

NORTHLAND REGIONAL ROAD SAFETY PLAN

2009 – 2012



CONTENTS

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD	3
INTRODUCTION	4
REGIONAL TRANSPORT OVERVIEW	5
THE NEW STRATEGY	6
The Role of RoadSafe Northland	7
Overarching Philosophy of the Strategic Plan	8
Vision, Mission, Goals and Actions	9
STRATEGIC ACTIONS	10
1. Speed	11
2. Alcohol	13
3. Inattention and Fatigue	15
4. Vulnerable Road Users	16
5. Young Driver Education	17
6. Restraints	17
7. Unsafe and Illegal Vehicles	17
IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING	18
FUNDING	20
Funding and Budgets	21
APPENDIX 1:	22
The Background Against Which The New Strategy Has been Developed	



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Northland Regional Council is committed to creating a safe and reliable transport system throughout Northland, which allows our region to realize its economic potential and to support the unique way of life which we enjoy.

Integral to the provision of a safe system, is a road safety plan which aspires to all road users feeling safe on Northlands roads. This 'Northland Road Safety Plan 2009-2012' is all about moving our region closer to our espoused vision.

Although we have a unique living environment, Northlanders have, for years, been disadvantaged by having physical and geographical factors which make road construction more challenging and expensive than other regions. Northland's road safety record partly reflects the relative unsafe nature of our roading environment. It is also indicative of social and behavioural factors requiring a planned and co-ordinated approach to reduce the social cost which these factors create.

Road Safety is a shared responsibility between communities, families and individuals, government agencies, local government and many other organizations. We all must play our part in improving the safety of the environment in which we live, work and play. I commend the proposals brought together in this plan as a vital step in making our roads better and safer for us all to enjoy.



John Bain
Chairman – Northland Regional Transport Committee



John Bain – NRTC Chairman

INTRODUCTION

The need for the development of a Strategic plan for road safety in Northland arises from a number of factors. Northland has a unique physical and road transportation environment which demands road safety solutions to be delivered differently from other regions. The development of a Road Safety Plan needs to sit within the overall development and revision of the Northland Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) to ensure that the further development of Northland's transport infrastructure proceeds in an integrated way so that all users of the roading network see progress towards a safer, more sustainable and more responsive system.

The Northland Regional Land Transport Strategy was last revised in 2006. It is currently under revision to fit the requirements of the Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2007. The Northland Regional Road Safety Plan had its last major revision in 2003. This current revision is designed to reflect on the 2003 plan, re-examine the issues and action strategies which were agreed then, re-establish a new strategic plan based on past achievement, emerging issues and consulted agreed actions in order to sit our new strategic plan within the revised Northland Regional Land Transport Strategy. This Plan has a three year update planning cycle with a full review every six years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author John Williamson wishes to acknowledge the following sources of information used in preparation of this report:

Members RoadSafe Northland including feedback during targeted communication phase.

Road Safety to 2010 – www.landtransport.govt.nz/strategy-2010

Crash Analysis System – www.landtransport.govt.nz/research/cas/index.html

Northland Regional Road Safety Plan 2004-2010 – [www.nrc.govt.nz/Transport/Road-safety/#road safety plan](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/Transport/Road-safety/#road%20safety%20plan)

ACC – www.acc.co.nz/preventing-injuries/on-the-road/index.htm?ref=footer

Road Safety Issues Reports (NZTA website) – www.landtransport.govt.nz/performance/index.html

Road Safety Calendar 09/10 – www.landtransport.govt.nz/advertising/docs/road-safety-calendar-2009-10.pdf

Regional Land Transport Strategy for Northland 2006-2016
– www.nrc.govt.nz/Transport/Draft-Regional-Land-Transport-Strategy

New Zealand Automobile Association – Various Reports

– www.kiwirap.org.nz

– www.aa.co.nz/about/issues/Pages/default.aspx

Whangarei District Council – www.wdc.govt.nz

Far North District Council – www.fndc.govt.nz

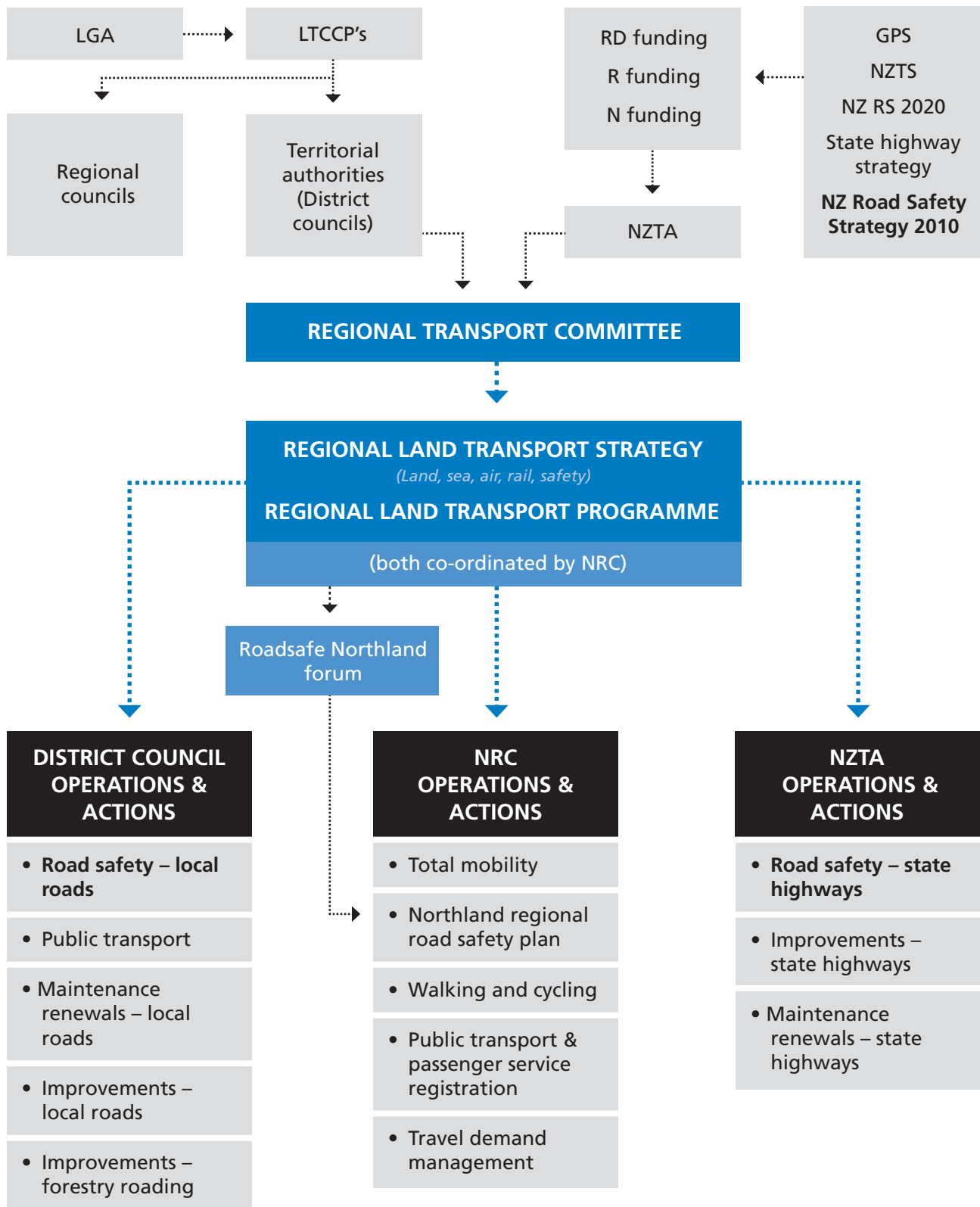
Kaipara District Council – www.kaipara.govt.nz

NZ Fire Service – www.fire.org.nz

St Johns Ambulance – www.stjohn.org.nz

Ministry of Transport – www.transport.govt.nz

REGIONAL TRANSPORT OVERVIEW





THE NEW STRATEGY

THE ROLE OF ROADSAFE NORTHLAND

RoadSafe Northland was established in 1991 as a policy and information sharing of Road Safety Activities in Northland.

RoadSafe Northland undertakes to develop road safety programmes and oversee their implementation by supervising the activities of two Road Safety Co-ordinators who contract through New Zealand Transport Agency to deliver specific community based programmes. These programmes are partnerships between a range of community groups and RoadSafe Northland members.

RoadSafe Northland operates through a Memorandum of Understanding with Northland Regional Council. It convenes a regular forum involving members of Far North District Council, Kaipara District Council, Whangarei District Council, Northland Regional Council, ACC, New Zealand Police, New Zealand Transport Agency, Northland Health, Multiserve, NZ Automobile Association, National Road Carriers (Inc), St John Ambulance Association, New Zealand Fire Service and Ministry of Education. RoadSafe Northland contracts Northland Road Safety Trust to administer its activities.

A technical group of RoadSafe Northland has been the working group responsible for developing this Strategic Plan.

RoadSafe Northland seeks to develop a greater advocacy role within the evolving Strategic Transportation framework.



OVERARCHING PHILOSOPHY OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

“TOO CLOSE BACK OFF”

This plan seeks to systematically coordinate the application of the three E's – Education, Engineering and Enforcement – approach to Road Safety in Northland.

It seeks to ensure this through a strong commitment to the approach of developing safety management systems and Road Safety Action Plans through the four Road Controlling Authorities in Northland. It will promote a focussed and consistent leadership role through these action plans which assures that Northland roads are regarded as a network and that Road Safety on these roads is regarded as a Regional network responsibility.

This approach is developed from evidence emerging from, established data sources, crash reduction studies, independent audit of the roading environment and personal engagement with people and organizations working within this environment.

This philosophy is to promote a more proactive rather than reactive approach to improving the Northland road safety environment and it endeavours to account for the evolving needs of all road users such that pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and public transport users regard Northland's roads as improving in safety for their activities.

This strategy will also advocate for a level of funding for the continued development of the Northland Road Transport network that is more appropriate to the comparative current state of Northland's roads. This level of funding should take into account the evidence of their relative unsafe nature as a road safety environment, the geology and relative cost of developing roads in Northland, the socio-economic state of the Northland region and the evolving needs of the heavy transport and tourism industries.



VISION, MISSION, GOALS & ACTIONS

The key to a strategic plan is that those who interact with it or see it as a touchstone to their activity, can relate to the aspirations identified and see how their actions can help in working towards its achievement.

VISION : The big picture – What we aspire to

“All road users are safe on Northland’s roads.”

MISSION : The business we are in and generally what we set out to achieve.

“The Northland Rooding Network continues to improve in order to create a safe environment for all road users in Northland and where safety is embedded in the thinking of all Northland road users”.

This is underpinned by the following operating policies

1. To coordinate and assist with integrated activities across all relevant agencies aimed at improving driver attitudes, driver behaviour and the safety of identified at risk groups.
 2. To improve the safety design aspects of the physical land transport network.
 3. To develop systems which improve the reporting, recording and investigation of road crashes.
-

GOALS : Specific, Measurable, Attainable & Time Framed

1. By 2012 there will be fewer than a combined total of 300 deaths and hospitalisations of more than one day duration for the calendar year as a result of crashes on Northland roads (or an equivalent 23% decrease from 2007).
2. That each of the speed related ,alcohol related, restraint related, inattention related, pedestrian, motorcyclist and cyclist death and injury casualty rate have a minimum reduction of 20% from the 2007 figures.
3. That all road controlling authorities in Northland have established a minimum investment of 10% of their road maintenance budget acknowledged to specific road safety engineering improvements by 2012, based on NZTA Funding Guidelines.
4. That all road controlling authorities who have identified by evidence based methods their top five road safety risk sections annually. From these to have developed schedules of high prioritised projects to be implemented in a three E’s way through Rooding Authorities and Task Force/Road Safety Action Plans.
5. To develop and lead collaborative initiatives in Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Community involvement which are focussed on priority road safety issues and delivered through Road Safety & Task Force Action Plans.
6. To work with Northland organizations encouraging them to develop policies relating to drink driving, restraint use and fatigue for their employees.
7. To be recognised as the Northland road safety leadership advocate.



STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The Strategic Actions are the key action plans relating to the goals and cover the following activity areas, speed, alcohol, inattention and fatigue, restraints, vulnerable road users and young driver education.

1 SPEED

Agreed Actions in Each Area

Loss of Control – Too fast for the Conditions

- (a) Each Road Controlling Authority to identify the five priority areas from the Road Safety Audit and Crash Reduction Study. Each “high risk area” to be subject to a detailed study through a road safety taskforce and develop Road Safety Action plans co-ordinating engineering, education and enforcement interventions, with the goal of “fixing” each area as a road safety hotspot. It is anticipated that each taskforce will be based around territorial local authority boundaries.
- (b) Continued and ongoing high visibility enforcement around the known loss of control and speeding hotspots.
- (c) Appropriate signage including fixed and mobile digital speed indication devices to indicate the speeds being attained by drivers against the advised or legal speed.



Unsafe or Illegal Speeding

- (a) Road speed data to be analysed to identify the speeding risk areas.
- (b) Deploying enforcement patrols to these targeted risk areas, seeking continuous improvement in outcomes.
- (c) Develop a speed signage approach which assures that drivers are reasonably aware of changing speed zones.
- (d) Where appropriate, District Councils respond to resident identified unsafe speed environments with traffic management practices.
- (e) Continue to develop the range of speed danger sign placements.



1 SPEED *(continued)*

Schools

- (a) Road Controlling Authorities to identify high at risk schools where excess speed identifiably puts lives at risk. Develop a 40 km per hour speed zone policy to be implemented around identified schools. (NZTA Traffic Note 37).
- (b) Such implemented zones to have a school travel management plan developed and implemented. This includes auditing the traffic and roading environment around the school.
- (c) Trial around selected schools and school bus providers the development of identified active warning signs on those buses which identifies when children are entering and exiting the buses. Assess the trial for possible wider implementation.
- (d) All school zones to be appropriately identified. (NZTA Traffic Note 56).
- (e) Police to enforce with “Speed Kills Kids” campaigns within the identified school zones.

Beaches

- (a) Each Roading Controlling Authority to institute a beach speed control and education approach in association with Northland Regional Council



“TOO FAST SLOW DOWN”

2 ALCOHOL

It is recognised that excess and inappropriate alcohol behaviour is an issue of society at large. It is also acknowledged that dealing with the issue within a road safety environment necessitates a strategic involvement within the wider strategies of addressing alcohol abuse.

Northland has already an established range of bylaws, policies and programmes to deal with specific problems at a local level. This strategy sets out to identify, to continue to implement and potentially extend those programmes which are being successfully implemented. Some are specific to the larger metropolitan area of Whangarei and would be deemed inappropriate for smaller centres.



Industry

- (a) Continue to work with industry initiatives designed to manage the public availability and consumption of alcohol from licensed premises across Northland.
- (b) Continue to develop cooperative programmes designed to move patrons by affordable public transport away from high risk consumption and crowd attracting areas within urban areas at peak night hours.
- (c) Continue to promote and encourage accreditation for door and bar staff for all licensed premises such that Host responsibility becomes part of the licensed premises culture.
- (d) Investigate the appropriateness of District Plan provisions for parking associated with licensed premises.

Sporting Organisations and Vulnerable Young Drinkers

- (a) Continue to develop the Alcohol Management Operation (AMO) and ClubMark programmes through sporting clubs with bar facilities seeking to extend its operation throughout Northland and ensuring that accreditation under the programme is regarded as meaningful and effective.
- (b) Develop a staged programme for extending the AMO philosophy throughout established multisport complexes and other appropriate sporting codes by seeking the involvement of an appropriate programme sponsor.
- (c) Seek Liquor Licensing Agency and Police assistance in monitoring and enforcing licence and AMO programme requirements.

2 ALCOHOL *(continued)*

Drink Drivers

- (a) Support the continuation by Police to enforce the random breath testing approach and checkpoints at selected localities throughout Northland
- (b) Work with the Justice system to identify recidivist drink drivers and to continue to develop and evaluate the pilot Recidivist Drink Driver course currently undertaken by Northland Health. Roll out Northland wide seeking sponsorship as necessary.
- (c) Enforce recidivist drink drivers seeking as harsh penalty as possible through the judiciary.
- (d) Continue to support the Students Against Drink Drivers (SADD) programme including advocating for more sustainable funding.
- (e) Continue the current education Fatal Vision programme through Brain Injury Association, promoting how impaired drivers become through alcohol consumption
- (f) Advocate and support the development and introduction of reliable multi substance testing devices to test for the presence of drugs in the system of drivers.



“ALCOHOL + SPEED = DEAD AHEAD”

3 INATTENTION & FATIGUE

Motorists

- (a) Continue to develop the Fatigue Stop programme which encourages drivers to break their journey at strategic high traffic times throughout the year. Target 20 fatigue stop days throughout the year.
- (b) Through ACC, develop a shift worker education programme which encourages shift workers and their employers to manage worker fatigue level as they drive home.
- (c) Continue to develop the general signage and education approach which warns of fatigue danger.
- (d) Continue the development of well signed rest stop areas on the State Highway system.
- (e) Advocate for banning of cell phone use by motor vehicle drivers.
- (f) In recognizing the wide range of cultures and languages of people using Northland roads, work with appropriate organisations (such as tourism bodies, rental vehicle operators and new immigrant service providers), to ensure that these road users understand the public expectations of driving on Northland roads.

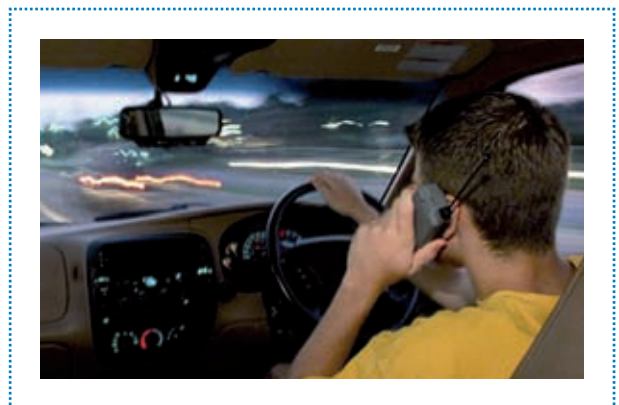


Heavy Vehicles

- (a) Through the Road Freight Cluster Group develop a fatigue awareness education programme such that each driver has a self managed and supervised approach to their fatigue situation.
- (b) Police to enforce the appropriate logbook hour and documentation for all heavy vehicle drivers.
- (c) Road Controlling Authorities in consultation with the heavy vehicle industry to identify the need and as appropriate, develop a series of truck pull off areas such that heavy vehicle drivers are encouraged to take a break.

The Roding Environment

- (a) As a consequence of roads having independent road safety audits, all roading controlling authorities to develop a prioritised programme of safety retrofitting and as appropriate, audio tactile strips around identified loss of control or fatigue high risk areas.



“TXTING WHILE DRIVING IS DANGEROUS”

4 VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

Schools

See the Schools section
(*Speed : Agreed Actions – pg 12*)

Cyclists

- (a) In association with cycling groups, District Councils to identify popular cycling routes and establish within these “Share the Road” signage and education campaigns for all road users, including a code of conduct for cyclists
- (b) Through established cycling groups and retail outlets, develop a series of cyclist skills and safety workshops such that cyclists adopt safe road behaviour including personal visibility.
- (c) Road Controlling Authorities, within their Walking and Cycling Strategies, to progressively incorporate the road needs of cyclists within their roading programmes and established roading/cycling corridors.
- (d) Explore the possibility of using established and new transport corridors for cycling and walking routes.

Motorcyclists

In association with ACC, develop a promotional campaign designed to lift the awareness of the needs and issues, including training and retraining, of motorcyclists within the roading environment.

Pedestrians and Mobility Scooters

- (a) Through workshops, public forums and organizations like Age Concern, develop a programme designed to lift the awareness and safety issues for pedestrians and mobility scooters within their identified component of the roading environment.
- (b) Road Controlling Authorities to audit for safety, their pedestrian corridors and develop a prioritised schedule of renovation.

Active Community

- (a) In association with Sport Northland develop an activity based programme designed to encourage an active community aimed at reducing the kilometres travelled by single occupancy vehicles in urban areas by 10% in 2012.
- (b) To make the use of public transport more effective and encourage RoadSafe Northland members to develop their own goals as an example.

Horses

- (a) Support the horse riding community to develop a plan which acknowledges horse riders as a vulnerable road user and which works toward a signage and bridle path development program.

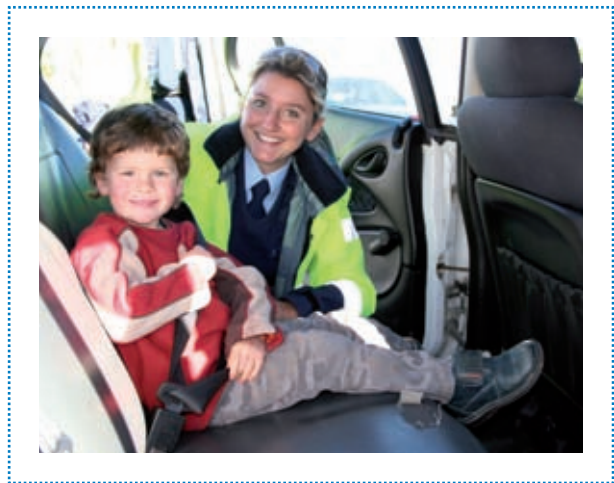


5 YOUNG DRIVER EDUCATION

- (a) In association with established driving schools, address the issue of a driver instructor shortage.
- (b) Develop a programme which advocates that young drivers move through their graduated license by providing enhanced skills and attitude training such that a 50% more young drivers than currently gain their full drivers licences within the prescribed minimum period.
- (c) In association with Rotary , make the Rotary Youth Driver Awareness programme available to all secondary schools throughout Northland.
- (d) Continue to develop and promote driver license assistance courses.

6 RESTRAINTS

- (a) Continue to develop the programme of regular roadside checks of the safety of child restraints and their wearing rates.
- (b) Police to enforce with regular campaigns the wearing of front and rear seat restraints, taking the opportunity to incorporate education components.
- (c) Continue to develop an education package warning of the consequences of unsafe restraint behaviour.
- (d) RoadSafe Northland member organizations to purchase vehicles with defined restraint and safety features.
- (e) Support 'Safekids' in reviewing the age for mandatory child restraints.



7 UNSAFE & ILLEGAL VEHICLES

- (a) Support police and road controlling authorities in eliminating unregistered and/or unwarranted vehicles from Northland roads.



IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

IMPLEMENTATION

“GIVE BIKES 1.5m”

The strategy's effective implementation depends on four factors

1. The commitment of the RoadSafe Northland partners and the buy in by the Regional Transport Committee to the role that road safety has within the strategic development of the Northland Land Transport network.
2. Effective and owned leadership of the RoadSafe Northland Forum who have developed the strategy . This leadership is manifest in the process of the Road Safety Action Plans and Road Safety Task Forces. Ideally these two roles need to come together so that the State Highway system and local roads are focussed within the territorial local authorities and the regional boundaries.
3. The actions are developed in a collaborative project based way which gain and delivers the joint commitment of resources to the improvement of Road Safety in Northland.
4. Part of the implementation process involves a commitment to training for the community group partners.

MONITORING

Each of the strategy actions in this plan has been identified with one or more of the RoadSafe Northland partners for its implementation. These partners deliver their actions through a road controlling authority action plan or task force. Monitoring of these actions will, therefore be through the action plan or task force meetings.

The plan envisages a consistent leadership and reportage approach which will culminate in regular written reports to the RoadSafe Northland Forum.

Budgets are managed and monitored through the organizations charged with budgetary oversight.

An annual report of progress of activities and outcomes will be presented to the Northland Regional Transport Committee.



FUNDING

FUNDING & BUDGETS

Sources of funding are in the process of being quantified.

Sources of funding include the Community Activity Funding programme funded through New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and local authorities on a 75% Financial Assistance Rate (FAR), the Regional Development Funding programme through NZTA as 100% funding, the local authorities funding of local roads based on a financial assistance rate which is different for the three Northland Districts and the Road Policing Programme.

As well, other agencies such as Accident Compensation Corporation and Northland Health have identified road safety programme funding budgets which play an important role in the funding and delivery of road safety in Northland.

These respective budgets are under development and negotiation at present.

A number of issues emerge

1. The Community Activity Budget projections have been significantly increased from previous years. These depend on the local voluntary contribution being quantified as its 25% share.
2. Total roading budgets are in the process of being set. Achievement of this strategy may require some reprioritising and/or reallocation of total budgets.
3. There is a strong case for all road safety works to be on a minimum FAR of 75%, the same as the Community Activity Programme.
4. There is some restricted Community Activity Funding within the State Highway (NZTA) component however there needs to be further focussed funding as most significant road crashes occur on State Highways.
5. Agencies need to signal priority road safety projects well before these applications are submitted. This is to encourage collaboration towards a regional focus and identify funding gaps.

“WELCOME BACK DEAD TIRED? TAKE A BREAK”



APPENDIX 1:

THE BACKGROUND AGAINST WHICH THE NEW STRATEGY
HAS BEEN DEVELOPED

APPENDIX 1:

The Strategic and Operating Context

The Northland Regional Land Transport Strategy of 2006 identifies the following as its strategic vision, objectives, key regional issues and key roading issues viz.

Vision – Northland has an integrated, responsive, safe and sustainable land transport system.

Overall Objectives

- Assist economic development
- Assist safety and personal security
- Improve access and mobility
- Protect and promote public health
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Integrate land use and transport planning
- Ensure an affordable and financially sustainable transport network.

Key Northland Regional Issues

- A low and geographically dispersed population base and therefore a high private vehicle dependency for inter and intra regional trips (although public transport usage has increased in Whangarei)
- Some economically deprived rural communities (particularly in the Far North)
- Strong rural based and manufacturing economy comprising pastoral farming, forestry, fishing and tourism.
- Diverse socio-economic patterns – high growth in the south (as a result of Auckland's growth) with the North relatively remote and sparsely settled. The East Coast has a high recreational use and coastal subdivision while the West Coast has fewer settlements and slower, even negative, population growth.
- Northland is a favourable and preferred holiday destination particularly on East Coast settlements with its consequent impacts on traffic congestion and safety at weekends and holiday periods.

Key Transport Issues

- Road design, maintenance and investment in infrastructure. High proportion – relative to other regions – of unsealed roads. Difficult geology for road construction. Availability and locality of suitable aggregate.
- Funding – Low population and socio-economic base means less funding is available to meet local authority share to be able to receive New Zealand Transport Agency funding. The region has a lot of catch up.
- Freight transportation – forestry, livestock, dairy products, fertiliser, metal and general freight mean that heavy vehicles cause frequent and severe pavement deterioration.
- Land use planning – need to integrate land use and transport planning.
- Rail Network – has locality and structural issues which needs development to facilitate an integrated transport system.
- Passenger transport services are generally lacking although undergoing some development.
- Travel Demand Management, in order to reduce private motor vehicle usage and promote alternative means of transport, is at an immature stage of development.
- Cycling and Walking – a safe cycle and pedestrian infrastructure is lacking and its development is likely to create demand.
- Road Safety – There is a strong need for a more streamlined approach to delivering road safety initiatives.
- Tourism – The increase in tourism has meant an increasing need for the development of roadside facilities.

Source: Northland Regional Land Transport Strategy 2006

APPENDIX 1: *(continued)*

“SWITCH ON 2 B SEEN”

During the last three years the Northland Regional strategic context has not changed a great deal.

The physical and socio-economic context has improved slightly with significantly enhanced dairy prices and favourable economic growth generating enhanced tourist seekers. The east coastal settlements continue to develop steadily while in the Bream Bay area of Whangarei has seen significant subdivision development. Both the forestry manufacturing and marine industries around Whangarei have seen more focussed development. This continues to put pressure on the transport infrastructure.

The Key Transport Issues have also seen some evolution. The road design, maintenance and infrastructure and funding issues remain. However a significant investment of regional development funding from central government has meant that enhanced development of so called “forestry roads” within the local roading network is being achieved.

While this “one off” upgrade has been beneficial, the long term implication of elevated heavy traffic levels on these roads is still there. As well, the Northland Regional Council has undertaken to designate the rail route from Whangarei to Marsden Point and is seeking an undertaking to develop the track as a national priority.

Passenger transport services within the Whangarei urban area have been further enhanced, such that modal shift to public transport passenger transport is becoming meaningful. Walking and cycling strategies are being developed within the District Councils as increasing emphasis is put on attaining a multidimensional sustainable transportation system.



APPENDIX 1: *(continued)*

The Northland Road Safety Strategic Context

The Northland Regional Road Safety Plan 2004 – 2010 identified the following as its strategic picture at that stage

Vision

“No road users killed or seriously injured on Northland roads.”

Mission

The Mission was lifted from the Northland Regional Land Transport Strategy at that time as:

“A Land Transport network that allows safe travel for all people in Northland”

With these safety policies as:

1. To assist with integrated initiatives across all relevant agencies aimed at improving driver attitudes, driver behaviour and the safety of identified at risk groups.
2. To improve the safety design aspects of the physical land transport network.
3. To develop systems which improve the reporting, recording and investigation of crashes.

Goals

1. To have fewer than a combined annual total of 160 road deaths and hospitalisations (of more than one day duration) as a result of crashes in Northland by 2010.
2. To further develop regional co-ordination of road safety resources, (engineering, enforcement, educational, community development) through RoadSafe Northland, and the development of collaboration initiatives that focus on priority road safety issues.

From these – Key Actions were Developed

1. All Road Controlling Authorities establish a Safety Management system.
2. RoadSafe Northland continues to develop and implement regional and local road safety community development projects and programmes. These will be developed in partnership with key stakeholders and communities.
3. All District Councils investigate problems and with the support of the Land Transport Safety Authority, the Police and others, prepare Road Safety Action Plans for priority crash factors and continue to plan, implement and evaluate specific projects and programmes for At Risk groups.

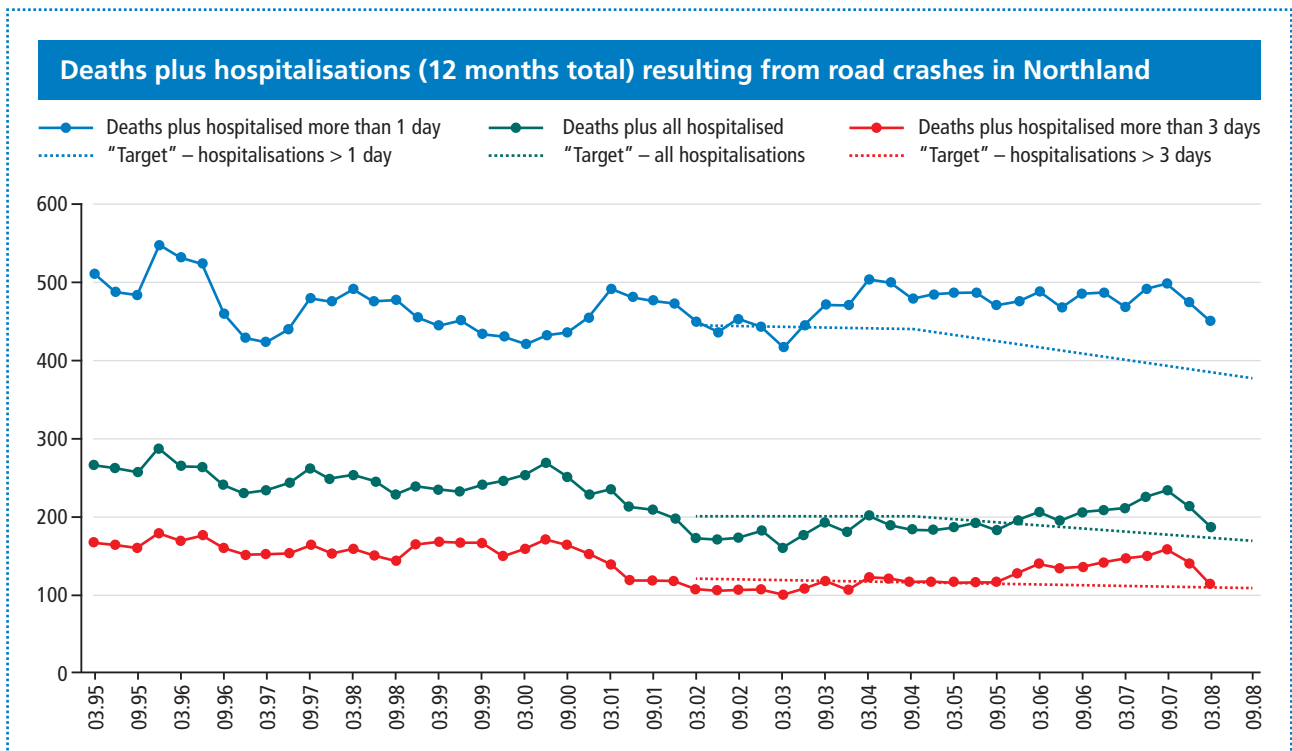
Current Progress

The most complete Crash Analysis data available is as at March 2008, indicates a slight tracking down in casualty rates for Northland. 338 in March 2008 as compared to 405 and 379 for March 2007 and March 2006 respectively.

The latest death figure until the end of December 2008 indicates only slight progress in the Northland performance as against the same time last year (29 vs. 30). This toll compares to a more significant change for the Auckland region (20% reduction) and against the National Toll (366 vs. 421).

Total Deaths and Hospitalisations (greater than 1 day) as at March 2008 for Northland at 338 compares to the target set in 2003 of 160. Considerable variability exists between years and between quarters with the attached graph (1) illustrating that deaths plus serious casualties is tracking towards target but when all hospitalisations is accounted, there is some way to go to achieve target. The lag in identifying hospitalisations occurs because of the investigative requirements of this statistic.

APPENDIX 1: (continued)



Overall though, Northland’s road toll remain reasonably consistent over recent times. While hospitalisations are tracking downwards.

The regional Mission identifies a policy “to develop systems which improve the reporting, recording and investigation of crashes”. It is difficult to measure progress as there is no legal obligation to report non-injury crashes. However based on official CAS numbers and the best information available through the Health system indicates that there is still a significant gap in numbers although it is not known what this means in terms of unaccounted social cost or dollars missed out on through the transport budget.

The question arises about the relative value of collecting additional evidence as it could involve private information which may add little to the ability to extract funds for roading improvements.

Key actions resulting from the current strategic plan specify that Road Controlling Authorities develop both Safety Management Systems and Road Safety Action Plans. These have been established but need to develop a different dynamic in order to be effective.

As well, specific projects and programmes for At Risk groups involving community stakeholders continue to be developed.

APPENDIX 1: *(continued)*

Overview of Trends and Issues

Analysis of data within the MOT publication "Motor Vehicle Crashes in New Zealand 2007" indicates a number of trends from a national perspective which will be set against the Northland trends from which conclusions will be drawn.

1. Injuries and Fatalities Nationally

The national ratio of injuries per 10,000 population is 37.9. This ratio hit a low point in Year 2000 of 28.6 but has generally been trending upwards over the last seven years although the injury rate is still lower than 14 years ago (46.4 in 1994).

The National road toll (fatalities) has been generally trending downwards from 1972 (2.79 per 10,000 population) to 1.0 per 10,000 in the 2007 year.

The injury crash rate has been generally tracking up since year 2000 although the highest crash rate per 10,000 population of 47.4 occurred in 1972.

Questions arise about the measurement of crash rates in earlier years but the general trend of fatalities trending down, injuries trending upwards and crash rates per unit of population trending upwards may have more to do with the relative safety of the vehicles on the road rather than the safety of the road itself relative to the driver behaviour of those using the roading network.

Within the categories of other road users over most recent years, for motorcyclists, the trending is consistent with cars – fatalities trending down and injuries trending up. Cyclists – injuries are trending up with fatalities relatively stable and Pedestrians, both killed and injured, is relatively stable.

2. Northland Trends in the National Context

Total casualties within the three Northland District Council areas in 2007 amounted to 797 or 51.7 per 10,000 population. This compares to 37.9 as the national average. Further analysis reveals significant variability between the Districts with Whangarei having 32, Far North 69 and Kaipara 79 casualties per 10,000 respectively. Both Far North, and Kaipara Districts have amongst the highest casualty rates per unit population in the country.

The issue with Kaipara's casualty rate is reinforced with the trending of total number of crashes over time. Most Districts in the country have a steady or slight trending upwards of total number of crashes over the past five years.

Most Districts show some year's crash rate as being out of the ordinary but the overall trend is reasonably steady. Kaipara's total crashes are on a strong upward trend from 57 in 2003 to 103 in 2007. This is a rate of 5.53 per 10,000 exceeded only by Southland at 5.98 per 10,000. The crash rate in Far North is also well above the average. It is reasonable to surmise that the crash rate in the two predominantly rural Districts in Northland has a relationship to the standard of the roads in those two Districts but that is not the only factor.

The specific issues relating to the road safety environment will be dealt with in a subsequent section. Data from the 2007 motor vehicle crashes report provide factors of interest:

APPENDIX 1: *(continued)*

Open Road Speeds

	2001	2007
Northland	96.3	95.0
W aikato	99.4	95.2
Bay of Plenty	96.7	91.5
Hawkes Bay	101.8	96.3
W ellington	98.7	93.2
National Average	100.2	96.3

This indicates that over this time, that open road speeds have reduced but that the speed on Northland roads has reduced less than the National average. This pattern is not so apparent with the urban road environment.

Restraint Wearing

Front Seat	2001	2003	2005	2007
Northland	88	90	93	100
W aikato	94	93	96	96
Bay of Plenty	94	93	93	94
Hawkes Bay	82	90	91	94
W ellington	94	91	96	95
Rear Seat				
Northland	72	87	94	71
W aikato	80	82	83	88
Bay of Plenty	53	70	85	76
Hawkes Bay	52	76	96	84
W ellington	71	82	84	87

The Northland figures indicate a high rate of restraint use. However, the Northland District Police Crash Review 2007 notes that notices issued for restraint offences have increased suggesting an increasingly complacent attitude to restraint use. Clearly the data is in conflict such that the Police report suggests that restraint use is a live issue on Northland roads.

APPENDIX 1: *(continued)*

“SLOW DA FLOW PASS YOUR KEYS TO A SOBER BRO”

Cycle Helmet Use

	2001	2003	2005	2007
Northland	85	69	91	77
Waikato	96	93	91	89
Bay of Plenty	93	87	87	93
Hawkes Bay	91	85	94	90
Wellington	96	91	93	88

Again the 2007 Northland figure could be an anomaly, based on the trending from previous years but it could also indicate an evolving complacent attitude regarding road safety. There have been no specific road safety/cycle helmet programmes in recent years.

Overall this limited data suggests a road safety environment in Northland that is trending in the wrong direction compared to the National scene.

Road Safety Issues in Northland

New Zealand Transport Agency has prepared Road Safety Issues reports based on reported crash data and trends for 2003-2007 period. These reports give details of contributing causes and the main characteristics of a range of different category of crashes. These are summarised by Road Controlling Authority district:

Whangarei	Kaipara	Far North	State Highways
Bends	Crashes at Bends	Bends	Bends
Loss of Control <i>(straights)</i>	Loss of Control <i>(straights)</i>	Alcohol	Speed
Road Factors	Alcohol	Speed	Alcohol
Alcohol		Road Factors	Road Factors

While different factors impact differently through the region, the issues which emerge from this analysis are:

APPENDIX 1: *(continued)*

Loss of Control on Bends

This relates to two factors – Too fast for the conditions and engineering issues relating to specific bends. Further analysis indicates that Learner, Restricted, Disqualified and Never licensed drivers are over-represented as well as 15-19 year age group. Crashes on bends often means the driver runs off the road hitting a roadside hazard or another vehicle.

Speed

The New Zealand Transport Agency statistic indicates a much higher proportion than the national average, are under 29 and/or in the other than fully licenced category.

Alcohol

Compared to national statistics, a significantly higher proportion are male and a high number of disqualified drivers of all ages – a recidivist drink driver problem.

Road Factors

Involve around 20% of the total crashes throughout the region and is identified as predominantly a rural issue.

The NZTA reports provide a guideline to the broader issues indicating where they might be different in Northland than in other areas.

Police Commentary

A report by Inspector Clifford Paxton "Northland District Fatal Crash Review 2007" provides further insights based on crash evidence.

Key insights into the issues include

1. People play the most significant role in Northland crashes as compared to vehicle and road factors.
2. Youth and/or young drivers are a particular issue as compared to the national scene i.e.

	Northland NZ	
0 – 14 Age	17.6%	4.6%
15 – 19 Age	17.6%	13.9%
20 – 24 Age	23.5%	18.5%

3. Alcohol and Drug dependency is responsible for 21% of casualty crashes – the highest percentage in New Zealand.
4. People will check the risk before modifying behaviour and increasing the perception of risk is a key policing tactic.

The Police model of deployment has been to focus on

- Policing the roads
- Deploying to risk through Risk Targeted Patrol Plans
- Seeking performance outcomes

Reduction in fatalities is claimed against the increased performance measures.

5. Socio-Economic factors such as low self esteem, low education, alcohol and drug dependency contribute to more risky behaviour and high casualty. The significantly higher incidence of Maori in motor vehicle crashes is identified.
6. An excessive speed including loss of control on bends (too fast for the conditions) is the principal issue in Northland with the perceived risk of being caught as the crucial determinant in the decision to speed.
7. Alcohol is a factor in 29% of all fatal and serious injury crashes with higher alcohol levels lowering the perception of risk. Compulsory breath testing is the best deterrent particularly at targeted times. High recidivists is an issue.

APPENDIX 1: *(continued)*

8. Restraints use has worrying contrasts with a recorded high level of restraint use but high number of offence notices and high casualty rate through lack of restraint use.
9. Intersections have a low crash risk in Northland compared to the National scene, with red light running being the biggest risk. The severity of crashes at uncontrolled intersections was lower because of increased care.
10. Pedestrians and Cyclists at 26% of all fatalities in 2007 was considerably higher than the previous year and the National average. The question is raised about road design needing to accommodate these users along with a 30 km per hour speed limit in certain built up areas and the need to promote higher cycle helmet wearing.
11. Fatigue was a reducing factor in 2007 in Northland although a major area nationally. High risk people are younger males and shift workers along with long hours working commercial drivers.
12. Motorcyclists are an emerging risk in Northland. Motorcyclists carry 18 times more risk than car drivers on the road. They are 2% of the vehicle fleet but they account for 17% of road related injury claims to ACC with emerging over 40 year old motorcyclists being a unique risk.
13. Road factors by themselves are unlikely to be the principal cause of Northland road accidents. However the development of self explaining forgiving roads and the systematic removal of unnecessary roadside objects along with signage and audible edgeline has the potential to mitigate driver behaviour and poor judgement on certain sections of roads in Northland.
14. Vehicle factors are rarely the leading causative factor in road casualties but the question is raised about whether drivers in safer vehicles adopt unsafe driving practices in compensation.

The NZTA Road Safety Issues reports and Inspector Paxton's report provide some insight into national trends which Northland stands against. They form the basis for developing the strategic plan.

Emerging Legislative Issues

The recently enacted Land Transport Management Amendment Act (2007) requires that Road Safety Strategies fit within the Regional Land Transport Strategy signed off by Regional Transport Committees.

The recent change of Government has meant a change in emphasis on infrastructure development and the new Government Policy Statement on Transport was imminent at the time of writing this Plan.

The Regional Road Safety Strategy needs to incorporate District Council Road Safety Strategies and Action Plans. These strategies and plans covering education, engineering and enforcement and road policies and/or community road safety plans need to be consolidated, formalised and implemented within the District Road Safety Action Plans.

As well, new proposals relating to young and novice drivers, speeding, give way and stop signs, seatbelts, fences and excessive noise are at various stages of enactment.



NORTHLAND REGIONAL ROAD SAFETY PLAN 2009 – 2012