Not Government Policy

This is a paper produced specifically for a stakeholder workshop (held 17 October 2012) and stakeholder consultation period that ended 9 November 2012. No general public reply to the questions in this document is expected as they were formulated for the purpose of gathering feedback from stakeholders.
Introduction

Purpose

The National Road Safety Committee (NRSC) agencies have been thinking about the approach to the second Safer Journeys Action Plan. This conversation paper represents the initial thinking of the NRSC agencies about the second Action Plan. The paper invites informed stakeholders (who have an interest in road safety) to use your knowledge to help NRSC agencies discuss the priorities identified in this paper and then to consider if these priorities or ones you identify should be included in the second Action Plan. Your input will help inform the development of our advice.

Progress so far

The launch of Safer Journeys and the adoption of the safe system approach have created a strong foundation for road safety improvement. It has led to the strengthening of all elements of the road safety system (roads and roadides, speeds, vehicles and road use). Discussions between agencies, stakeholders and external experts confirm that there is widespread support for Safer Journeys and that the strategy remains consistent with leading international thinking. NRSC agencies therefore believe that the Safer Journeys strategy and the framework it sets out remain a strong foundation for future efforts.

The first Action Plan for 2011-2012 set out 108 actions across the four elements of the safe system to begin implementing the strategy. This ambitious programme of work has delivered many major initiatives, such as changing the Give Way Rule, introducing a new Restricted Licence test and installing safety barriers on high risk roads, alongside other less high profile but important initiatives. Overall delivery of the first Action Plan is proceeding well, with over three quarters of the actions either already completed, or well underway. Others will be completed this year or over a longer timeframe.

A major change for NRSC agencies has been aligning core road safety activity with the safe system approach. Safer Journeys is now reflected in our directional documents such as the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding, the NZ Transport Agency’s Investment and Revenue Strategy, NRSC agencies’ Statements of Intent, and the Road Policing Strategy. Processes, systems and programmes have changed to better align with the four principles of the safe system. Sector wide training in the safe system approach has commenced and the way we communicate with the public about road safety has also been changing.

The road toll has reduced considerably. While other factors have played a role, road safety initiatives over previous decades, along with the high public profile of road safety issues recently, have undoubtedly made a significant contribution to this reduction. The 2011 road toll of 284 fatalities is the lowest since records began in 1952. It is a hundred fewer deaths than 2009, the year before the strategy was introduced. Serious injuries have also reduced substantially.

The second Safer Journeys Action Plan

The purpose of the second Action Plan is to maintain these recent gains and continue the progress of reducing road deaths and serious injuries by creating a safe road system.

While the first Action Plan set out a broad range of actions to put this change in motion, repeating this approach could mean duplicating the actions, initiatives, and priorities that are now set out in the business plans and other strategic documents of the NRSC agencies.

The NRSC agencies’ view is that there is an opportunity for the second Action Plan to focus on a small number of key priorities that aim to take ambitious steps forward. These actions should be transformational ones which make substantial progress towards Safer Journeys’ goals. They should also require joint effort from NRSC agencies to complete. In fact, NRSC agencies believe making sufficient gains will require the involvement and support of other stakeholders who are working to improve road safety. Identifying the areas where substantial progress can be made is a key challenge in developing the second Action Plan.

1 In this paper NRSC agencies refers primarily to the Ministry of Transport, NZ Transport Agency, Police and ACC. In addition to these four organisations, NRSC associate members are LGNZ, EECA, Ministries of Justice, Health, Education and Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (Department of Labour)
Levels of activity

The road safety activity that will be conducted by central and local government agencies over the period of the second Action Plan can be described as occurring at three levels.

Strategic priorities

NRSC agencies consider that the second Action Plan should focus on this area of activity. This activity is the ambitious, transformational actions and outcomes that road safety partners can only achieve together, often by working in new ways and with new partners. These are the actions and outcomes that Chief Executives of NRSC agencies will be especially concerned about and where they will be looking for results. By focusing the second Action Plan in this way, NRSC agencies aim to further embed the safe system approach and enhance our road safety outcomes.

One implication of this more focused approach is that the second Action Plan will not be able to encompass all of the different road safety issues set out in the strategy in a very visible way. It also will mean that the second Action Plan will not expressly detail large elements of ongoing delivery of core business by road safety agencies. These activities have their own communications channels. However, there may be ways of better informing stakeholders and the public about the ongoing core business activity and the results.

Tactical enablers

Tactical enablers include actions and outcomes that either support the strategic priorities or enhance core business where that is needed. NRSC agencies will be focused on considering how to complete these challenges by enhancing cross-agency coordination and increasing stakeholder involvement.

Core business

This is the bulk of road safety activity such as the maintenance and enhancement of infrastructure, education and advertising activity and enforcement operations. Continuing to deliver and improve these crucial activities to align with the safe system approach is core agency business, set out in Statements of Intent and other accountability documents. Completing actions from the first Action Plan is also captured here.

For the reasons set out above, NRSC agencies do not believe this area should be the focus of the second Action Plan. However, we recognise that stakeholders may have suggestions about the delivery of core business. Any suggestions of this nature that are put forward during discussions will be passed on to the relevant agency for their consideration, following completion of the work on the second Action Plan.

Possible Actions for the Second Action Plan

The actions proposed for the second Action Plan should be considered to be transformational actions that could become strategic priorities. The possible actions are grouped under each of the elements of the safe system: safe road use, safe roads and roadsides, safe speeds and safe vehicles. In addition, there is an extra area titled ‘Demonstrating the Safe System’ that focuses on putting safe system thinking into practice to achieve measurable road safety results.

To start a conversation NRSC agencies have considered for each element of the safe system the:

- progress made to date
- potential in each area for road safety gains
- changes needed to move towards a safe system
- current opportunities for improvement.

The NRSC agencies then thought that, in addition to meeting standard selection criteria for Safer Journeys, the second action plan should include actions that can also:

- make substantial progress towards reducing death and serious injury and/or movement towards a safe system
- only be achieved by working together, often by working in new ways and with new partners.
The following fourteen possible actions for the second Action Plan were identified:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Possible actions</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Safe roads and roadsides            | 1 Improve High-Risk Roads and Intersections  
                                      2 Target Safety Improvements on Local Roads                                    |
| Safe speed                          | 3 Implement a Speed Plan  
                                      4 Enhance Automated Speed Enforcement                                           |
| Safe vehicles                       | 5 Improve the Safety of the Vehicles Entering the Fleet  
                                      6 Encourage the Exit of unsafe Vehicles from the Fleet  
                                      7 Change Consumer Vehicle Purchasing Behaviour                                   |
| Safe road use                       | 8 Move Towards International Best Practice  
                                      9 Enhance the Whole of Government Approach  
                                      10 Wider Use of Alcohol Interlocks  
                                      11 New Interventions for Drug Driving                                             |
| Demonstrating the Safe System       | 12 Safe System Signature Projects  
                                      13 Corporate Partnership Programme  
                                      14 Align Policies and Strategies with the Safe System                           |
For the safe system element safe road users: each of the sub-areas were considered; alcohol/drug impaired driving, young drivers, walking and cycling, distraction and fatigue, and high risk drivers. Of the three safe road use areas of high concern, alcohol/drug impaired driving was thought to have the most potential to be a strategic priority. This is because for young drivers there have been significant actions in recent years. The focus for young drivers is on bedding in the major changes and assessing next steps. Motorcycling could be incorporated in other workstreams, for example, Safe Vehicles and Demonstrating the Safe System. Improving the safety of young drivers clearly requires coordination between agencies and enhancement of the NRSC agencies core business so was considered more a tactical enabler than a strategic priority.

To help frame the conversations for each of these possible actions the following pages set out:

• Safer Journeys goals
• progress so far
• initial thinking on the strengths for each area; and
• explanations of each possible action.

All actions should at least:

**Align with the Safer Journeys Strategy**
- be consistent with Safer Journeys and embed the safe system approach further
- make progress towards a safe road system that is forgiving of human error (or enable other steps that would achieve this)
- develop safe system knowledge and tools and accelerate transfer to partners and stakeholders.

**Be Effective**
- actions that lead to a substantial improvement in road safety outcomes and build a robust platform for future gains
- actions that are underpinned by an evidence-based approach.

**Be Efficient**
- actions that maximise the value from any investment made and provide value for money
- actions that can provide benefits across different elements of the system and for different partners, including economic, environmental and social benefits

**Be Practical**
- the road safety partners need the capability, capacity and commitment necessary to carry out the action
- actions are complementary and consistent with wider transport sector efforts

NRSC agencies invite a conversation around the following questions for each of the possible actions:

• What opportunities can you see in progressing this action?
• What do you still need to learn about this action?
• Who should be involved in this action?
• What challenges might need to be overcome and how that might be done?
• What is the next level of thinking that is needed?

NRSC agencies also ask:

What other actions would you suggest could be strategic priorities?
Safer Journeys goals

The Safer Journeys goal is to ultimately achieve roads and roadsides that are predictable and forgiving of mistakes. They are self-explaining in that their design encourages safe travel speeds. This would result in providing roads and roadsides that reduce the likelihood of crashes occurring and minimise the consequences of crashes if they occur.

By 2020, the aim is to significantly reduce the crash risk on high-risk routes and at high-risk intersections.

Progress so far

The first Action Plan included a focus on targeting high-risk rural roads and urban intersections, progressing safe system demonstration projects and ensuring that the Roads of National Significance (RoNS) are implemented with a four-star KiwiRAP rating.

Progress in most areas has been good. The High Risk Rural Roads Guide, Safer Journeys for Motorcycling Guide, and the pending High Risk Intersection Guide all strengthen our approach to targeting high-risk roads and provide robust tools to guide investment and safety effort. The design standard for the RoNS has been set as a minimum four-star. Changing the Give Way Rule was another significant step for all road users.

Further work is underway to develop a national policy for red light cameras at high-risk urban intersections. While progress has been slow on demonstration projects, there is potential to pick this up over the next three years. In terms of outcomes, progress has been good. The rate of fatal or serious injuries from head-on and run off road crashes has decreased.

There is good knowledge of the type of road designs and treatments that help prevent crashes or reduce the trauma sustained if a crash does take place. A targeted approach to improving roads and roadsides is necessary, and comprehensive plan for State Highways is underway.

In summary there has been progress on making roads and roadsides more forgiving of human error but there is still a long way to go, especially with local roads. Progress on predictable and self-explaining roads has been limited (this is related to the speed management issues discussed under safe speeds).

Strengths and opportunities for improvement

The strengths in this area include:

- the development of KiwiRAP, the High-Risk Rural Roads Guide, Safer Journeys for Motorcycling on New Zealand Roads, and the High-Risk Intersection Guide have given us a good platform of robust tools to guide investment and effort on State Highways and local roads
- the activity that is planned and currently underway to provide roads and roadsides that are designed to be safer and more forgiving

Based on our work so far, opportunities for improvement include:

- ensuring that the potential value of the new tools is maximised through targeted investment and effort
- the Canterbury rebuild. This may provide us with opportunities to utilise the knowledge about designing and building safer roads
- providing signals to road users to increase their understanding of the variability of risk on different parts of the network and adjust their behaviour and speed accordingly
- identifying tools and solutions to reduce risk on local roads.

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Figure 1: Fatal and serious per 100km road per year: rolling 12 month totals

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SAFE ROADS AND ROADSIDES

A SAFE ROAD SYSTEM INCREASINGLY FREE OF DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY

SAFE ROAD USE

SAFE VEHICLES

SAFE SPEEDS
Possible actions

Based on the discussions with NRSC agencies possible actions for discussion are given below.

### Improve high-risk roads and intersections

The development of tools such as the *High Risk Rural Roads Guide*, *Safer Journeys for Motorcycling Guide* and *High Risk Intersections Guide* could be used to implement a programme of improvements to reduce fatal and serious injuries. This could include:

- a targeted safety barrier programme, to deliver a specific length of safety barriers on high-risk State Highways and high-risk rural roads. Other treatments, such as audio-tactile line markings (“rumble strips”) could also be candidates for such an action
- identifying and targeting the highest risk intersections, such as a “top 100” programme with targets to improve a set number of intersections per year
- moving specific lengths of roads rated as 2 stars (for example) in KiwiRAP to 3 stars to align with the State Highway classification system
- addressing motorcyclist safety issues on a specific high risk motorcycling route
- developing a system to ensure funding of the increased operational and maintenance costs of safety improvements, such as improved skid resistance, electronic curve warning signs, audio tactile markings and safety barriers.

Such programmes would ensure that the safety investment made through the National Land Transport Programme 2012-15 is more visible to stakeholders and the public. It could also help galvanise local government action on infrastructure improvements.

### Target safety improvements on local roads

#### Risk rating system for local roads

Attempts to apply a risk rating system for local roads, similar to KiwiRAP methodology, have had limited success so far. A rating system would provide a means to compare the relative safety of local roads, assess the safety of the network as a whole, and allow for proactive rather than reactive treatments and monitor and drive safety improvements.

While challenging, the experience and knowledge gained through the development of KiwiRAP and tools like the *High Risk Rural Roads Guide* could be utilised to contribute to the development of a suitable assessment system for local roads.

#### Use risk rating systems to implement low-cost safety retrofit for local roads

Adopting low-cost solutions could be one way of delivering safety treatments. This action should also consider how to access funding through current options in the National Land Transport Programme 2012-15 and identify new or alternative sources of safety investment from other public or private sector partners. One example of the kind of low cost treatments that could be adopted includes wide centrelines, as currently being trialled in the Waikato.
Safer Journeys goals

*Safer Journeys* sets out a goal of significantly reducing the number of crashes attributed to speeding and driving too fast for the conditions. Ultimately, the aim is for travel speeds that suit the function and level of safety of the road, and road users who understand and comply with the speed limits and drive to the conditions.

Achieving safe speeds will have beneficial effects for a number of other parts of the safe system, particularly for active road users in terms of safe walking and cycling and safe motorcycling. It will also improve the safety of the overall system by increasing the survivability of crashes.

Progress so far

The first Action Plan had three focus areas for safe speeds. These included public campaigns to achieve acceptance of safe speeds, creating speed limits that reflect the safe system, and the increased use of speed cameras.

Work in this area has included the creation and delivery of new public education campaigns that use the safe system approach to human vulnerability to crash forces. Options for rebalancing fines and demerits for speeding offences are being examined, and diverse technologies for speed management are being, or have been explored, including increasing the network of fixed speed cameras, Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA), point-to-point speed cameras, and new forms of variable and advance warning speed limit signs.

Attitudes toward speed limits and speed enforcement have been improving. The percentage of drivers exceeding the speed limit has also declined over the long-term, although it has stabilised in recent years at around 30 percent for open roads and 60 percent for urban roads. However, police reports concluding ‘speed too fast for conditions’ has remained fairly constant between 2009-2011 and is a factor in around 27 percent of crashes.

Overall, only limited progress has been made in this area. There is still significant work required in the area of speed management. While steps have been taken to create an enabling environment for Road Controlling Authorities (RCAs) to set speed limits, it is recognised that more needs to be done to align current policies with the safe system approach and to provide overall consistency in the long term. While some RCAs have introduced revised speed limits more in keeping with a safe system, these are still relatively few in number and are occurring in isolation of a national strategic framework.

Some progress has been made in increasing the use of speed cameras, through the progressive rollout of digital technology to the existing camera network. However, increasing the number of fixed speed cameras has not progressed significantly. Funding has been provisionally set aside in the 2012-15 Road Policing Programme for this purpose. There are also barriers to adopting and making the best use of new automated technology in an integrated way under the current regulatory and operational arrangements.

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**Figure 2: Attitudes to speed limits**

![Figure 2: Attitudes to speed limits](image-url)
Strengths and opportunities for improvement

The strengths of our current position regarding safe speeds include:

• driver attitudes and behaviour are moving in the right direction. Over the long term, mean speeds have reduced, as has the proportion of drivers exceeding the speed limit. Attitudes towards enforcement and limits have also been improving, albeit slower than desired, supported by new public education campaigns using the safe system approach
• improved enforcement that uses risk-targeted approaches such as reducing speed tolerances on special holidays which is effective in raising driver and rider awareness of their speeds over these high risk periods
• using KiwiRAP, the High-Risk Rural Roads Guide and Traffic Note 61, to provide better information to set speed limits that better match the form and function of roads more appropriately.

Based on the work so far, opportunities for improvement include:

• improving the regulatory framework for setting speed limits which has been described as complex and inconsistent at times. The opportunity includes changing the regulatory regime to more reflect the safe system approach and to ensure more consistency in the approach to setting speed limits
• the development and maintenance of an electronic speed map for the New Zealand road network to enable the use of smarter speed management approaches, including Intelligent Speed Adaptation
• utilising new technologies that assist drivers or strengthen enforcement, both in-vehicle (such as Intelligent Speed Adaptation) and external (such as point-to-point cameras and new forms of signage)
• taking advantage of the co-benefits of safer speeds and smoother driving, which include the potential to make substantial fuel savings
• changing the public perception of speed enforcement, for example, by changing the perception that speed enforcement is about revenue gathering
• changing the conversation about speed through refreshed campaigns using a wide variety of mediums.
Possible actions

Based on the discussions with NRSC agencies possible actions for discussion are given below.

**Implement a speed plan**

Work on speed management over the first Action Plan has highlighted the difficulty of making progress on speed management. It has been suggested that what is needed is greater clarity about long-term goals and the steps that will be taken to achieve them, together with the alignment of key practices and supporting RCAs to make changes in a coherent manner.

Establishing a national speed management plan could address this issue and set out goals to be pursued by the partners and stakeholders. These goals could be summarised as:

- people will increasingly understand what travelling at safe speeds means
- travel speeds will reflect a balance of safety and economic productivity
- speed limits will increasingly reflect the use and function of the network

An agreed plan would set out the steps and the time to achieve these objectives. The plan could include improving the setting of speed limits with possible actions including:

- revising the Speed Limits Rule to reflect the agreed goals, safe system principles, and other agreed factors such as economic productivity
- setting out a hierarchy of speed limits and a desired end state, and the steps to move towards this
- enabling steps to support local government to change speed limits, potentially including funding support
- the development and maintenance of a speed map.

Also to help people drive at safe speeds by

- considering making roads more “self explaining” for drivers and riders
- using technology such as Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) to reduce drivers speeding inadvertently, i.e. not being aware of the applicable speed limit

(“Self-explanatory” refers to signs that provide context and an expected speed to help drivers understand what speed is appropriate under those circumstances and why.)

**Enhance automated speed enforcement**

Enforcement is a crucial part of efforts to reduce speed-related death and injury. Increasingly automated enforcement is the preferred approach for delivering speed enforcement, freeing up officers for other duties. Modern technology offers numerous advantages in terms of efficiency, value for money and accuracy for enforcement programmes.

New Zealand’s arrangements for the ownership, deployment, and operation (including related processing) of automated enforcement technology have not necessarily kept pace with advances in technology and the lessons learned from approaches elsewhere. There are opportunities for wider adoption of automated enforcement technology and its integration with other intelligent transport systems (not just in relation to speed) that our current arrangements do not facilitate.

A number of issues that could be examined and possible actions taken include:

- opportunities for use of proven and emerging technologies, including point-to-point cameras, combined speed/red light cameras, weigh in motion devices, and automatic number plate recognition devices
- considering which organisations should own and operate automated devices
- determining the responsibility for particular functions such as prosecution, audit and calibration
- possible alternative delivery arrangements, including outsourcing or other options
- opportunities for the integration of automated technology as part of more coherent intelligent transport systems approaches
- the possibility of hypothecating fine revenue from speed camera offences for specific road safety initiatives to reduce public perceptions related to revenue raising
- investigating funding issues, including the purchase and operation of automated devices.

(Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) has been successfully trialled in Australia, Europe and the United States and is being adopted in a number of leading jurisdictions. Advisory ISA provides a visual and audible warning to a driver if they are exceeding the speed limit, usually through a GPS-based system. There are also other forms of ISA which can actively intervene to reduce or limit the speed of the vehicle).
Safer Journeys goals

Safer Journeys aims to have vehicles that prevent crashes and protect road users, including pedestrians and cyclists, in the event of a crash. To do this the aim is to increase the number of vehicles entering the country with a high crash rating and increase the exit of less safe vehicles from the national fleet by encouraging New Zealanders to choose and purchase the safest vehicle they can afford.

While Safer Journeys sets a goal of reducing the average age of the fleet from over 13 years old to a level similar to that of Australia at 10 years, the first Action Plan identified that it may be better to focus on ensuring that the vehicles entering the country have a high safety rating.

Progress so far

The focus areas of the first Action Plan for Safer Vehicles were increasing public awareness and demand for safer light vehicles, considering regulatory interventions and education to improve child restraint and booster seat use, and incentivising heavy vehicle fleet owners to be increasingly safety conscious.

The re-launch of the Right Car website and accompanying promotional efforts was a significant action in this area as it provides road users with a robust source of information on vehicle safety. Policy work on booster seats is underway. Work to incentivise heavy vehicle fleet owners through the Operator Rating System, Workplace Fleet Safety Programme, and other steps is also underway. Finally, investigation of whether safety features such as Electronic Stability Control and Side Curtain Airbags should be mandatory for vehicles entering the fleet is continuing. Young drivers have been encouraged to drive the safest car available.

The proportion of new cars and light commercial vehicles with a five-star rating is increasing. However, the average age of the used light passenger fleet is still increasing and is now over 13 years. A large number of vehicles involved in serious crashes are 10-17 years old so do not have high crash ratings/good crashworthiness.

There are still large numbers of vehicles that have poor crashworthiness in the vehicle fleet.

Strengths and opportunities for improvement

The strengths of the current work to improve the safety of our vehicle fleet include:

- that consumers are increasingly recognising the importance of safety when looking to purchase a vehicle and are starting to understand the importance of buying the safest vehicle they can afford
- the effect the Emissions Rule has had on the standard of vehicles entering the fleet
- the robust car safety information on the Right Car website
- a wide range of advanced vehicle safety technology is becoming available

Based on the work so far, opportunities for improvement include:

- building on the work done to influence purchasing decisions by highlighting the wide ranging personal and collective benefits of having a safer, more modern fleet
- establishing standards or other mechanisms to ensure that the vehicles entering the fleet are as safe as possible
- working with industry to ensure that buyers purchase the safest car in their price range and maintain their vehicles appropriately
- providing information for buyers on the right tyres that can enhance safety and efficiency
### Possible actions

Based on the discussions with NRSC agencies possible actions for discussion are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible actions</th>
<th>Safe vehicles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improve the safety of vehicles entering the fleet</strong></td>
<td>There are a large number of new and existing vehicle technologies that have major benefits for safety. Existing features include Electronic Stability Control and Side Curtain Airbags and new features include Autonomous Emergency Braking, and Lane Departure warnings. The opportunity is to look at a package of standards and incentives to ensure that the vehicles, including motorcycles, entering New Zealand are the safest possible. This could include setting out a long-term plan to introduce key safety features as mandatory for new and used vehicles and providing vehicle retailers and other stakeholders with sufficient advance notice to plan accordingly. Some stakeholders have already signalled their support for this kind of approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encourage the exit of unsafe vehicles from the fleet</strong></td>
<td>Implement actions that encourage the exit of older and less safe vehicles from the fleet. Trials of scrappage schemes have had limited success so other innovative actions are needed to achieve this outcome. This links to the “changing consumer purchasing behaviours” and complements other signals and information provided to the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change consumer purchasing behaviour</strong></td>
<td>The aim is to change the behaviour of people purchasing a vehicle, including motorcycles, so that they purchase the safest vehicle that they can afford. Consumer information programmes have been a key component internationally to change consumer demand for safer vehicles and to influence manufacturers and retailers. The Right Car website provides a good foundation to build on in this area. Right Car could be further enhanced by expanding the information on the site and extending its coverage for example to include motorcycles and motorcyclist safety gear. A key step could be implementing safety labelling at the point of sale, ensuring that consumers are able to easily compare the safety of vehicles. This would complement the mandatory efficiency information already provided by EECA. It will be important to think about how to create the right information that targets specific audiences such as young drivers and parents of young drivers, and fleet owners (light commercial fleets). Developing partnerships with the insurance and motoring industries to promote these messages would be important. Another key area will be how to create incentives for people to purchase safer vehicles.</td>
</tr>
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Alcohol/drug impaired driving

Safer Journeys goals

_Safer Journeys_ sets out the goal of having road users who are skilled, competent, alert and unimpaired; they comply with road rules, take steps to improve road safety and expect safety improvements. 

_Safer Journeys_ also sets a goal of reducing the level of fatalities caused by drink and/or drugged driving from the level of 28 deaths per one million population, to a rate similar to that of Australia at 22 deaths per one million population.

Progress so far

Alcohol/drug impaired driving is an area of high concern in _Safer Journeys_. The focus in the current action plan is on implementing regulatory interventions, and undertaking targeted education and enforcement. Alcohol focused initiatives are also part of efforts in the young driver and high risk-driver areas.

Some key actions have been progressed in the 2011-2012 period including lowering the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) for young drivers to zero and implementing an alcohol interlock programme. Research on lowering the adult BAC is underway and will help inform future policy decisions. Other work was also undertaken to examine the extent of drug-impaired driving and to educate the public about drug-related impairment.

Advertising campaigns continue to emphasise the social unacceptability of drink-driving. Alongside steps taken in the first Action Plan, this area is a significant focus of core business, particularly in terms of enforcement, prevention, education and advertising.

In 2011 there was a marked decline in the number of alcohol-related fatal and serious crashes. This may signal that recent interventions have had a positive effect.

However, alcohol impairment continues to be one of the leading factors in serious crashes. There also continues to be high levels of offending, with approximately 30,000 offences annually. This puts a heavy burden on the justice sector.

Strengths and opportunities for improvement

The strengths of our current work to reduce the impact of alcohol-impaired driving include:

- that the majority of drivers/riders recognise the risk associated with alcohol impaired driving/riding and comply with the law
- enforcement continuing to be an effective tool in deterring and detecting a proportion of drink-driving
- early signs are that the introduction of a zero limit for young drivers has had positive effects
- new preventative approaches with the alcohol interlock programme operational from 10 September 2012 and $1 million per year secured for additional stop drink-driving education courses
- information from the Centre for Road Safety Intelligence such as better intelligence on drugs and driving
- the start of the substance impairment and driving pilot implementation project

Based on the work so far, opportunities for improvements include:

- better aligning aspects of our current approach with international best practice
- leveraging off wider government and community work currently underway that seeks to reduce alcohol-related harm
- improving alcohol enforcement approaches in rural areas, including the use of other tools and new approaches in rural areas
- improving our understanding of the prevalence and importance of drug-impaired driving and developing possible interventions.

Figure 4: Fatal and serious crashes involving driver drugs/alcohol per 1,000,000 population
### Possible actions

Based on the discussions with NRSC agencies possible actions for discussion are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move towards international best practice</th>
<th>Wider use of alcohol interlocks</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Safer Journeys</strong> highlighted that New Zealand was behind other countries in some areas of international best practice for dealing with alcohol impaired driving. One area was the BAC levels. Initial indications are that the introduction of the zero BAC limit for under 20s has been successful for young drivers.</td>
<td><strong>Expand the use of interlocks, following international practice.</strong> This could include:</td>
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<tr>
<td>The government is gathering further data on the issue of adult BAC levels. This research is currently underway and once it is completed advice will be provided to government on its findings and the latest international research. In addition to this there could be a focus on what else could be considered from international best practice in the area.</td>
<td>• providing alcohol treatment and rehabilitation services for people sentenced to have an alcohol interlock</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enhance the whole-of-government approach</strong></td>
<td>• expanding the use of interlocks as a sentencing option and even potentially as a diversionary option</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drink-driving is primarily an issue of public health (in respect to harmful drinking) which has negative consequences for road safety. In addition to solutions in the transport sector there are wider cross-government approaches because the core issue is an alcohol problem.</td>
<td>• supporting the proactive use of interlocks as an intervention or voluntary treatment for those with alcohol issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-faceted approaches covering many government agencies could be used more to help prevent drink-driving. These approaches could include wrap-around services for offenders including:</td>
<td>• promoting voluntary adoption of interlocks in commercial and public vehicles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• alcohol assessments at the time of their initial court appearance</td>
<td>While the use of interlocks is comparatively advanced in some of our peer countries, this preventive measure has just been introduced in New Zealand. Expanding and accelerating the use of interlocks would require significant leadership across the transport, justice and health sectors, and with local and community partners. It would also require new funding sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• access to appropriate treatment and rehabilitation services</td>
<td><strong>New interventions for drug-driving</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• supporting and educating those around the offender (eg family, employers, community groups)</td>
<td>Current work includes advertising and education to improve awareness, and research to understand the extent of the problem.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• access to technology to assist reducing drink-driving, such as interlocks and in-home alcohol monitoring.</td>
<td>Far less is known about the impairment effects of drugs than about alcohol, and the issue is far more complex. However, if the technology improves to allow for faster and more accurate detection of drug-impairment this could lead to a greater ability to enforce drug-driving laws. Education will continue to be an important tool, particularly in helping people to understand the risks of driving under the influence of both illicit and prescription drugs.</td>
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<td>This holistic approach could be trialled as part of a collaborative demonstration project.</td>
<td><strong>NRSC agencies were not sure if enough was known to determine if this needs to be a strategic priority and if so what interventions need to be investigated. Therefore, a placeholder for further enquiry, including New Zealand research, into this issue is suggested in the second Action Plan.</strong></td>
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**Safer Journeys goals**

*Safer Journeys* introduced the safe system approach to road safety which has the objectives to:

- make the road transport system more accommodating of human error
- manage the forces that injure people in a crash to a level the human body can tolerate without serious injury
- minimise the level of unsafe road user behaviour.

Rather than reacting to crashes, the level of ambition can be lifted to prevent deaths and serious injuries by reducing risk across the whole system. This means setting safety performance goals for the system, and proactively working to improve the elements: roads and roadides, vehicles, speeds, and users.

Implementing a safe system approach requires fundamental changes to how people think and act about road safety. It means moving away from blaming the user to a genuine shared responsibility between system users such as drivers, riders, cyclists and pedestrians, and system designers such as engineers, employers, and policymakers. All of these parties need to take responsibility for working together to reduce crash forces to survivable levels.

The *Safer Journeys* goal is that by 2020 the safe system approach will be fully embedded and progress against safe system performance goals can be demonstrated.

**Progress so far**

Since the adoption of the safe system approach, it has been partially implemented in the NRSC agencies through the revision of policies, performance measures and through new ways of communicating road safety activity. While this is a promising beginning, there is much to do to continue this shift.

There are also signs of progress in the wider community and in the public discussion of road safety, but this is less advanced as might be expected at this stage. Much of the public debate is still framed using traditional concepts of blaming the user, rather than looking at the broader issue in safe system terms. Changing the road safety conversation will require a sustained effort, as will engaging the private sector, community and local government partners for shared responsibility for road safety.

Ways of objectively assessing the embedding of the safe system approach are needed.

**Strengths and opportunities for improvement**

The strengths of the current work to deliver the safe system include:

- the adoption of the safe system approach as the guiding strategy for the decade as set out in *Safer Journeys*
- a sense of momentum and progress created by major steps set out in the *Safer Journeys* and the first Action Plan, such as raising the driving age and changing the Give Way Rule
- putting in place foundations for future improvements and initiatives, such as establishing safety as one of three priorities in the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding, developing new tools such as the *High Risk Rural Roads Guide* and establishing bodies such as the Motorcycle Safety Advisory Council.

Based on work so far, opportunities for improvement include:

- expanding the knowledge of the safe system approach beyond central government agencies
- continuing to change the conversation with the private sector and public, to move away from a blame culture to safe system thinking
- using high-profile projects and initiatives that put safe system approaches into effect to demonstrate road safety benefits and what is achievable to facilitate wider learning and engagement opportunities
- engaging and developing partnerships with a wider range of organisations and groups as part of shared responsibility for road safety. This includes ensuring that existing central and local government partners are fully aware of, and take ownership of, their responsibilities in a safe system
- continuing to align national and regional processes, standards and guidelines to ensure they support and do not act as barriers to uptake of the safe system approach.
Possible actions

Based on the discussions with NRSC agencies possible actions for discussion are given below.

**Safe System signature projects**

Projects to implement safe system approaches have been a major feature of many road safety efforts overseas. Often called ‘demonstration projects’, these help to put safe system thinking into practice and achieve measurable road safety results on a variety of different scales (corridors, areas, networks, communities). They also have been a basis to develop and spread safe system knowledge and innovative approaches using new technology. As identifiable and high profile projects, they also provide a means to engage with current and new partners in order to further embed safe system approaches and share responsibility for road safety.

The suggestion is to create a small number of large, high profile projects that look to make substantial advances in implementing the safe system. The aim would be that a wide range of road safety partners make a clear contribution to these projects. An advantage of this approach is it would help to build safe system capability in New Zealand’s regions and inspire greater local ownership of road safety results.

The Canterbury rebuild provides an opportunity to ensure safe system concepts are embedded from the earliest stages of urban planning and design. Another suggestion has been for a project in the Waikato, given that region’s importance in terms of overall road trauma and past successes in implementing innovative actions.

Delivering these projects would require new ways of working nationally and regionally, with partners establishing joint, dedicated teams to ensure the full benefits of cross-sector collaboration were realised. Resourcing constraints will need to be taken into account as the proposal develops.

**Corporate partnership programme**

Safer Journeys emphasises shared responsibility for road safety, and safe system approaches globally recognise the key role that the private sector and other groups outside of central government have to play in road safety. In order to embed the safe system approach, wider partnerships need to be developed to secure the contribution of the private sector and others to road safety, and to draw upon the considerable knowledge and experience in improving workplace safety, operating safety management systems and incentive-based approaches that exists outside of government.

One aim would be to establish a collaborative network, share good practice, and to seek ways to improve road safety outside of traditional regulatory approaches. The National Transport Commission in Australia has developed such an approach.

**Align policies and strategies with the Safe System**

In early discussions, some stakeholders have suggested there may be existing policies, strategies and accountabilities that do not align as well as they could with the vision set out in Safer Journeys. One example is the current provisions for setting speed limits, which could be addressed as part of the Safe Speeds area outlined earlier.

Another example is whether regional and local government responsibilities for providing a safe road system could be strengthened or clarified and made more consistent. For example, some regions have clear road safety outcomes they are working in partnership to achieve, while others do not.

One approach might be for each Regional Transport Committee (or Regional Council) to determine the desired road safety outcomes and targets to achieve a safe system within that region, and that these should then have a greater influence on investment decision making within that region.

NRSC agencies would be interested in whether stakeholders have identified any ways in which the safe system approach can be properly embedded in policies, strategies and other areas of our transport system.