

intransit

184

PUBLISHED BY TRANSIT NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL OFFICE

NOVEMBER 2007 » ISSUE NO. 184

Highway Info on the information highway

Motorists will be able to get New Zealand's most up to date and accurate online state highway information directly 'from the horse's mouth', following the launch of Transit's Highway Info web service.

Highway Info provides free, regularly updated information about closures, delays and warnings across the entire state highway network. The information is refreshed every ten minutes and updated around the clock by Transit highway management staff, ensuring motorists have the most accurate and up to the minute information at their fingertips to help them plan their journey.

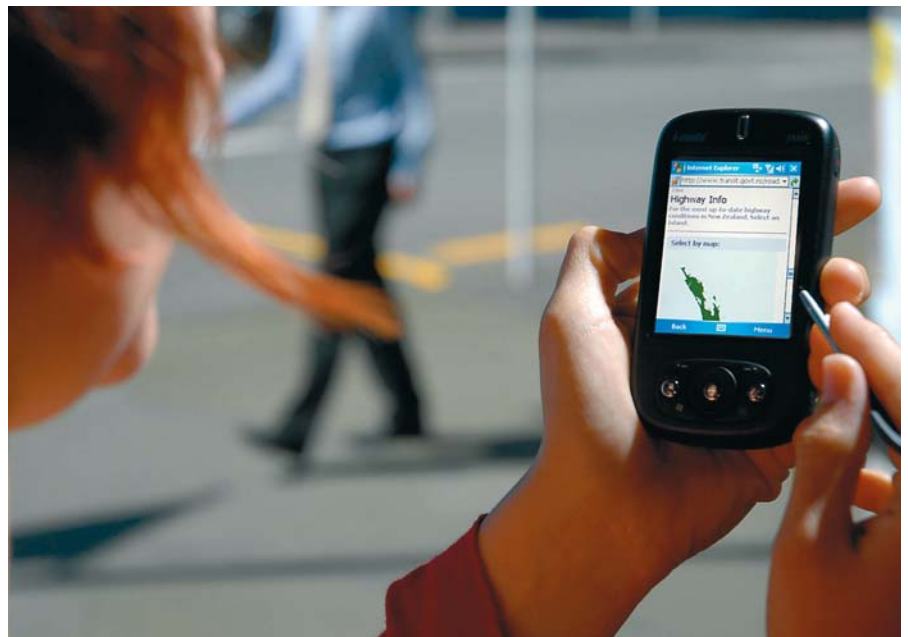
Good information helps drivers make better decisions about how and when they travel, and makes their journeys safer.

"We understand that up-to-the minute highway information is crucial for motorists to plan their travel, especially for holidaymakers and commercial transport operators," says Transit general manager network operations Roly Frost.

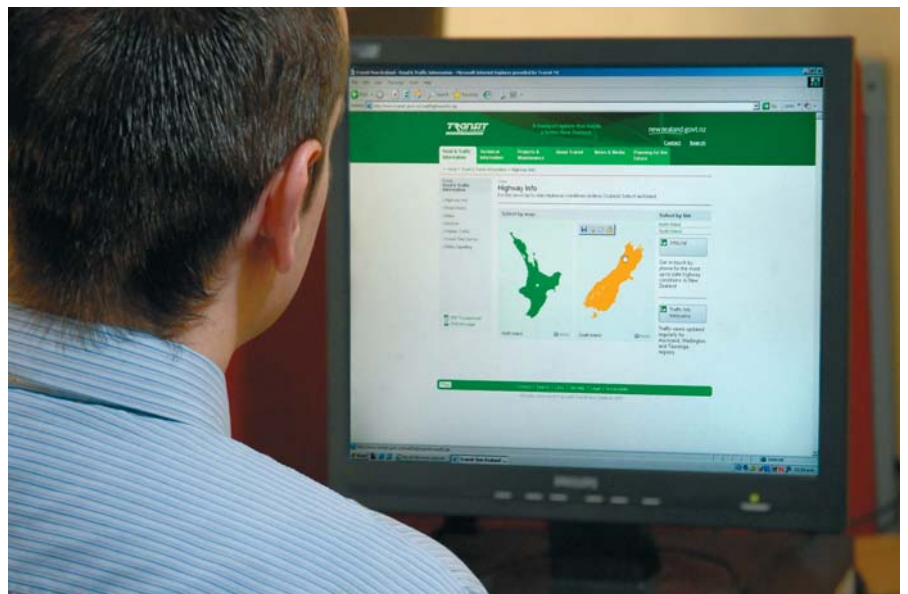
"Good information helps drivers make better decisions about how and when they travel, and makes their journeys safer."

Roly says Transit will continue to explore new and convenient ways using the latest technology to communicate timely and accurate highway information to motorists.

The Highway Info service can be found at www.transit.govt.nz



When checking Transit's online state highway information via your cell phone.



Highway Info on Transit website.

Honk if you love SH50 Meeanee Overbridge



The Hawke's Bay Vintage Car Club ride over the SH50 Meeanee Overbridge moments after the ribbon cutting.

The ribbon wasn't the only thing being cut as the Minister of Transport Hon Annette King officially opened the SH50 Meeanee Overbridge to traffic in both directions on 1 November. As the ribbon was cut, so was the expectant silence as the audience of dignitaries and members of the local community applauded and vintage cars crossed the bridge.

The opening of the overbridge means lines of traffic backed up at the intersection of the SH50 Hawke's Bay Expressway and Meeanee Road will be a thing of the past. The overbridge is a major milestone towards the completion of the Meeanee Interchange Project.

Transit began construction on the \$8 million Meeanee Interchange Project

in December 2005, and the project is on track for completion on time and on budget in December this year.

Transit acting regional manager Errol Christiansen said the opening of the overbridge offers immediate benefits to motorists.

"By separating traffic on the Hawke's Bay Expressway from local traffic using Meeanee Road it will significantly reduce congestion and improve safety."

Errol said the Napier City Council and the local community had been incredibly supportive and patient throughout the two years of construction.

"They've been great. It's really rewarding to see an entire community get behind a

project like this."

Transit Acting Chairman Bryan Jackson, and the Mayor of Napier Barbara Arnott also took part in the official opening of the overbridge. Following the ribbon cutting, a procession of vintage cars was driven over the bridge by members of the Hawke's Bay Vintage Car Club donned in traditional art deco regalia, complementing the art deco-inspired sunburst panels on the bridge.

Local school students and community groups were involved in the development and design of the sunburst panels, and the winning design was selected by members of the local community. ☑

New traffic signals in Nelson go green

It was green for go when Transit switched on the new traffic signals on Tahunanui Road in Nelson last month, completing work to remove the twin roundabouts that used to hold up peak hour traffic.

Now, anecdotal evidence is that as much as 10 minutes have been shaved off the daily commute through the new intersection, delighting local motorists.

Transit's Wellington regional manager Graham Taylor says initial reports just after the intersection was made operational show that the signals are improving traffic flow along SH6.

"We're really happy with this outcome

and very happy that the signals were turned on in time for the Labour Weekend holiday period."

He says motorists were adapting well to the new changes on the road and that there would be a settling-in period while people got used to the new layout and traffic merges.

Initial reports show that the signals are improving traffic flow along SH6.

Graham says the state highway work was completed ahead of schedule. Associated work will continue to the Tahunanui Beach/ Abel Tasman car parks on behalf of Nelson

City Council. This work is schedule to be completed in December.

Work on the Tahunanui Intersection upgrade began in late May to replace the twin roundabouts with one traffic signal managed intersection. It takes into account the needs of cyclists and pedestrians as well as the different requirements of motorists travelling along this road for commercial, residential and recreational purposes.

Graham says there should also be some relief for the Port Hills suburbs where motorists avoid congestion and delays along Rocks Road and Tahunanui Drive by "rat-running" through residential streets. ☑

Median barrier makes Centennial Highway safer

Motorists travelling a coastal section of State Highway 1 north of Wellington can look forward to safer journeys following the recent completion of a life-saving median barrier.

“The three-kilometre extension of the Centennial Highway wire rope barrier will dramatically reduce the risk of head-on collisions on the stretch of highway between Paekakariki and Pukerua Bay, which carries around 22,000 vehicles a day,” Transit chief executive Rick van Barneveld says.

In December 2004, a wire rope median barrier was installed along a 700m section of this route, a trial that pushed international best practice to the limit. A wire rope barrier had never been installed on such a narrow road. Closed-circuit television cameras set up to monitor the barrier captured hits that might otherwise have been head-on collisions and the Transit Board decided to extend the barrier over a wider section of the route, with construction starting in August 2006.

Lengthening the barrier was a much more complicated exercise than installing the initial 700m. Putting up the wire rope took just three days – the rest of the year-long construction period focussed on widening much of the road to safely accommodate the barrier. Areas where



Workers installing wire rope barrier on Centennial Highway.

the sea wall was high needed cuts into the hillside and concrete retaining walls, while earthworks and concrete blocks extended the road on the sea side at other locations. Entrances to laybys have been made safer and guardrails along the entire length of the project have been replaced.

The narrowness of the road and shortage of a viable alternative route meant all construction took place at night when traffic volumes were light, something Rick says is becoming more commonplace as traffic volumes grow.

He says the need to keep traffic moving on this stretch of highway was one of the

reasons a wire rope barrier was the only type of barrier that could be installed at this location.

“Even if we’d wanted to we couldn’t have installed another type of barrier on such a narrow stretch of highway, and from an incident management point of view the fact that the barrier can literally be pulled out and laid on the ground for traffic to get through is a real advantage.”

There have now been at least 15 hits on the original 700m barrier, each representing a potential crash, injury or fatality that has been prevented. ❑

Awatere Bridge project marks the end of an era



Train crosses the old Awatere bridge, while motorists cross the new bridge.

The end of an era was marked on 8 November when the completion of the Awatere Bridge project was celebrated by a crowd of over 100 guests.

It was a momentous occasion for Marlburians and Transit as the project

replaced the old, problematic road and rail bridge with a new bridge, 30m downstream of its predecessor as well as a railway overbridge and underpass to the south and passing lane and intersection to the north.

The project was always deemed more than just a bridge, which became its catchphrase, because of the full extent of the project. However, it was the new bridge that created the most fanfare.

The original 105-year-old Awatere Bridge was a one-lane, dual-purpose crossing for road and rail and had been an issue for motorists for years. It caused delays for travellers who had to wait at either end of the bridge for their turn to cross with traffic signals installed to co-ordinate the traffic. However, the new bridge has

seen the end of this for good, with some local residents counting a saving of 10 minutes on their journey to either side.

Minister of Transport Hon Annette King attended the event and made the project completion official by cutting a ribbon on the new bridge. A convoy of vintage cars, which looked as though they would have been more at home on the old bridge than the new, then crossed the Awatere River on the now completed structure.

Transit Wellington regional manager Graham Taylor says the event was a success in celebrating Transit’s achievement by completing the project ahead of schedule and for ensuring that there would be no more delays on that section of SH1 in future. ❑

Wellington projects win awards

Transit is celebrating winning two awards for state highway projects in central Wellington within the space of a week.

An improved crossing for pedestrians and cyclists at the intersection of Rugby Road and Adelaide Road at the Basin Reserve won the Avanti award for best cycle facility at the recent 2007 SPARC – Cycle Friendly Awards.

The awards, devised by the Cycling Advocates' Network and presented at the 2007 NZ Cycling Conference, celebrate initiatives that help to promote cycling or create a cycle-friendly environment.

Traffic lights replaced an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing at this busy junction, which was frequently the subject of near miss tales from cyclists and pedestrians.

Transit chief executive Rick van Barneveld said Transit was delighted by every award it won, but there was something extra special about being recognised by the cyclists the project was designed to benefit.

"What better way is there to know that our project is making a difference for cyclists than to receive a pat on the back from them."

Cycle Aware Wellington president Robert Ibell, who nominated Transit for the award, said he has experienced that difference first-hand.

"The Basin Reserve used to be a big black hole in cycle route maps of

Wellington. The new facilities installed by Transit at the Basin have made things much better for cyclists at a crucial intersection – I ride through there most days, and really appreciate the improvements. I hope we see Transit doing many more such projects in the region and around the country."

Less than a week after the cycle awards were announced it was the Inner City Bypass project's turn for accolades, winning the Nikau compliance award in the inaugural Great Wellington Regional Council Environment Awards. The project was singled out for going over and above the conditions of its resource consent to ensure a range of complicated – and potentially significant – environmental issues were well managed within the constraints of an inner-city construction site.

Transit's project manager Jonnette Adams said the award recognised the commitment the entire project team of Transit, Fulton Hogan, Opus International Consultants and Wellington City Council had to make to ensure the project was a success at every level.

"For this team, environmental management was about more than a do minimum approach to meet the resource consent conditions. We were genuinely focussed on making sure our management of the at times tricky environmental issues was top notch." ☑

inbrief

Napier's new Breakwater Cycleway



Minister of Transport Hon Annette King and Mayor of Napier Barbara Arnott welcome the completion of Napier's new Breakwater Cycleway by hopping on a tandem bike together. The 1.4km cycleway will allow safer and easier travel for cyclists between Marine Parade and Arahau, and is a joint project between Transit and the Napier City Council. ☑

Governor-General visit to Southland



During his visit to Southland, Governor-General of New Zealand Hon Anand Satyanand stopped in Te Anau to see first-hand how Transit manages and operates SH94 Milford Road. The visit included a briefing on Transit's Milford Road avalanche programme and a helicopter ride to mountain weather stations. On the photo from left: Wayne Carran from Downer EDI Works, Governor-General and his wife Susan Satyanand, and helicopter pilot Richard Hayes. ☑

What's on

- › **Road Safety Barrier Systems Workshop – 4-5 December 2007, Taupo**
Contact Stuart Fraser (04) 496 6698 or stuart.fraser@transit.govt.nz. Registration forms www.transit.govt.nz
- › **Level 2/3 STMS Training Courses**
Auckland: STMS NP (non-practising) STMS NP 17-18 December 2007
Hamilton: STMS NP 6-7 December 2007
Contact John Boyson, (09) 428 0018 or 021 207 3954
- › **18th Road Safety Engineering Workshop, Takapuna, North Shore City 25-29 August 2008.**
Contact Stuart Fraser (see details above).

Your correct contact details?

If you want to update your details, change the number of copies of InTransit you are receiving or if you or others you know wish to begin receiving it, email communications@transit.govt.nz or post to Transit, Communications Team, PO Box 5084, Wellington.

CONTACT US

Transit New Zealand National Office

Level 9, PSIS Building
20-26 Ballance Street
PO Box 5084, Wellington 6145

Tel 64 4 499 6600
Fax 64 4 499 6613
www.transit.govt.nz