



29 June 2021

RTF rejects being excluded from speed setting

The Road Transport Forum (RTF) opposes a rule change by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency which removes that agency's duty to consult the freight sector when setting road speed limits, says chief executive Nick Leggett.

"With 93 percent of freight in New Zealand moved by trucks, and considering the significant contribution that makes to the economy, we must have a say on what happens on the roads, which are the workplace for those we represent," Leggett says.

"We can't be locked out of that because the government doesn't like what we say.

"We have submitted on this rule change, that suggests an independent speed management committee take on responsibility for speed setting, with no opportunity for direct submissions, or specific freight industry consultation. We think that is inadequate and that the current consultation process should remain.

"The RTF has been vocal about the Government's speed-setting agenda, that has been wrapped up in claims of road safety and decarbonisation.

"Speed setting is something of a coarse approach to safety management and is viewed as the low-cost option when measured against network improvements, or safety improvement investments.

"While the RTF recognises the objectives of having a formal speed setting policy framework, a worrying trend that appears to be gathering momentum is the need to reduce speeds rather than carry out network and route upgrades, especially when New Zealand roads are not without significant safety design deficits and functionality challenges.

"The Government's reluctance to invest in long-term roading infrastructure to improve and future-proof the network for vehicles, and ensure better outcomes for vehicle drivers in the event a crash occurs, is a concern.

"The current lack of investment in roads for vehicles, and the subsequent lowering of speed limits to make roads 'safe', is a policy of death by a thousand cuts. It will result in higher costs, due to increased trip times, which will eventually impact all consumer goods.

“We believe our industry has valuable input into discussions about roads in New Zealand and we do not want to be removed from those discussions. That doesn’t feel very democratic,” Leggett says.

The RTF submission to Waka Kotahi is available [here](#).

For more information contact:

**Josie Vidal, RTF manager communications & government relations
Mob: 022 092 9353**

About Road Transport Forum New Zealand (RTF)

RTF provides unified national representation for several regional trucking associations. RTF members include Road Transport Association NZ, National Road Carriers, and NZ Trucking Association. The affiliated representation of the RTF is about 3,000 individual road transport companies which in turn, operate 16-18,000 trucks involved in road freight transport, as well as companies that provide services allied to road freight transport.

The road freight transport industry employs 32,868 people (2.0% of the workforce), has a gross annual turnover of \$6 billion, and transports 93% of the total tonnes of freight moved in New Zealand.