



Media Release

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New round of RONS will help NZ catch up

Road Transport Forum Chief Executive Ken Shirley has welcomed the National Party's announcement of a new round of roads of national significance.

"The fact is that New Zealand still faces a major transport infrastructure deficit," says Shirley. "These new RONS will go a long way to helping us catch up, while improving resilience and safety."

"Of course, there will also be the usual detractors to these projects, but it is worth reflecting on the success of the first round of RONS and the positive impact they are already having on communities and the economy."

"I am glad that both major parties have now made formal commitments to finding an enduring solution to the Manawatu Gorge, it is a vital freight route that links the eastern and western sides of the lower North Island."

"The East West Link is a similarly critical project to freeing up freight movements around Auckland, says Shirley. "But currently there is a lot of uncertainty with it before in the Environment Court. It is encouraging that the political commitment is there to see it through however."

"The Katikati to Tauranga project is absolutely necessary from a safety point of view, just recently that road was identified as one of the most dangerous in New Zealand. If we are serious about getting the road toll down we must address such routes."

"Finally, the extension into Northland with the Wellsford to Whangarei route is a natural progression to further realise the potential of the Northland economy and improve its connectivity to Auckland."

"The road transport industry looks forward to the certainty of other political parties committing to these projects also, they are far too important to be treated as political footballs," says Shirley.

RTF is joining with a number of other transport organisations including the AA, the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, New Zealand Shipping Federation and Bus and Coach Association to host the Election

2017 Transport Summit at Te Papa tomorrow. This is a great chance to hear directly from the political parties on their transport policies and quiz them on issues important to the broader transport sector. Information and tickets are available at www.transportsummit.org.nz.

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