

Hon Mark Gosche

Minister of Transport



28 February 2002

Media Statement

Transport Vision

Land Transport changes announced today reflect the government's vision for the future of the New Zealand transport system, says Transport Minister Mark Gosche.

"The vision is that by 2010 New Zealand will have a transport system that is affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable."

Mr Gosche said a New Zealand Transport Strategy (NZTS) based on this vision was currently being developed.

The objectives of the strategy would be:

- assisting economic development
- ensuring safety and personal security
- improving access and mobility
- protecting and promoting public health, and
- ensuring environmental sustainability.

"The transport sector has lacked a strategic focus. The NZTS will provide a strong direction across all modes of transport - land, sea and air - and will link the government's social, economic and environmental goals."

Full details of the strategy will be announced later this year.

In keeping with the NZTS, the government has identified clear priorities for land transport funding, and these priorities are reflected in the new "*Moving Forward*" land transport package, Mr Gosche said.

The priorities for the National Land Transport Fund (as the current National Road Fund will be called) will be:

- reducing severe traffic congestion
- improving passenger transport
- promoting walking and cycling
- assisting regional development and alternatives to roading, and
- improving road safety

"Roading will of course continue to be the major focus of land transport funding. But we are looking to a more balanced mix of options."

“The transport strategy will reinforce many of our existing priorities. For example in our two years in government, we have increased passenger transport funding by 107 per cent including this new boost. The same is true for road safety. This latest increase means government funding for road safety has increased by 38 per cent under this government.

“This is the first time under any government that transport funding has specifically focussed on regional development, and on walking and cycling.”

“We are making our priorities very explicit. And we are making changes to the funding system to ensure that government priorities are reflected in spending decisions - something that has never happened before. The existing framework isn’t flexible enough, and doesn’t easily allow government priorities to be translated into funding priorities.”

“Transport funding agency Transfund New Zealand will be required to ensure government priorities will be better reflected in its future funding decisions.”

“Both Transfund and Transit New Zealand will be required to review all major projects currently planned, to ensure that they all meet the new strategic objectives.”

A more strategic and longer-term focus for funding decisions will also result from the changes. Planning of land transport infrastructure invariably involves long gestation periods and a commitment of resources over many years. Therefore longer term planning is essential, said Mr Gosche.

“Transfund and Transit will be required to have 10 year revenue and expenditure plans and these will be more closely aligned with the government’s goals.”

Other land transport policy changes planned to implement the government’s transport vision include:

- Regional councils will be able to fund, and under agreed conditions, both own and operate public transport infrastructure and services
- Legislative barriers to greater co-operation between road controlling authorities will be removed;
- A national cycling strategy will be developed;
- Where appropriate, encouragement will be given to carrying more heavy freight by rail;
- Further work will be done on congestion pricing issues
- Road management powers will be consolidated and updated.

“The government is significantly boosting the amount of money in the land transport system, but many of the issues won’t be fixed by money alone. The funding boost, combined with these policy changes, will help give us a land transport system that is up to the huge demands being made of it. “

Full details of the package can be found on <http://www.executive.govt.nz/minister/gosche>.

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