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Urgent clarity needed on Transmission Gully

The completion date for construction of the Transmission Gully motorway north of Wellington needs urgent clarity from the Government, Road Transport Forum (RTF) chief executive Nick Leggett says.

“I understand that the Government’s lockdown of New Zealand meant that no further work could be done on this motorway for those five weeks,” Leggett says. “But I am really concerned that I have been contacted in the past week, since Level 3 came into force, by a number of people associated with the build saying that contracting equipment has been removed from the site and worker numbers have been cut. They have also suggested the budget has been cut and the timeline has been extended two years.

“This is a vital piece of public infrastructure and at a time the Government is promising to invest in infrastructure big time, it worries me that people associated with Transmission Gully are in the dark and coming to me for answers. People might be able to accept delays because of Covid-19, but only if the information is upfront and honest.

“In the final straight of construction of such a large project, which was due to be completed by the end of this year, it is a worry to hear that contracts for supply and equipment have been cut, and workforce numbers reduced.

“The concern for New Zealanders is that this is the biggest active road construction project on the Government’s horizon. The Government has signalled it wants to heavily invest in infrastructure projects, including roads, to stimulate the economic damage done by Covid-19. However, if Transmission Gully can’t be completed due to labour and budgetary issues, it undermines confidence in the Government’s ability to deliver on any other infrastructure projects.

“Transmission Gully is a much anticipated and key piece of motorway for the economic development of the lower North Island. We need answers now on what is happening with the project.”

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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.