



19 December 2019

RTF supports move to get drugged drivers off roads

The Road Transport Forum (RTF) strongly supports the Government's moves to get drugged drivers off our roads, says RTF chief executive Nick Leggett.

"More people are killed on the roads by drugged drivers than by drunk drivers so we have been asking the Government for some time to introduce adequate roadside drug testing," Leggett says.

"Saliva testing for drugs, followed by impairment and blood testing had to happen, so we are pleased to see the Government announce this.

"Those of us in the safety sensitive industries are very concerned about this Government's plans to legalise recreational cannabis, so it is imperative some steps are in place to ensure employers can meet workplace health and safety laws. This is one step in that direction.

"We are also pleased to see stiffer penalties for distracted drivers to improve road safety.

"We do not however, support wholesale speed limit cuts around New Zealand.

"We think roads should be 'engineered up' to adequate safety limits rather than the Government just accepting the roads are unsafe and deciding not to fix them.

"Long stretches of road with reduced speed limits will slow down the delivery of goods and consequently, make those goods more expensive.

"We have offered to prove this to the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) by taking them on truck trips to witness the slow down and hear what that means for businesses.

"The roads are the workplace for truck drivers, so no one supports road safety more than us. But we want to see the right risk profiling balance, not a sharp swerve in the wrong direction," Leggett says.

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 Associations 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 26,600 people (3.0% of the workforce), has a gross annual turnover of \$6 billion, and transports about 70% of New Zealand's land-based freight measured on a tonne/kilometre basis.