

# ACRS Submission on the Draft Katoa, Ka Ora: Auckland Speed Management Plan 2024-27



## ***About the Australasian College of Road Safety***

The Australasian College of Road Safety was established in 1988 and is the region's peak organisation for road safety professionals and members of the public who are focused on saving lives and serious injuries on our roads.

The College Patron is His Excellency General the Honourable David John Hurley AC DSC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

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## Introduction

The Australasian College of Road Safety is the region's peak membership association for road safety with a vision of eliminating death and serious injury on the road. Our members include experts from all areas of road safety including policy makers, health and transport professionals, academics, community organisations, researchers, federal, state and local government agencies, private companies and members of the public. The purpose of the College is to support our members in their efforts to eliminate serious road trauma through knowledge sharing, professional development, networking and advocacy. Our objectives include the promotion of road safety as a critical organisational objective within government, business and the community; the promotion and advocacy of policies and practices that support harm elimination; the improvement of relative safety outcomes for vulnerable demographic and user groups within the community; the promotion of post-crash policies and practices; and the promotion of a collegiate climate amongst all those with responsibilities for and working in road safety.

The College believes that we should prevent all fatal and serious injuries on our roads; the road traffic system must be made safe for all road users; system designers should aim to prevent human error and mitigate its consequences; life and health are not exchangeable for other benefits in society; and that all College policy positions must be evidence based.

## ACRS submission on the Draft Katoa, Ka Ora: Auckland Speed Management Plan 2024-27

Auckland Transport's commitment to Vision Zero is strongly supported by the College and provides a strong foundation for this Speed Management Plan 2024-27. Speed management will be essential to both the long-term goals and interim 2030 targets. The draft plan is supported by the police, fire and emergency services and health sectors, as well as national transport agencies, in a cross-governmental programme. This is important given the multi-disciplinary nature of road safety.

The draft plan builds on work done to date, and notes that more than 3,000 roads (almost 40% of the network) now have set safe speed limits but acknowledges that not everyone in Auckland fully supports the plan yet.

### a) Alignment of speed limits with road design

A key premise of Katoa, Ka Ora is ensuring that speed limits are lowered on roads where the environment and design "...already look and feel like a slower speed." (p40)(1) The ACRS are strongly supportive of this approach, noting it is directly aligned with the following key points of the [ACRS Policy Position Statement on Speed Management](#):

2. *Design traffic environments based on the nature and function of roads that are credible and plausible to road users, then set speed limits appropriate to this section of road.*
3. *Use traffic calming and infrastructure changes to achieve lower speeds where road functions include movement of a mixture of motorised (drivers/riders) and non-motorised (pedestrians, bicyclists) road users and to moderate speeds on high-speed roads.*
4. *Make sure that road users know the speed limit and understand why this limit is applied.*

*5. Ensure speed limits are credible and believable in terms of the traffic environments in which they are applied, and enforcement of speed limits is led by general deterrence strategies.(2)*

The ACRS urges Auckland Transport to ensure that roads included in Katoa, Ka Ora for permanent speed limit change have road designs and an environment that reflect the proposed lower speed limit. The ACRS acknowledge that a key challenge of the widespread roll out of safer speeds is political and social support and the quickest way to erode that support is to apply limits to roads that do not support slower speeds. This also means that ‘trialling’ lower speed limits by signage alone relies heavily on enforcement and does not provide the community with an accurate experience during the trial period, or what the road would be like with the lower speed limit and supporting physical measures.

The ACRS recommends that physical measures are deployed at locations where the road design does not support slower speeds. These physical measures typically aid mobility and accessibility of pedestrians and cyclists e.g. narrowed and raised crossing points, and provide the added benefit of reducing speeds above and beyond what can be achieved through changes to speed limit signs alone. Funding must be provided to allow for physical measures to accompany speed limit changes. The outcome is a safer environment for all road users and greater likelihood of maximising road trauma reductions.

#### **b) Success of previous tranches**

The ACRS note the success of the previous tranches of speed limit reductions around Auckland. The draft Plan includes the evidence that the first phase of changes has led to a 30% reduction in deaths and a 20% reduction in serious injuries in the first 2 years, compared with a 9% increase in fatalities on other Auckland roads yet to have their speed limits addressed.(1) Recognition of success will help to demonstrate the possibilities and encourage community acceptance in new areas.

The statistics may be more impactful as examples Aucklanders may recognise and relate to. ACRS recommends that the Plan highlight specific case studies such as the St Heliers 30 km/hr zone including evidence of their success both in implementation and acceptability, and in reducing trauma incidents.

#### **c) Additional benefits of speed reductions**

ACRS notes the interpretation taken by Auckland Transport, of ‘speed limits around schools’ from Section 5 of the Setting of Speed Limits 2022. We are strongly supportive of the inclusion of the journey to school on local roads to facilitate safer walking and cycling and encourage active and public transport. Feeling unsafe remains one of the key barriers to increasing active transport use.(3) Along with separated infrastructure, lower speed limits are one of the ways to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

As noted in the draft Plan and the ACRS policy position statement on climate change and road safety, lowering speeds will also contribute to lowering emissions from the transport sector.(4) This is a key benefit aligned with the aim of reducing New Zealand’s transport emissions by 41% by 2035.(5)

#### **d) Monitoring and evaluation**

Success of the speed reduction programme will be seen not only in the proportion of roads with speed limits addressed, and trauma rates, but in community acceptance and support. Much greater reliance will be required on enforcement where implementation is not supported. This may be monitored through an additional measure of quality in terms of intuitiveness of the measures and speed reductions achieved.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, the NZ Chapter of the ACRS is strongly supportive of the Draft Katoa, Ka Ora: Auckland Speed Management Plan 2024-27. We recommend that:


- Adequate funding, with support through Waka Kotahi, is provided to ensure physical measures are installed where necessary to support and reinforce lower speed limits, including traffic calming and perceptual countermeasures;
- Case studies of success be highlighted in the Plan; and
- Interim measures of quality be added to the monitoring and evaluation.

ACRS appreciates the opportunity to make a submission and contribute to improved road safety in Auckland through speed management.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.



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