The movement of people and goods has a profound impact on the nation’s health, lifestyle, sustainability (environment and economic) and public safety.

The merger on 1 August of Land Transport NZ and Transit New Zealand into the one entity – the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) – will make us all the more stronger and more effective in our commitment to improve New Zealand’s transport systems and provide an integrated approach to transport planning, funding and delivery.

The NZTA has four transport outcomes – integration, safety, sustainability and value for money.

We are responsible for these things: land transport planning; regulating access to the transport network (e.g. driver and vehicle licensing); managing state highways; promoting safety and sustainability; and allocating funding.

All the services previously provided by Land Transport NZ and Transit will continue to be provided as part of the new entity.

This monthly publication Pathways is one of the ways in which we will communicate with you. Welcome, then, to the first edition.

It’s a bumper issue because there’s a lot to tell you about. From the old railways mug at our official launch; the way we kept New Zealand open for business during horrific weather; a new website to keep councils in the loop about a raft of our information; and introducing our board members and chief executive.

We had our official launch on 5 August. More on that on Page 2.

Masthead image: The NZ Transport Agency has been established to contribute to an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system. Every issue of Pathways will feature an image in our masthead which will reflect what our organisation does.
THE LAUNCH

A sturdy, old railways saucer and mug that could still hold a strong brew of tea if it had to. They don’t make ‘em like that anymore.

Many of the people at the official launch of the NZ Transport Agency on 5 August must have had visions of chief executive Geoff Dangerfield giving it a thorough run through the dishwasher before proudly having his morning brew in it as the sun rose on his new agency.

The inspired gift was presented to Geoff by a lad from St Mark’s School. Maybe he was saying to Geoff the NZTA had a proud and long heritage behind it and would also stand the test of time.

The NZTA, bringing together the former Transit New Zealand and Land Transport NZ, officially took flight on 1 August, with the ceremony in Wellington following a few days later. The power and soul of the Waka Kotahi Whanau Support Group, supported by members of the Ngāti Pōneke Māori Club, soared through the rafters of the stadium and the hearts of the audience; because this was an important moment.

The unpredictable responses from the 10 teleconferenced regions as they were introduced by Transport Minister Annette King made people smile, because this was a human moment, too.

For Geoff Dangerfield it was all too easy to sum up: “We are ready to roll!”

“I now a great opportunity sits in front of us – to work for an effective and well-integrated transport system for New Zealanders.”

NZ Transport Agency hits the road
“We are ready to roll”

If there was a stand-out star of this event, it had to be the chipped mug from TradeMe.

A first issue welcome from the chief executive

Welcome to the first issue of Pathways, the NZ Transport Agency’s monthly newsletter.

Some of you will be familiar with Intransit – the newsletter of the former Transit New Zealand; others will have received Land Transport News from Land Transport NZ. Now the two organisations have come together as the NZ Transport Agency. Pathways will, every month, not only take up the baton of keeping you up to date with what we are doing, but also work to showcase the activities the former two organisations have been involved with, for the benefit of those who may have been familiar with one, but not the other.

This first issue covers our official launch, and what we are here to do. There’s also a round-up of key projects.

I have been busy getting to know people in my new industry. Last month I attended one of the first of the 16 roadshow events run by the Ministry of Transport and the NZ Transport Agency to inform our key regional stakeholders about the changes to the land transport funding and planning system.

This involves information about the way the agency is coming together and its role in the new system, the Government Policy Statement on funding, the system changes incorporated in the Land Transport Management Amendment Act, options and process for a regional fuel tax, and bringing together the first three-year National Land Transport Programme.

Feedback from the regions has been good. There is lots of interest in the changes and understanding how they will work. I look forward to working with you all.

Meanwhile I have been working on recruiting for General Manager and Regional Director positions, and look forward to up-dating you on this next month.

NZ Transport Agency hits the road
“We are ready to roll”

If there was a stand-out star of this event, it had to be the chipped mug from TradeMe.
First meeting for NZTA board members

The NZ Transport Agency’s board met for the first time in August. Pictured, left to right, they are: Mike Williams, Grahame Hall, Bryan Jackson, Christine Caughey, Alick Shaw, Brian Roche (chair), Garry Moore, Paul Fitzharris.

Transport sector set defined targets for the first time

Being one of the first countries in the world to widely use electric vehicles is a major goal of the recently released New Zealand Transport Strategy.

The strategy and the Government Policy Statement (GPS), both launched on 5 August, will drive many of the activities of the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) in its work to achieve an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable transport system.

The New Zealand Transport Strategy takes a long-term outlook. It sets out, for the first time, defined targets for the whole transport sector and what needs to be done to achieve these by 2040.

A major goal of the strategy is to halve by this date per capita domestic greenhouse gas emissions from transport by:

- being one of the first countries in the world to widely use electric vehicles
- using more renewable fuels
- increasing the movement of freight by coastal shipping and rail to 30 percent and 25 percent respectively by 2040
- reducing the kilometres travelled by single-occupancy vehicles, in major urban areas on weekdays, by 10 percent per capita by 2015 (compared with 2007 figures).

The strategy also sets a road safety target to reduce road deaths to no more than 200 per annum, and serious injuries to no more than 1500 per year, both by 2040.

The GPS sets out shorter-term targets and focuses on providing direction for allocating land transport funding over the next six years. It describes what the government wants to achieve through funding to the land transport sector, the levels of funding, what areas of transport will be funded, and how this funding will be raised.

The NZTA is responsible for allocating these funds. The goal is to influence the types of transport projects that are carried out by providing guidance to local government and the NZTA, which is responsible for managing our state highway network.
Our projects are winners

The Olympics didn’t only happen in Beijing this year. The NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) also won gold in two major roading competitions.

The International Road Federation (IRF) chose the State Highway 94 Milford Road avalanche programme as its winner of the Maintenance Management section in the 2008 Global Road Achievement Awards. The IRF is an association of world roading authorities, representing 110 countries, and headquartered in Virginia.

The programme is one of few in the world to use helicopter bombing to trigger avalanches under safe conditions. The IRF is an association of world roading authorities, representing 110 countries, and headquartered in Virginia.

The programme is one of few in the world to use helicopter bombing to trigger avalanches under safe conditions. The avalanche programme is run for the NZTA by contractor Downer Edi Works, whose key people with the programme, Wayne and Ann Carran, received Queen’s Service Medals for their services to conservation in the Queen’s Birthday Honours this year.

Three projects took top honours at the recent NZ Roading Excellence Awards.

The Roading New Zealand Supreme Award went to stage one of the 8km Northern Busway on Auckland’s North Shore.

The Infratrain New Zealand Industry Best Practice Award for Environmental Sustainability went to the Northern Gateway Toll Road - the extension of SH1 from Orewa to Puhoi. The second SH20 Manukau Harbour crossing won the Infratrain New Zealand Industry Best Practice Award for Procurement.

Roly says this project alliance is the first designed specifically to take on operations, maintenance and asset management activities on a complex urban motorway system.

The AMA is to feature at the NZ Alliancing Conference at the beginning of October. It is the first conference of its kind and is being hosted by the NZTA.

The 2-3 October conference, at Auckland’s SKYCITY, will give participants an opportunity to understand the Alliance model.

...so’s our contact centre

The Transport Registry Centre’s contact centre won the Gold Award at the CRM 2008 Contact Centre Awards hosted in Auckland.

Manager transport registry centre Brett Dooley congratulated contact centre manager Michelle Charlton, and all of the teams for achieving the prestigious award. Brett says it means the contact centre was judged second in New Zealand for customer services.
How long will it take to get to Mt Wellington?

There’s nothing worse than being caught in traffic – for what could be two minutes or three years – at least that’s what it may feel like. A bit of information would make all the difference.

The NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) is working on just this with its pilot journey time estimation project. Using high tech sensors on Auckland’s Southern Motorway, NZTA experts have, for some months, been estimating how long it takes road users in parts of Auckland to get from one point to another.

The whole idea, in the end, is to be able to provide travel time information on variable message signs, telling road users what lies ahead in terms of minutes; for instance it will take them, say, five minutes to get to Mt Wellington from where they are, or over 30 minutes (because there’s been an incident further ahead, for instance). In which case, road users can choose to take a different route.

Project sponsor Deryk Whyte says if road users have the right information before they enter a motorway, it will make their journey much more predictable. The variable message signs will be capable of up-dating journey times every minute.

The project has involved a significant software development, the input of statistical expertise and painstaking calculations over 18 months. The validity of the methods and calculations will be trialled with NZTA project partners before determining the final approach and going live to the public.

Ramp signals go west

The first two ramp signals on the Northwestern Motorway will be switched on soon, marking the first step west in the roll-out of the NZ Transport Agency’s (NZTA) comprehensive traffic management system for Auckland.

The ramp signals on the St Lukes Road westbound and Newton Road westbound onramps will go live in mid September. These will be followed by signals on the Patiki Road westbound onramp.

Ramp signals – traffic lights at onramps that manage the rate at which vehicles move down the ramp and onto the motorway – help improve traffic flows and safety on the motorway, while enabling more consistent speeds, safer merging and more predictable travel times. The signals operate only when needed during the morning and afternoon peaks and through other busy periods. At all other times they remain off.

NZTA project director Peter McCombs explains that the commissioning of the signals at Newton and St Lukes is aimed at improving traffic flows on the Northwestern Motorway and particularly in the heavily trafficked area between Newton and Avondale.

“These improvements, together with the additional capacity, will help to provide more consistent travel times for motorists,” says Peter.

Operators have a range of cameras giving a real time view of traffic operations throughout the area. At the same time, the NZTA is working closely with Auckland and Waitakere City Councils to manage and assist traffic flows on the local approaches to the onramp.

The installation follows successful operations on each of the southbound onramps on the Southern Motorway last year, as well as the northbound onramps from Mt Wellington to Gillies Avenue. The operation of these ramp signals has seen a 15 percent improvement in travel speeds and a 5 to 15 percent increase in throughput of vehicles.

A further six onramp sites between Patiki Road and Royal Road on the Northwestern Motorway will be completed and commissioned over the next few months. The project also includes corresponding improvements to a number of offramps.

The NZTA’s current project – working collaboratively with Auckland’s local and regional councils and the Auckland Regional Transport Authority – will see the installation of 61 ramp signals on the Southern, Northern and Northwestern Motorways as part of a comprehensive motorway management system being installed by 2009.
The significant damage to the network, mainly through rainsodden slopes giving way, cost millions of dollars. Waikato was particularly hard hit, where damage is more than $6 million. In the West Coast of the South Island, costs ran to $2 million and the Gisborne area copped $3 million worth of damage.

“It’s been a really challenging few weeks,” says network operations manager Dave Bates. “We’ve had reports of 30 metre trees blowing across the road in the Horowhenua as if they were twigs, and we’ve also encountered some of the biggest slips we’ve ever seen.”

In the North Island, flooding and slips closed roads as far afield as Northland, Coromandel, Taranaki, Manawatu, Hawke’s Bay, and the East Cape, while the Desert Road was closed several times as it bore the brunt of one of the largest snow dumps in memory.

“It’s challenging for both ourselves and motorists – it certainly affects our ability to clean up the mess when there’s another big storm just around the corner threatening to undo all our good work,” says Dave.

“The snow came from the west, so it was unusual we had snow to really low levels on the west coasts. The snow was wet and heavy
as a result, which made power lines susceptible to wind damage”.

At one point Haast, Arthur’s, Lewis and Lindis passes were closed at the same time. Area engineer West Coast Mark Pinner says this was unusual.

“Usually it’s one or another of them but seldom all at one time. It was definitely all hands to the pump but everything ran smoothly and the roads were opened as quickly as possible.”

State Highway 73 suffered avalanches for the first time in 10 years. The volume of snow on the road between Otira and Arthur’s Pass meant ploughs had to be followed later with plant to scoop away large windrows of snow that had built up along the carriageway. “This was made worse by the opening of access via a single lane.”

Gale-force winds brought down trees across the West Coast. Teams had to clear a significant number of trees from Lewis Pass and south Westland, Mark said.

The severe weather also stretched the NZTA’s Milford road team who had to clear nearly one metre of snow from the road between the Hollyford turnoff and the Homer Tunnel and remove dozens of fallen trees off SH94.

Regional network manager Otago Southland Murray Clarke says snow blanketed the West Coast and Alps. “SH6 near Haast was the worst affected road while the Milford road was closed for four days as teams cleared snow and trees from the area.

“We also had helicopters dropping explosives to create controlled avalanches into the snow fields on SH94 between the lower Hollyford turnoff and Milford Sound. This is one of the biggest exercises in active snow control that we have done for a long time.”

In North Canterbury, heavy rains triggered a major slip of over 16,000 tonnes of rock onto SH1 south of Kaikoura. Area engineer North Canterbury, Barry Stratton, says the road and railway line suffered several closures as contractors for the NZTA cleared the fallen rubble from the highway and from the railway for OnTrack.

“The weather had a similar intensity to that when Cyclone Alison hit in 1986. There’s been widespread slips and damage to roads across the Kaikoura, Hurunui and Waimakariri districts which will cost at least $1 million, and take several months, to clear.”

Says Dave Bates: “Considering this weather the country has experienced, the public has been really patient, and our road crews have battled away tirelessly 24/7, often working virtual miracles to keep the country’s lifelines open.

“We understand that road closures carry a big cost to the country, and we’re committed to keeping New Zealand open for business. We’re really proud of what we’ve achieved this winter, and I think our contractors and the public deserves a round of applause; its support makes a difficult job that much easier.”

There’s not much happening on New Zealand’s state highways that you shouldn’t know about.

Check our Highway Info webpage – it’s topical, user friendly and it’s here you’ll find out about any events or incidents that may affect your travel by 20 minutes or more. www.highwayinfo.govt.nz

You can access RSS feeds, ring our 0800 number to receive road condition information, or use our webcams. You can even register on our InfoConnect portal, specifically designed for developers to repackage and republish road condition information for free. infoconnect.highwayinfo.govt.nz

And, says project manager, network demand Deidre Hills “we want people to use it”.

To help you understand how we manage state highways and provide information to road users and key stakeholders, the diagram on the right summarises the flow of information of our Traffic Road Event Information System (TREIS).
An enthusiastic crowd was on hand for the recent launch of Hamilton City’s passenger transport accessible journey pilot. The project is a joint initiative between the NZTA, Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind, CCS Disability Action, the Human Rights Commission, Waikato Regional Council and Hamilton City Council.

The pilot is seen as a positive step forward in improving public transport accessibility for everyone in Hamilton, not only those with disabilities.

Hamilton Mayor Bob Simcock and Transport Minister Annette King were among the guests for the launch of the year-long pilot, which will trial a range of modifications to improve accessibility on the Hamilton City CBD bus shuttle route.

The then Land Transport NZ was approached by CCS Disability Action in 2006 to help address the lack of accessibility for disabled people to bus routes and services in and around the Hamilton City Centre.

The resulting pilot is also part of a wider effort to address the recommendations of The Accessible Journey, a report on public transport accessibility levels produced by the Human Rights Commission in 2005.

Key modifications that will be tested in the pilot include:
- tactile paving for blind or visually impaired people
- raised curb height to allow for wheelchair access using on board ramps
- a range of seating configurations
- visual and audio equipment on buses to alert users with visual and hearing impairments of upcoming stops.

The options trialled will contribute to the development of national vehicle quality standards for urban buses, being progressed by the NZTA.

For more information on the project, visit www.ew.govt.nz/regional-services/Passenger-transport/Accessible-journeys-pilot
Have your say on proposed amendments to the Road User Rule

A ban on the use of hand-held mobile phones while driving is one of several proposed changes in the draft Road User Amendment Rule, now out for public consultation.

The draft rule proposes to ban the use of hand-held mobile phones and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) that function as phones while driving. Under the proposal, drivers would still be able to use hands-free mobile phones and two-way radios.

Reported crashes involving the use of mobile phones has more than doubled over the last six years. Research shows that using a mobile phone while driving increases the risk of being involved in a crash by up to four times. Between 2002 and 2007, there were 411 injury crashes and 26 fatal crashes where the use of mobile phones or other telecommunication devices was identified as a contributing factor.

distraction was a contributing factor in 11 percent of all crashes, with a total social cost of $300 million.

Other proposals in the Road User Amendment Rule include changes to signalling requirements for cyclists at roundabouts, new maximum speeds for mopeds and a requirement for mopeds and motorbikes to have their lights on during the day. The rule also proposes to put in place nationally-defined uniform requirements around vehicles parking on grassed or cultivated areas that are part of a road. Another matter up for discussion in the rule is whether vehicles should be required to give way to buses leaving bus stops.

For more information
Submissions on the Road User Amendment Rule close on Thursday 16 October 2008. To view the rule or to have your say, visit www.nzta.govt.nz/consultation/road-user-amendment/index.html.
Project targets better value for local authorities

Smarter procurement practices are one of the keys to unlocking greater value for money from the $2 billion plus dollars invested annually in our land transport system through the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) fund.

A large portion of NLTP funding goes to councils to deliver a range of land transport projects ranging from road construction to passenger transport services. The NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) has developed a new Procurement Manual that will help councils become even better at procuring the services they require for their NLTP-funded activities.

This Procurement Manual is the key means for delivering changes identified in the review of procurement procedures for physical works, professional services and public transport. The review, which started in 2006, involved extensive stakeholder consultation.

Nine district, regional and city councils plus the NZTA’s highway management divisions are about to pilot an interim version of the new Procurement Manual. The following approved organisations have agreed to take part in the six-month pilot:

- NZ Transport Agency - highway management division
- Auckland City Council
- Hamilton City Council
- Matamata-Piako District Council
- Wairoa District Council
- Manawatu District Council
- Westland District Council
- Central Otago District Council
- ARTA (public transport – ferry)
- Northland Regional Council (public transport).

The pilot will test with end users the content and procedures within the interim manual and provide feedback to improve its usability. Involvement in the pilot is expected to give participants the knowledge and ability to develop their own comprehensive procurement strategies.

The review is all about the NZTA working with approved organisations to get better value for money from their NLTP funding, through smarter procurement practices.

The new Procurement Manual will encourage councils to adopt a more strategic approach to procuring their NLTP-funded land transport activities. By doing this, local supplier market issues, like competition and efficiency, are fostered to create an environment where value for money can be obtained.

Once finalised, the Procurement Manual will be gradually rolled out to councils over two years beginning mid-2009. Once all councils are working with the Procurement Manual, the current Competitive Pricing Procedure Manuals will be withdrawn.

For more information on the procurement review and to see a copy of the interim Procurement Manual, please go to: www.landtransport.govt.nz/funding/procurement.
SmartMovez
joins the information super highway

All the information councils need to work with the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) is now just a click away on the SmartMovez website.

This website has been in development over the last year to provide councils with quick and easy 24/7 access to a raft of NZTA information ranging from funding manuals to road crash facts and figures.

Project leader Doug Miller says the website was created in response to a growing desire by local and regional authorities for hassle free on-line access to the information they need to work with us. This is exactly the intention of the SmartMovez website. While the site is not 100 percent complete it contains enough information to make it worth putting on-line now. Further information will be added as the website evolves.

Doug says there has been a strong emphasis on making the website as user friendly as possible.

Representatives from local and regional authorities were involved in this project at the all important concept stage. Doug says their input played a major role in creating a website tailored to the land transport information needs of the local government sector.

The SmartMovez website will continue to expand to provide the information local and regional authorities need to work in partnership with the NZTA, toward a sustainable, safe and affordable land transport system that benefits all New Zealanders.

For more information on SmartMovez go to www.smartmovez.org.nz
**Conferences**

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<td>29 Sept-2 Oct</td>
<td>Taxi Federation Conference</td>
<td><a href="mailto:adam.doesburg@nzta.govt.nz">adam.doesburg@nzta.govt.nz</a></td>
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<td>2-3 Oct</td>
<td>NZTA Alliance Conference</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vanisa.dhiru@nzta.govt.nz">vanisa.dhiru@nzta.govt.nz</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.nzallianceconference.co.nz">www.nzallianceconference.co.nz</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>12-14 Oct</td>
<td>NZ Transport Agency &amp; NZHIT 9th Annual Conference</td>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="http://www.con.org.nz/awards">www.con.org.nz/awards</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2-5 Nov</td>
<td>IPENZ Transportation Group Conference</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ana.zandi@nzta.govt.nz">ana.zandi@nzta.govt.nz</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.hardingconsultants.co.nz/ipenz2008/index.html">www.hardingconsultants.co.nz/ipenz2008/index.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Dec</td>
<td>Road Controlling Authorities Forum</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Douceline.vanArts@nzta.govt.nz">Douceline.vanArts@nzta.govt.nz</a></td>
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**Awards**

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<td><a href="http://www.con.org.nz/awards">www.con.org.nz/awards</a></td>
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<td>15 Oct</td>
<td>CILT Annual Awards Forum &amp; AGM Awards Dinner</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ana.zandi@nzta.govt.nz">ana.zandi@nzta.govt.nz</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.cilt.co.nz">www.cilt.co.nz</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Nov</td>
<td>Manawatu Contact Centre Awards Night</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michelle.charlton@nzta.govt.nz">michelle.charlton@nzta.govt.nz</a></td>
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**Courses**

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<td>26-28 Nov</td>
<td>Level 1 STMS Train the Trainer Course</td>
<td>Kimberley Ng, (04) 496 6688 or <a href="mailto:capttm.quals@transit.govt.nz">capttm.quals@transit.govt.nz</a></td>
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**Events**

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**Do we have your correct details?**

We would like to hear from you if you wish to update your name or address details or alter the number of copies of *Pathways* you’d like to receive. Please also let us know if you or others wish to begin receiving *Pathways*, or if you have any feedback about the content.

Email sue.grant-mackie@nzta.govt.nz

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Fax: +64 6 953 6406

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