

## Traffic Note 13

**Date:** November 1998  
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### 1998 Road Safety Survey Reports - Information

As described in *Traffic Note 5* (June 1998) the Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) carries out surveys on the application of safety standards by Road Controlling Authorities (RCA). The surveys help fulfil the LTSA's statutory function to "monitor adherence to safety standards within the land transport system".

Results of further surveys, one carried out during 1996/97 and three completed during 1997/98, are now available. The survey topics and results are briefly described below. Copies of the full reports are available through the LTSA regional engineers at Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Hard copy reports cost \$10 each while electronic versions are available through e-mail at no charge.

#### Report RSS6: Pedestrian Crossings (1996/97)

- Almost all RCAs surveyed used the *Manual of Traffic Signs and Markings* as the main reference for marking, signs and other devices associated with crossings.
- Most RCAs used the pedestrian crossing warrant to establish a new crossing, but it was estimated only 62% of existing crossings met the warrant criteria.
- Only 26% of RCAs claimed to floodlight all crossings used at night.

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- Very few RCAs (13%) monitored the skid resistance of the pavement on approaches to crossing, or had a programme to maintain it at appropriate levels.
- Only 18% of sites complied with the full range of legal requirements and the average site complied with 82% of the legal requirements.
- Nationally, compliance with visibility requirements ranged from 81 to 98% over five different criteria and 98% of crossings measured met width requirements.
- Only 45% of diamond markings and 38% of other warning devices complied with the requirements - generally they were too close to the crossing.

Non-compliance with legal requirements highlighted the need for RCAs to check crossings. To assist them with this the LTSA produced *Traffic Note 1* (June 1998).

### **Report RSS7: Temporary Speed Limits (1997/98)**

- 66% of RCAs used a guideline or specification for setting temporary speed limits.
- 28% of RCAs used only 30km/h temporary speed limits and, of the surveyed sites, 77% in an underlying 100km/h area were sign posted at 30km/h.
- The temporary speed limit value was judged appropriate at 79% of sites surveyed.
- At 92% of sites surveyed there was at least one speed limit sign missing or placed in an inappropriate location.

It was concluded RCAs need to use published guidelines in setting temporary speed limits. They should ensure any limits set remain appropriate for changing conditions and should demand a higher level of expertise and training from contractors and RCA staff involved in the placement of temporary speed limit signs.

### **Report RSS8: Traffic Control at Roadworks (1997/98)**

- RCAs use a wide variety of techniques to ensure traffic safety at road-work sites. While the use of traffic management plans in contract documents is widespread and increasing they are not in universal use.
- The safety performance and motivation of contractors was reported to be extremely variable. While training alone was not seen as the key, it would have an important role in providing improvement to both skills and motivation.

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- Issues RCA engineers identified often related to inappropriate use of signs. Common issues included signs left out too long, speed limits not fitting conditions at the time and the use of damaged, incorrect or old signs.
- Field surveys of 104 road work sites throughout New Zealand failed to find a single site fully complying with the current guidelines. While many of the faults were not dangerous, the message being given to motorists was inconsistent and contributes to the low regard taken by some motorists for road works signs.

It was concluded RCAs should require any road works in their jurisdiction to comply with a traffic management plan and ensure compliance. It was also suggested new guidelines be produced to better cover traffic and occupational safety and health and to recognise special needs of pedestrians and cyclists at road work sites.

### **Report RSS9: Safety Management Systems (1997/98)**

- Most RCAs surveyed have prepared, or are preparing, an asset management plan, although there is considerable variation in the content of these plans.
- 34% of RCAs had a single document defining their road safety activities, while many others are including these in asset management plans and/or District Plans.
- Only 5 of the 28 territorial authorities surveyed had a single document specifying the standards, guidelines and codes of practice they had adopted.
- 44% have been or are working towards being registered for Quality Assurance.

It was recommended RCAs specify the documents to be utilised for the provision of safe roads within their area and consider the suitability of the control they currently have over the standards and guidelines applied to their roads.

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