



Media Release

23 June 2016

Road transport industry supports Government's investment in road safety

"The Government's announcement of a \$600 million commitment to a nationwide road safety programme has the full support of the Road Transport Forum and wider road freight industry," says RTF Chief Executive Ken Shirley.

"Anything that can be done to reduce the risk of injury and death on our roads is very welcome."

"The road transport industry has long advocated for an improvement to New Zealand's rural roads. Traditionally these have been neglected in favour of more congested urban or intercity routes, yet the fatality and crash rates tell the story, far too many serious accidents occur on these rural highways."

Livestock, forestry and dairy product transporters are heavy users of the rural road network as they help facilitate the economic activity of our primary sector.

"Despite a steady reduction in the heavy vehicle crash rate over the last 20 years driving large trucks often with live loads on narrow, loose and difficult rural roads can be dangerous. Improving the visibility and signage, widening centrelines and putting down more rumble strips will help trucks and other motorists avoid the split second situations that can have very serious personal and financial consequences."

"The forecast of 900 fewer deaths and serious injuries over the next ten years is an ambitious but admirable target."

"The reality however is that a number of improvements that are suitable and effective for cars and light vehicles often have little to no effect on trucks. Wire median and roadside barriers will not prevent a truck going across the centreline or going off the road and it is true that some bridge approaches present a greater challenge for trucks than they do for cars."

“The industry is therefore keen to make sure NZTA remains engaged with us to identify the hotspots and limit, where we can, the risk to heavy vehicle traffic.”

The Road Transport Forum and its associations already take road safety extremely seriously. The Road Transport Forum with the assistance of NZTA is running a highly successful series of rollover prevention seminars all around the country and the NZ Trucking Association has just launched their Share the Road Safely with Big Trucks Programme.

“Road Safety is an ongoing challenge and improvements can always be made, especially as technology and understanding advances. Today’s announcement is a great step forward and the road transport industry is very supportive of it,” says Shirley.

Contact:
Ken Shirley
021 570 877