

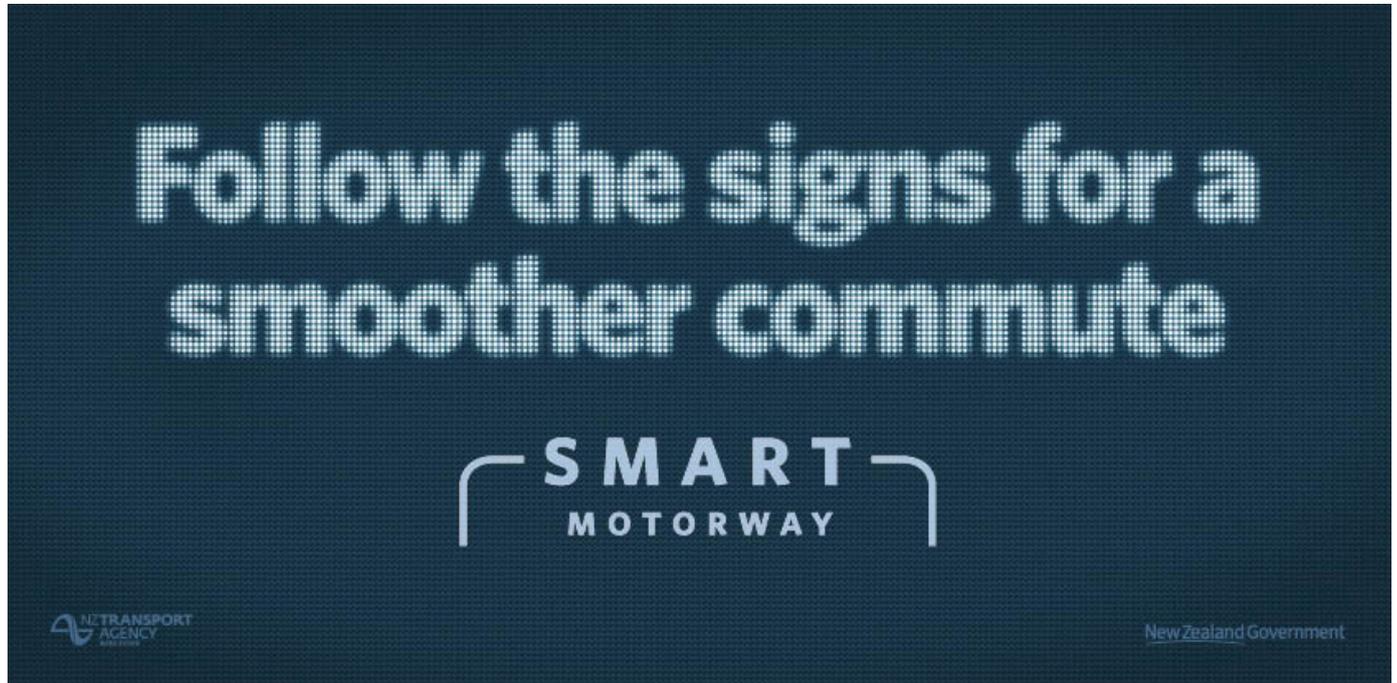


Ngauranga to Aotea Quay upgrade

Putting the smarts into Wellington's urban motorway

PROJECT UPDATE NO. 7

JULY 2016



SMART MOTORWAY STARTS

The first section of New Zealand's first smart motorway – part of Wellington's urban motorway – opened on 22 June.

The smart motorway opened for northbound commuters in time for the evening peak, taking full advantage of the new additional northbound lane from the Aotea Quay on-ramp to Ngauranga.

The southbound smart motorway will open as soon as resurfacing work is complete. Rather than waiting to open in both directions when the southbound section is ready, it was important to make the northbound improvements available to road users as soon as possible.

The smart motorway is a combination of clever roading infrastructure and intelligent technology. The number and speed of vehicles is monitored 24/7 and the speed limits are altered when required to smooth traffic flow and ease congestion.

Changing the speed limit as conditions change is at the heart of the system. Other countries using similar technology have found it results in more predictable travel times, as well as fewer crashes, leading to less stressful and safer journeys.

DRIVE SMART

How motorists drive has a big influence on how well the smart motorway works. The information campaign reminds us to play our part and follow the signs for a smoother commute.



SAFE BAYS

Wellington’s smart motorway is the region’s busiest section of road. The new, fourth northbound lane features two emergency stopping areas - safe places drivers can pull into if their vehicle gets into trouble. These emergency stopping areas are equipped with sensors, cameras and a phone that connects directly with the NZ Transport Agency’s Wellington Transport Operations Centre.

The smart motorway is monitored at all times. In the event of a breakdown or other emergency, the Transport Agency team will ensure that incidents are cleared as quickly as possible to keep people safe and traffic flowing. During peak periods, a response vehicle is always on standby to move broken down vehicles off the network to a safe location.



AN EARLY CHALLENGE

The smart motorway had just opened when a bus broke down on northbound State Highway 2, 10 minutes into the peak period. This incident backed the traffic up all the way to the city.

‘We used the new technology to slow traffic near that incident and keep drivers informed,’ said Neil Walker, Wellington Highway Manager.

There are two types of signage on the motorway - variable message signs have the words and the lane control signs show either the speed limit or an X if the lane is closed. Signage on the Hobson Street gantry showed the message ‘SH2 incident’ and a 60km/h speed limit was posted.

‘Changes to speed limits are now supported by messages so drivers know what’s happening and why the speed limit is different,’ said Neil.



CONTACT

Email us at ntaq@nzta.govt.nz

Find out more at nzta.govt.nz/smartmotorway

Visit the smart information site in the **Johnsonville Mall**

Sign up for Twitter updates [@nztawgtn](https://twitter.com/nztawgtn)

Thank you for your cooperation and patience as we complete this important work