

## Winter roads need winter drivers

**With winter well and truly upon us, Transit New Zealand's maintenance efforts have changed focus.**

Just as winter presents motorists with extra challenges, the task of keeping state highways safe and open is equally challenging.

But innovative road management practices, good monitoring and, sometimes, sheer grit and determination, ensure Transit and our suppliers are well equipped to deal with the 'winter nasties' mother nature throws our way.

Transit's General Manager Network Operations Roly Frost says last year was a good example of the challenges winter can bring. Rainfall 200 percent over normal levels occurred in Northland, Auckland, Canterbury, Wairarapa (its wettest in 30 years), Wanganui and Hawke's Bay. On top of that, South Canterbury saw the heaviest snow in 14 years, which affected highways for several weeks.

"These statistics demonstrate that regardless of which part of the country they are based in, our network operations teams have to work hard and smart to keep the state highways open during winter," Roly says.

In areas where ice or snow is likely, Transit uses calcium magnesium acetate (CMA) to help prevent ice forming or, together with grit, to dissolve it and re-open the highway as quickly as possible. Easily applied and much more environmentally friendly than salt or other de-icers, CMA is a vital winter maintenance tool on the North Island's Central Plateau, alpine areas in Canterbury, and parts of Otago and Southland. Hi-tech weather monitoring and prediction tools help



Snow storm hits SH94 to Milford Sound.

contractors figure out where and when it will be required.

The world leading avalanche management programme on SH94 to Milford Sound also moves into higher gear with the onset of snow.

"As well as responding to big snow storms, large slips and other more obvious effects of winter weather, day-to-day maintenance also becomes more difficult and some problems can't be fixed properly until warmer, drier weather arrives," Roly says.

He says just as Transit needs to plan ahead and be prepared in winter, motorists need to do the same.

"Winter roads need winter drivers. Because of the rapid weather changes we experience, there will be times when road users will find they need to take extra care, plan their journeys carefully and be prepared for the unexpected."

For road conditions around the country go to [www.transit.govt.nz/road/conditions.jsp](http://www.transit.govt.nz/road/conditions.jsp) ■

## New SH1 interchange links North Shore communities

Opening of the Esmonde Road Interchange in May marked the completion of one of the biggest motorway upgrades on Auckland's North Shore. The new \$44 million interchange gives North Shore communities direct SH1 motorway access from both the east and the west of the motorway.

"The upgrade has major benefits for North Shore communities as well as other Aucklanders. It provides locals with more options for traveling by car, bike and foot," Transit Auckland regional manager Peter Spies says.

New northbound on-ramps at Esmonde Road and Akoranga provide motorway access from both the east and the west of the motorway, while a new southbound off-ramp from the motorway to Esmonde Road improves access to Devonport and Takapuna.

An east-west route across the motorway creates new travel choices for pedestrians and cyclists. The interchange also improves access to Auckland University of Technology's Akoranga campus.

The project is a culmination of joint effort by Transit, North Shore City Council



Prime Minister Rt Helen Clark (fourth from left) cuts the ribbon at the new SH1 interchange, with (from left to right) Transit Auckland Regional Manager Peter Spies, Northcote MP Ann Hartley, Mayor of North Shore City George Wood, AUT University Vice-Chancellor Derek McCormack, Transport Minister Annette King, Transit Acting Chairman Bryan Jackson and Transit Chief Executive Rick van Barneveld.

and key stakeholders from the local community including AUT's Akoranga campus and local businesses.

Prime Minister Rt Hon Helen Clark, accompanied by Transport Minister Annette King, officially cut the ribbon during an opening ceremony that included

a bus tour of the new interchange.

The interchange is part of the Northern Busway project which is New Zealand's first purpose built road dedicated to bus passenger transport and is due for completion at the end of this year. ■

## Transit wins road safety award

Transit's SWATT 2010 initiative to reduce crashes on SH1 in South Waikato has won the road engineering category of the 2007 Road Safety Innovation and Achievement Awards.

Aimed at reducing the crash rate on 200km of SH1 between Piarere and the Desert Road Summit, the project also involves Police, Land Transport NZ, ACC, local authorities, consultants and Waikato University.

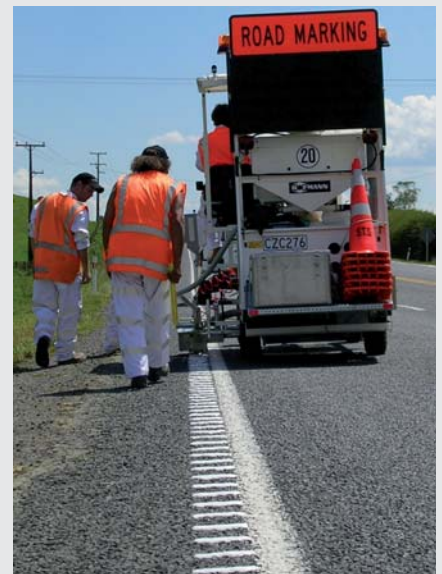
"We are proud of the success of the SWATT 2010 initiative, much of which stems from the collaborative approach to identifying the problems and coming up with solutions," Transit chief executive Rick van Barneveld says.

The investigation of possible causes of crashes on this stretch of road found that a major factor in many of the crashes was drivers crossing the centre line or leaving the road. To keep motorists in their lanes,



Sign used as part of SWATT 2010 initiative that targets driver behaviour issues.

Transit made a number of engineering improvements, such as installing 'audio tactile' edgelines and centrelines ('rumble strips'). These improvements were also accompanied by increased enforcement and education activities targeted at driver behaviour issues. ■



Rumble strips being installed on SH1 in South Waikato as part of the SWATT 2010 initiative.

## Greater strides, smaller footprints

Measuring air and stormwater quality next to state highways around the country is part of the work Transit is doing to determine the impact of roads on the environment and communities near them.

"We already do this work for new major capital projects but now we are also looking at existing state highways around the country," Transit's Environmental Manager Carl Reller says.

Transit's statutory objective is to operate the state highway network in a way that contributes to an integrated, safe, responsive, and sustainable land transport system.

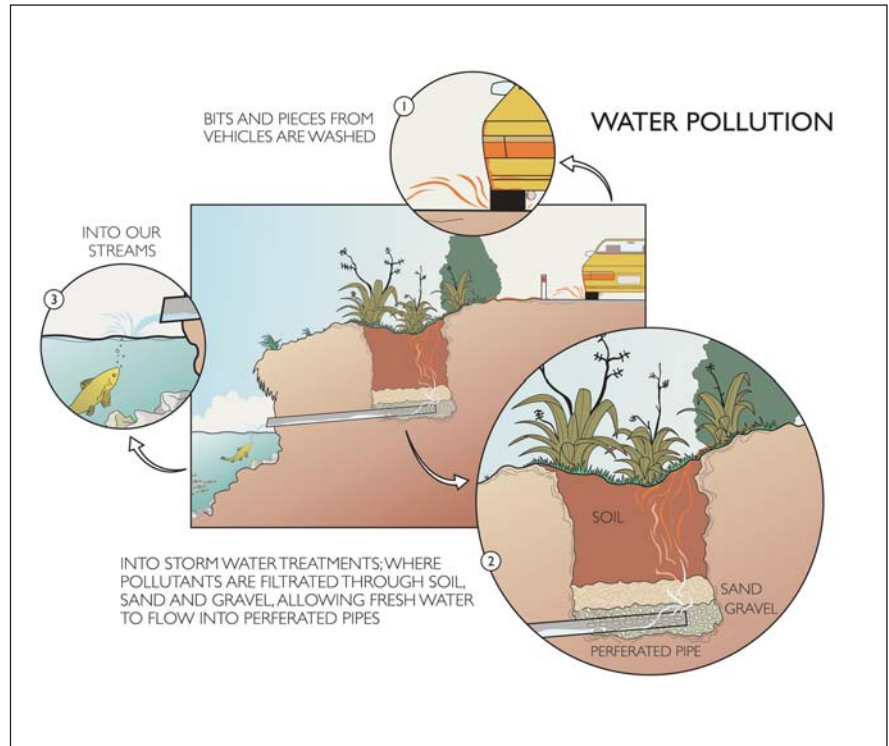
"An important part of this is measuring the impact of the highway network on New Zealand and New Zealanders," Carl says.

Transit is monitoring air quality at 70 sites throughout New Zealand by measuring nitrogen dioxide, an air pollutant associated with vehicle exhaust emissions.

"We started in January and the first results showed there are only half a dozen sites that have elevated levels of this pollutant. We need to do more monitoring to determine with consistency and certainty the air quality across the network," says Transit's Senior Environmental Policy Advisor Rob Hannaby, who as part of Carl's team is leading the air quality monitoring work.

As for work on stormwater quality, Transit has identified 'hot spots' around the country that are potentially at most risk from stormwater runoff.

"As expected, hot spots with heavy traffic in catchments traversed by highways are



Transit illustration showing how highway stormwater runoff can be treated with low impact design solutions.

in Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury regions," Carl says.

While a lot of work still needs to be done to narrow down the most significant areas, there are already areas that are being piloted to identify possible solutions. One such pilot study is on SH58 near the western end of Pauatahanui Inlet near Wellington where Transit initiated a field trial of catchpit filter systems.

"Given the narrow sections of this highway that back on cliffs, use of catch-pit filter systems is the only practical

means for stormwater retrofit in this area," Carl says.

Transit will be monitoring the filters' performance over a period of about 10 months. This pilot will help Transit select appropriate sump filter systems that the agency may use when doing stormwater retrofits in the future.

For more information on this project and other work Transit is doing around air and stormwater quality, go to [www.transit.govt.nz/planning/environment.jsp](http://www.transit.govt.nz/planning/environment.jsp) ■

## Wheels in motion for Breakwater Cycleway



**Napier cyclists will soon enjoy safer and easier travel from Marine Parade to Ahuriri, with the construction of the Breakwater Cycleway now underway.**

The \$600,000 project is a joint venture between Transit and the Napier City Council in association with the Port of Napier and the Rotary Centennial Pathways Trust.

Transit regional manager Hilton Netteville says the 1.4km cycleway will create a safer passage for cyclists through a popular recreational area with high traffic numbers.

"It's one of six cycling projects we have underway or planned for state highways in the Hawke's Bay region. Hawke's Bay is really leading the country in promoting

healthy and sustainable forms of transport and we're thrilled to be a part of it."

The project is due for completion in mid-August, ready for the arriving spring.

This project will be followed by the Bayview Cycleway, a Transit project which will complement the existing and proposed walking and cycling paths linking Napier and Bayview. ■

## 10-year State Highway Forecast released

Transit announced the greatest number of project investigation, design and construction starts ever in the coming financial year, with the release of 10-year State Highway Plan and Forecast for 2007/08 to 2016/17 at the end of June.

The Forecast shows investment in state highways continues to be significant at \$1.2 billion for the coming financial year and \$13.3 billion forecast over the next 10 years.

New large projects (over \$4 million) to be started around the country in the coming financial year include:

- design of Newmarket Viaduct in Auckland
- design of the Tauranga Eastern Motorway
- investigation of Prebensen Drive/

### 10-year State Highway Plan and Forecast for 2007/08 to 2016/17

- Hyderabad Road Interchange in Napier
- design of Hawke's Bay Expressway Southern Extension
- design of Rimutaka Corner Easing (Muldoons) on SH2 north of Wellington
- investigation of Memorial Ave Intersection in Christchurch
- investigation of Christchurch Northern Arterial Rural south of Belfast.

The 2007/08 State Highway Forecast is available online at [www.transit.govt.nz/news/publications.jsp](http://www.transit.govt.nz/news/publications.jsp). To order a copy, send your contact details to [communications@transit.govt.nz](mailto:communications@transit.govt.nz).



## Update on Tumai roading realignment

Tumai roading realignment project has reached an important milestone, with the new 3.3km road being open six months ahead of schedule. The project, which started in 2005, realigns State Highway 1 between Waikouaiti and Tumai, and eliminates the Tumai overbridge. Although the main part of the new road is already open, the project is not finished yet as link roads still need to be built and some other minor work needs to be carried out by the contractors on site. The project is expected to be finished in the next few months. ■

## Next steps for land transport sector announced

In late May the Government announced the results of the Next Steps Review into the land transport sector. Transit believes that the new proposals for planning and funding, and the merger of Land Transport New Zealand and Transit will underpin the gains already made in the transport sector. During this period of change, Transit's core activities will continue. "We've still got roads to plan, build and maintain, and critically we've got a considerable task on our hands to deliver the project expectations covered by government's 2006 funding guarantee," Transit chief executive Rick van Barneveld said. For more information on the Next Steps Review visit the Ministry of Transport website at [www.mot.govt.nz](http://www.mot.govt.nz) ■

## Board Meeting

The next Transit Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 1 August at Transit's National Office in Wellington. The open agenda is from 2.30pm.

## what's on

### Train the Trainers - Refresher Courses for Level 1 Roads

For Level 1 trainers to conduct refresher training they must attend either a trainers' refresher course or the full course where they will receive updated information. Contact Kimberley Ng, (04) 496 6688 or [copptm.qualis@transit.govt.nz](mailto:copptm.qualis@transit.govt.nz)

**Level 1 - STMS Trainers Refresher** - (also may be used as a refresher for Level 1 TC Trainers), Taupo, 23 November 2007. Contact Stuart Fraser (04) 496 6698 or [stuart.fraser@transit.govt.nz](mailto:stuart.fraser@transit.govt.nz)

**Level 1 - STMS Train the Trainer Course** - restricted entry, applicants must be qualified STMS, Taupo 27-29 November 2007. Contact Stuart Fraser (04) 496 6698 or [stuart.fraser@transit.govt.nz](mailto:stuart.fraser@transit.govt.nz)

### Road Safety Engineering Workshop

A second 2007 Road Safety Engineering Workshop will be run in the Auckland region on 24-28 September. The workshop will train people to carry out Safety Audits and Crash Reduction Studies. Registration forms and programme are available on Transit's website: [www.transit.govt.nz](http://www.transit.govt.nz)

### Road Safety Barrier Systems Workshop

Owing to growing demand this second workshop is planned for 5-6 November 2007. It is essential for consultants responsible for design, checking, and audit of safety barriers, and for contractors responsible for installation. Contact Stuart Fraser on (04) 496 6698 or [stuart.fraser@transit.govt.nz](mailto:stuart.fraser@transit.govt.nz) to register your interest. Registration forms and the programme will be available from 20 July 2007 on Transit's website: [www.transit.govt.nz](http://www.transit.govt.nz)

## Conference: Transport - The Next 50 years

The international transport conference of the year will be held in Christchurch Convention Centre from 25-27 July. This conference is a great opportunity for everyone associated with the transport sector to discuss and listen to new ideas about multi-modal, integrated, sustainable transport directions for the next 50 years. Around 500 people are expected to attend and listen to a variety of international and New Zealand speakers. For more information on the conference visit [www.transport07.co.nz](http://www.transport07.co.nz).

## TRAFINZ Conference: "Sustainability - Just doing it"

The New Zealand Local Authority Traffic Institute (TRAFINZ)'s annual conference will this year be held in Taupo from 12 to 15 August 2007. The theme is "Sustainability - Just doing it". TRAFINZ represents local authority views on road safety and traffic management in New Zealand.

Transit chief executive Rick van Barneveld will be speaking at the conference about "The sustainable highway interfacing with the larger local government networks". To register, visit [www.trafinz.org.nz](http://www.trafinz.org.nz).

## Do we have your correct contact details?

We would like to hear from you if you wish to update your contact details, change the number of copies of InTransit you are receiving or if you or others you know wish to begin receiving this newsletter. Email [communications@transit.govt.nz](mailto:communications@transit.govt.nz) or post to Transit, Communications Team, PO Box 5084, Wellington. ■