

Safe Roads and Roadsides Programme

Frequently asked questions

What is the Safe Roads and Roadsides programme?

The Safe Roads and Roadsides programme will see safety improvements made to over 90 high-risk rural state highways across the country over six years.

The improvements will make roads more forgiving of human error, helping to reduce the occurrence of crashes in the first place and limiting their severity when they do happen.

What's the purpose of the programme?

The programme aims to reduce deaths and serious injuries on New Zealand's roads by 900 over 10 years by making over 400 kilometres of rural roads safer.

How does this work fit into the government's road safety strategy?

Improving the safety of rural roads and roadsides is a key action of the government's road safety strategy, Safer Journeys, which is based on the Safe System approach.

What is the Safe System approach?

The Safe System approach acknowledges that people make mistakes and aims to create a more forgiving transport system where mistakes do not result in death or serious injury.

The approach looks across the entire road system to improve safety – including the safety of roads and roadsides, encouraging safer speeds, driver behaviour and vehicles.

Why is the Safe Roads and Roadsides programme needed?

Around eight out of 10 fatal and serious crashes on state highways occur on rural roads and of those state highway crashes, 85 to 90 percent are run-off-road, head-on and intersection crashes.

Although the long-term trend has been downward, the road toll has steadily risen from 253 in 2013 to 320 in 2015, and the highest proportions of deaths and serious injuries on all New Zealand roads are caused by head-on and run-off-road crashes.

How are the project sites selected?

The sites are identified as high-risk due to crash history, traffic volumes and road safety rating.

What will the safety improvement projects involve?

Safety improvement projects will generally include a combination of the following engineering treatments:

- side barriers
- median barriers
- rumble strips
- curve reduction
- wide centrelines
- improved road markings and signs.

All of these treatments have been proven to reduce deaths and serious injuries from head-on and run-off-road crashes.

How much will the programme cost?

Around \$100 million will be invested in the programme each year over six years. This amount is additional to the \$20 million which will continue to be invested in minor safety projects each year.

Is this investment more than what is currently allocated to safety improvement works?

We usually spend around \$60 million on minor safety improvements and capital safety works each year so this is a significant increase in investment. This step up in investment aims to reduce deaths and serious injuries, minimising the economic impact of road crashes as well as the social impact.

Who will deliver the programme?

The programme will be delivered by the Safe Roads Alliance, which is made up of the Transport Agency and infrastructure consultancies Beca, Bloxam Burnett and Olliver and Northern Civil Consulting. The Alliance is based in Hamilton and will employ local construction contractors to carry out the project work across the regions.

How many projects are currently underway?

The Alliance is currently developing plans for 38 sites and plans to have 18 projects underway by the end of the year. The first two projects, State Highway 37 to Waitomo and State Highway 11 north of Whangarei between Airfield and Lily Pond, are currently in construction.



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