Wood – Minister of Transport

VISIT TO THE MARLBOROUGH REGION

Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with information about the impact of the August 2022 severe weather event ahead of your visit to the Marlborough region on Thursday, 1 September 2022.
2. The Prime Minister, Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, and Minister for Emergency Management, Hon Kieran McAnulty will join you on the visit.
3. This briefing will update you on the scale of the August 2022 severe weather event and funding support provided by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency to Marlborough District Council (MDC).

Background

4. Beginning 17 August 2022, heavy rain swept across the top of South Island area for over three consecutive days without respite. At Tunakino Valley (Rai Valley), 1,028mm of rainfall was recorded over the three-day period. Meanwhile, other areas of the Marlborough Sounds and northern Marlborough, recorded between 500 and 700mm of rainfall.
5. The heavy rain has led to the biggest recorded flood in the Pelorus River, with extensive flooding across northern Marlborough and areas of the Wairau Plains. The severe flood damage to the region has forced the closure of the main transport links between Nelson and Marlborough, as well as the closure of many other roads in the region. Initial inspections show that there are major slips, river scour, significant washouts and significant pavement damage, although it will take some time to undertake a full assessment of the damage to the network.
6. Because of the heavy rainfall, State Highway 63 (SH63) was closed due to the eastern approach to the Branch River Bridge being washed out. The river had also inundated the road, causing severe road damage on SH63 adjacent to the Wash Bridge.
7. SH6 was initially closed between Renwick and Hira (Nelson) due to a number of slips, under slips, and flooding. The team has managed to open SH6 from Renwick to Rai Valley on 30 August 2022. Waka Kotahi will open SH6, under significant traffic management, on 31 August 2022.
8. The damage across the Marlborough Sounds local road network is substantial. It covers a larger area and is more severe than the July 2021 storm event. Last year's event was centred on the Kenepuru and Queen Charlotte Drive area. The August 2022 event has seen Kenepuru and Queen Charlotte Drive experiencing significant additional damage. The damage is more widespread, also affecting Okiwi Bay, French Pass, Tennyson Inlet and Port Underwood areas.
9. To compare the scale of these two events, approximately 1,630 faults were picked up across Marlborough's road network following the July 2021 storm event. As at 30 August 2022, this year's

severe weather event has caused 1,800 faults on the road and there is still around 100 kilometres of road that has not been assessed. An initial fault assessment shows that the impact of the August 2022 severe weather event is more significant, being both larger and more complex.

10. In total, around 400km out of the 1,550km of road network in the Marlborough Sounds was closed after this event. Emergency Access is being restored to a number of these roads, but some communities remain inaccessible by road, and full access may not be restored to all parts of the network.
11. Further details on roads accessibility are included as Appendix 2.

Funding to repair damaged roads

12. Waka Kotahi holds the responsibility as the Road Controlling Authority (RCA) to repair all damage on the state highway network, while the local council is the RCA responsible for repairs to local roads.
13. In the Marlborough region, there is an agreement between MDC and Waka Kotahi, which allows Waka Kotahi to manage local roads on behalf of the council.
14. MDC receives a Funding Assistance Rate (FAR) from Waka Kotahi of 51 percent for normal road maintenance activities. The Waka Kotahi board agreed to set an emergency works bespoke FAR of 95 percent for the July 2021 Storm event recovery works (total cost estimated to be approximately \$85 million).
15. At this time, it is not yet possible to estimate the financial cost of the damage of the August 2022 severe weather event to the region's roads. Initial indications show that it will significantly exceed the July 2021 Storm event.

16. MDC has already identified that the costs required are likely to exceed its ability to pay, even at the 95 percent FAR. MDC is already considering an alternative approach to accessing the Marlborough Sounds (primarily based on water access, with some link roads) – although this will require significant work.

It is recommended that you:

1. **Note** the content of the briefing.



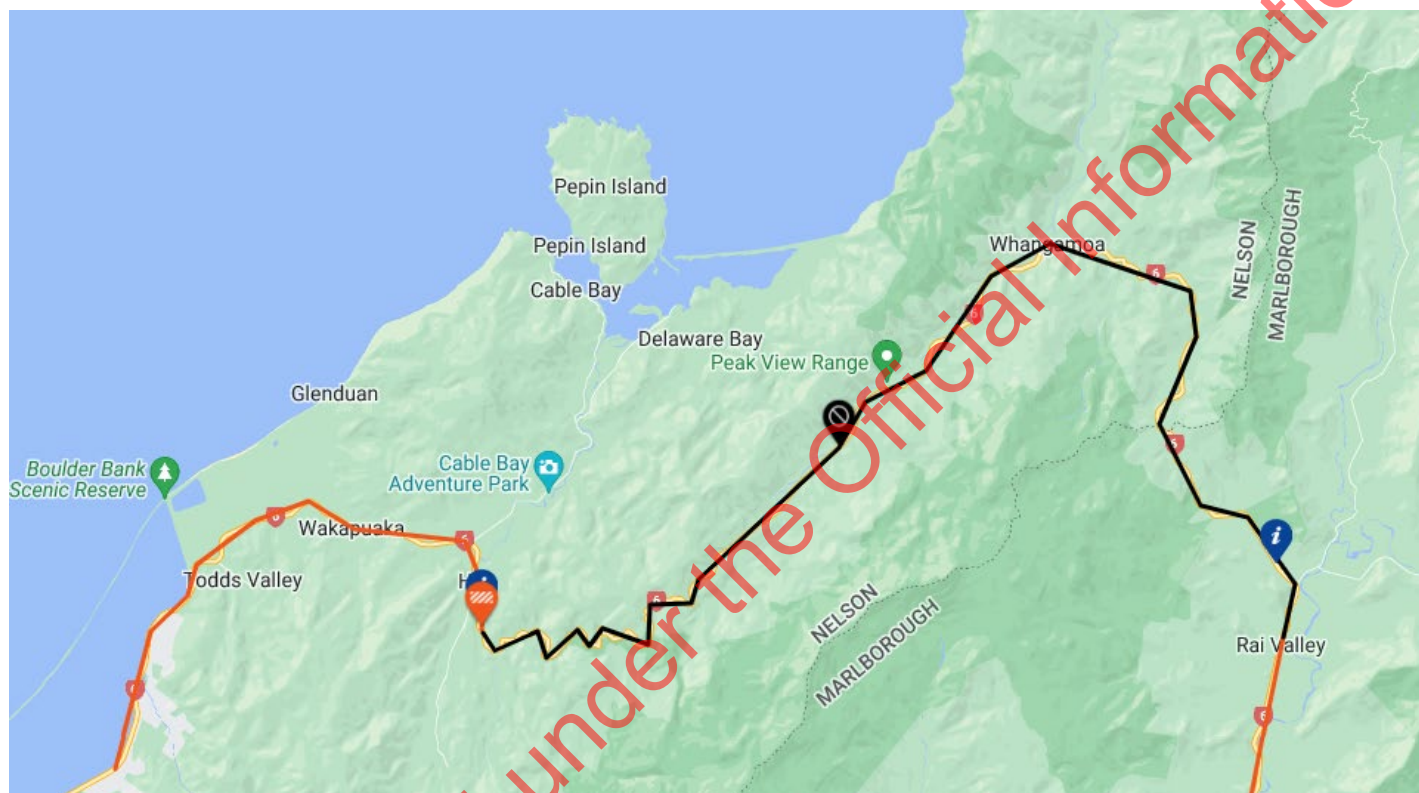
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Brett Gliddon
GM Transport Services

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Hon Michael Wood, Minister of Transport
Date: 2022

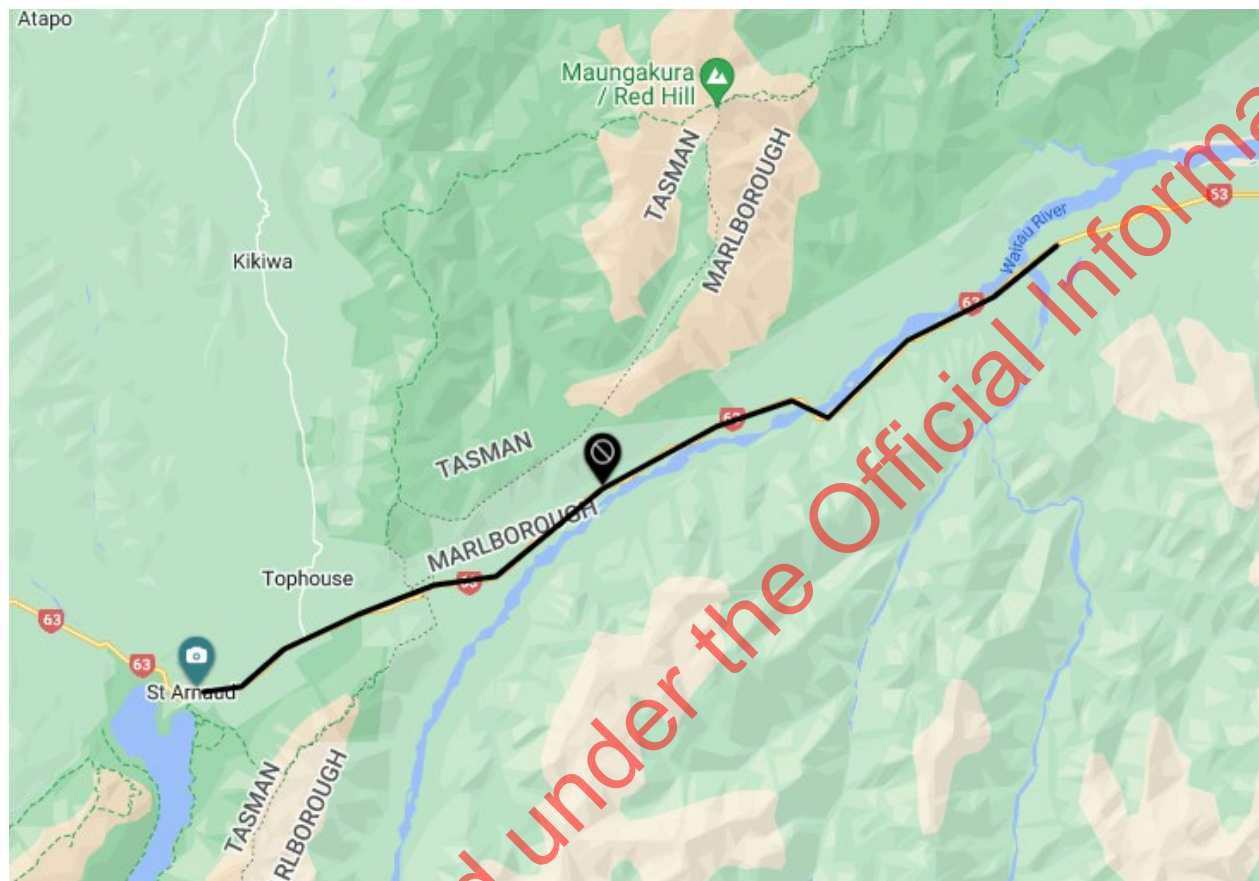
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Appendix 1: state highway closures map

SH6 Hira to Rai Valley



Due to flood damage, State Highway 6 is closed between Hira and Rai Valley. This section of road is expected to re-open at 1pm on Wednesday, 31 August 2022. Once open, there will be temporary traffic restrictions with delays expected when travelling. Please note, road re-opening is dependent on weather and various factors.

SH63 St Arnau, between the intersection of Bridge Street and Leatham Road

Due to flood damage, State Highway 63 is closed between Leatham Road and St Arnau. This road is expected to reopen the week of Monday, 12 September 2022, once open there will be temporary traffic restrictions with delays expected when travelling. Please note the road reopening is dependent on weather and various factors. An update will be provided by Friday, 9 September 2022, or sooner if the road opens.

Appendix 2: Key figures of road length accessibility

As at 22 August 2022 (when the most local roads were closed), it was identified that:

- 258km of road cannot be accessed (No Access)
- 351km of road is still not assessed (Road Not Assessed)
- 80km of road has controlled access (Controlled Access)

Including the approximate length of closed sections of SH6 and SH63 on that day (both about 90km):

- 438km of road cannot be accessed (No Access)
- 351km of road is still not assessed (Road Not Assessed)
- 80km of road has controlled access (Controlled Access)

As at 30 August 2022 (local roads), it was identified that:

- 220km road cannot be accessed (No Access)
- 345km of road is still not assessed (Road Not Assessed)
- 110km of road has controlled access (Controlled Access)

Including state highways closed sections

- 264km road cannot be accessed (No Access)
- 345km of road is still not assessed (Road Not Assessed)
- 110km of road has controlled access (Controlled Access)

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