

Hon Simeon Brown

MP for Pakuranga

Minister for Energy
Minister of Local Government
Minister of Transport

Minister for Auckland
Deputy Leader of the House



Grant Smith
Palmerston North City Council
Grant.smith@pncc.govt.nz

Dear Grant,

As you will be aware, a new Government has taken office with a comprehensive transport programme that will see Kiwis get to where they want to go, quickly and safely. The Government is writing a new Government Policy Statement on Land Transport to focus on reducing travel times and to create a more productive and resilient transport network that drives economic growth to boost incomes and unlock land for houses.

I am writing to inform you of recent changes made to the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2022 (the Rule).

I am aware Regional Transport Committees (RTCs) and Road Controlling Authorities (RCAs) are currently developing, or have developed, speed management plans in line with the Rule and deadlines set by the New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA).

The Rule has been amended to revoke the deadlines set by the NZTA, including the 29 March 2024 deadline for submitting the final draft speed management plans for certification. The deadlines and targets for reviewing speed limits, including around schools, have also been revoked. The Rule no longer requires RTCs and RCAs to develop speed management plans, and instead allows them to choose to do so.

As part of the Government's 100-day commitments, I intend to replace the current Rule.

This new Rule will ensure that when speed limits are set, economic impacts – including travel times – and the views of road users and local communities are taken into account, alongside safety.

The new Rule will also implement requirements for variable speed limits on roads approaching schools during pick up and drop off times, rather than permanent reductions, to keep young New Zealanders safe when they are arriving at, or leaving, school.

I consider it is undesirable for RTCs and RCAs to apply public money and resources in developing speed management plans only to have to revisit the plans when the new Rule takes effect. Given this, if you have not already finalised your speed management plan, I encourage you to consider the new Rule before making final decisions.

I also note the policies within the previous Government's so-called 'Road to Zero' strategy, in relation to speed limits, are no longer the Government road safety strategy for the purpose of the Rule. The Government is committed to road safety and will be publishing new objectives for road safety along with the new Rule next year.

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160 New Zealand
+64 4 817 6804 | s.brown@ministers.govt.nz | www.beehive.govt.nz

I am working with officials on the timeline for replacing the current Rule and I expect them to keep you updated on progress.

In addition, I understand that some local authorities have been developing programmes with NZTA and other stakeholders to reduce vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) by the light vehicle fleet, using funding from the Climate Emergency Response Fund. I have given notice to NZTA to end its work on these programmes, and to not commit any further funding to local authorities (beyond existing contractual obligations) to develop these programmes.

Thank you for your understanding as we work through these changes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Simeon Brown', with a stylized, cursive script.

Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Transport

Copy to: Waid Crockett, waid.crockett@pncc.govt.nz