



NATIONAL ROAD CARRIERS PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF INQUIRY FOR THE NORTHERN CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS PROPOSAL

31 July 2017

EPA Reference: 126192

Thank you for this opportunity....

My name is Paula Rogers, a National Road Carriers executive with responsibilities covering Auckland north of the Waitemata Harbour, and including Northland

First, some context:

As you will see from our submission, National Road Carriers is all about freight transport

From that perspective, we regard this project as long over-due and a critical catch-up to providing Auckland with a modern transport network that will enable road freight operators to efficiently and safely service customers.

As we note in our submission the freight task in Auckland is projected to increase by around 6% a year for the foreseeable future. That is probably conservative.

The project area has major freight generating and distribution activity, including to-and-from the North Harbour Business Park, Constellation and Apollo Business areas, and the Albany Metropolitan Centre.

All these areas have access by both the Grenville Road and Upper Harbour interchanges, and all are at the heart of Auckland's growth-led economy.

NRC notes the NZTA heavy truck movement projections presented to you, and which we have referenced for you.¹

¹ See: <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/projects/auckland-northern-corridor/EPA/Assessment-of-Environmental-Effects/Assessment-of-Transport-Effects.pdf>, specifically paragraph 3.17: current numbers, and paragraph 7.6: future projected volumes.

With the completion of the Western Ring Route Waterview Tunnels the northern corridor section is likely to become an even more popular heavy freight route not just linking the project area but further north for business areas of Silverdale, Warkworth, Wellsford and Northland.

There is a big freight task linking all these areas with the distribution hubs to the south, including the Southdown rail head, East Tamaki and Auckland Airport.

Please keep in mind therefore that the project will be adding improvements to a highway network that forms part of Northland's economic lifeline – there is no Auckland-Northland rail. All goods are carried to-from Northland by road. (And let's not ignore the significant tourist traffic that uses the road....).

The East West Link between SH20 and SH1 that your panel peers are currently considering will form a critical part of this emerging network, as will the proposed upgraded SH16/18 and SH18 Squadron Drive Connection, discussions on which are getting underway.

(pause)

This context reinforces why NRC gives its 'support in full' to the application.

In one sense we see the project as (simply) another stage of building a modern, efficient and safe Auckland – Whangarei highway within 15-20 years or sooner; 3-lanes each way.

In a more immediate sense, the key role the highway plays in moving goods by the high numbers of heavy trucks that it will carry brings me to the key issues our submission requests the Board of Inquiry give attention to.

These concerns centre on the design and construction of the highway to ensure it meets the highest possible standards of freight transport efficiency, safety and effectiveness, as highlighted in paragraph 29.

In practical terms, design and construction needs to ensure that the following basic freight transport requirements are incorporated:

- All HPMV, Over dimension and 50Tonne + configurations along the full length of the route.

- A full spectrum of operational and safety provisions such as shoulder lanes, stopping areas and freight ways.
- Inter-changes and turning circles designed to ensure larger classes of HPMV (B-trains and bulk fuel tankers) can corner safely and creating no risks to other traffic, especially where SH1 and SH18 join at the mid-section of the improvements.
- Underpasses are to a specification and height for all permitted freight vehicle configurations.

NRC strongly supports the proposed ramp signal bypass lanes, and also the northbound kerbside lane on SH1 starting from the Grenville Road Interchange ramp (where the carriageway widens from two to three lanes). This will help slow moving/ heavy vehicles due to the gradient on this section, and also benefit faster general traffic.

To avoid freight getting caught up in general traffic congestion on the Northern Motorway, NRC has elsewhere suggested that heavy trucks have access to the Northern Busway outside peak hours.

We would greatly welcome your support to this proposal, for a more efficient use of the northern busway's extension.

(Pause)

As a final observation, another way you might assess the technical design and efficiency requirements of the project is to keep an eye on our fast changing technologically-led future.

Looking to the emerging future of transport technology suggests we are entering an era of great change.

But one thing you can be certain of - **whatever happens there will be trucks for a long time**, be they with or without drivers.

NRC wishes you well in your deliberations on this important project."

Thank you