

21 December 2023

Hon Dr Shane Reti
Minister of Health
Private Bag 18888
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

Email: Shane.Reti@parliament.govt.nz

Dear Minister

Subject: Urgent appeal to maintain reduced speed limits for road safety

I am writing to you on behalf of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons to urgently appeal for the maintenance of reduced speed limits on Aotearoa New Zealand's roads. We believe that this is crucial for the safety of all road users and to prevent unnecessary fatalities and lifelong injuries.

Road injuries present a significant cost to the government, not only in terms of the financial burden of hospital stays and extensive rehabilitation but also in the emotional toll it takes on individuals and their families. By maintaining lower speed limits, we can help reduce the number of road injuries and alleviate the strain on our healthcare system and the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC).

Research from [Austroads](#) has consistently shown that reducing speed limits significantly reduces the risk of death and serious injury in road accidents. The correlation between speed and the severity of injuries is well-established and it is imperative that we prioritise the safety of all road users by keeping speed limits lower.

Aotearoa's roads are known for their challenging conditions, including winding roads, blind spots, and limited passing lanes. Increasing the speed limits on these roads would only amplify the risks and dangers. It is essential to ensure that our roads are fit for safe travel and that the well-being of our communities is prioritised.

We understand the need for efficient transportation and the desire to improve travel times. However, we firmly believe that the long-term consequences of reversing the reduced speed limits outweigh any short-term benefits. The health and well-being of our communities should be the top priority, and maintaining lower speed limits is a crucial step in achieving this.

We respectfully request that you reconsider any plans to reverse the reduced speed limits and instead focus on implementing further measures to enhance road safety. We are available to provide any additional information or support that may be required to address this matter effectively.

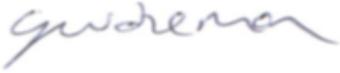


Committed to
Indigenous health

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

We look forward to your prompt response and action to ensure the safety of all road users.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'C Wakeman', written in a cursive style.

Dr Chris Wakeman, FRACS

Chair – RACS Aotearoa New Zealand Trauma Committee

cc: Minister of Transport, Hon Simeon Brown

Minister of ACC, Hon Matt Doocey

Audrey Sonerson, Chief Executive, Ministry of Transport

Megan Main, Chief Executive, ACC