

18 May 2018

To: NZTA
Submitted via electronic form

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Consultation on the Draft Investment Assessment Framework to support 2018-21 National Land Transport Plan

Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Draft Investment Assessment Framework (IAF) for the 2018-21 National Land Transport Programme (NLTP).

TIA is the peak body for the tourism industry in New Zealand. With around 1,600 members, TIA represents a range of tourism-related activities including rental car and motorhomes, hospitality, accommodation, adventure & other activities, attractions, retail, airports & airlines, as well as related tourism services.

Land transport is very important to the tourism proposition in NZ. The industry encourages both domestic and international visitors to travel by land to explore and experience the many tourism regions and experiences that NZ offers. We support the key strategic priorities in the draft GPS of safety and access.

TIA has worked closely with NZTA over the past four years as a key member of NZTA's Safer Journeys for Visiting Drivers programme. TIA also submitted on the draft Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport in May 2018, and understands that this draft IAF has been developed to give effect to the draft GPS. While we noted a number of gaps in the GPS we were overall pleased to see the strong consideration given to tourism within that document. Our comments below build on this, in the context of informing and prioritising the land transport investment. There are four key points we want to make.

Strategic Partners supporting TIA
and the tourism industry

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1. Cars and Mode Neutrality

One of the themes of the GPS is mode neutrality, though it appears there is a shift to greater investment in modes of travel other than private vehicles. We support the increasing focus on modes such as walking and cycling though not to the detriment of vehicles.

Travel by motor vehicle remains the most common transport option for both domestic and international visitors. New Zealanders enjoy up to 45 million domestic trips per annum¹. Of these 28 million (62%) are day trips and 17 million (38%) overnight trips. 90% of all trips occur via road. As a rule of thumb, New Zealanders prefer to drive up to 3-4 hours for a short-stay overnight domestic trip. The quality and timeliness of the journey are important considerations and therefore roads and cars feature heavily in domestic tourism decisions. While acknowledging the theme of mode neutrality in the IAF it will be important to the tourism sector to ensure private and rented vehicles are not disadvantaged in investment decisions.

2. Tourism Insight

We noted in our response to the draft GPS there is an insight gap in understanding both the impact of visitor flows on land transport planning and investment, and also the different user-groups on the road. This insight gap has been a long-standing one for the tourism sector. It appears a reasonable assumption that understanding both current and future visitor flows will be important to investment decisions in land transport. It's not clear to us where in the draft IAS that investment into insight, particularly in the tourism sector, is prioritised. As tourism is a key component of the draft GPS we recommend a stronger reference to tourism insight in the draft IAF.

3. Visiting Drivers Programme

Driving in New Zealand is different to driving overseas. TIA has worked closely with NZTA on the Safer Journeys for Visiting Drivers programme since 2013 and regard that work as instrumental in responding effectively to the issues associated with accidents involving drivers from overseas. We were surprised and somewhat concerned when the programme was significantly wound down by NZTA in 2017. We acknowledge that a number of positive outcomes were achieved prior to that and

¹ Domestic Growth Insight Tool (DGIT) 2016

some systems have become BAU such as the Code of Practice for rental operators. We are concerned though that the decreased focus runs a risk of taking the eye off the ball on what is an important issue for the tourism industry.

The IAF contains a section called 'Prioritisation for continuous programmes', listing three prioritised activities – public transport existing services, and maintenance of local road, and state highways. We recommend that the continuation of safety programmes, in particular the Visiting Drivers Programme, remains an ongoing priority over the duration of the 2018-21 National Land Transport Programme.

4. *NZTA-Tourism Planning*

The development of a closer relationship between NZTA and the tourism sector would be timely. While there is solid recognition of tourism in the strategy documents there is less detail on how this commitment will be enabled via the IAF.

Areas for further discussion include tourism roads of significance. We believe it timely to have a deeper discussion on roads that are of significant importance to tourism in New Zealand. While the state highway network and touring routes will feature prominently in this discussion there are other roads where greater investment may be required such as the Milford road (SH94), Cardrona road (SH6), and the Queenstown-Glenorchy road. Within that discussion is also the importance of road design catering for visitors. We provided perspectives on this to NCTIR during the rebuild of SH1, reinforcing the importance of not only safety items such as directional arrows, rumble strips, and sealed berms but also rest areas, photo stops, improved signage and visitor information. It's important this thinking is part of the national investment discussion.

There is also a need for a wider conversation between industry and government on land transport priorities beyond that of the current 2018-21 NLTP. The industry is this year resetting its growth framework *Tourism 2025* and it is timely to connect land transport more closely into the industry's strategic planning.

Conclusion

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the above in more detail with NZTA and look forward to our ongoing contribution and input to this process. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries about our feedback.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. m. Hanrahan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Steve Hanrahan
Advocacy Manager Tourism Industry Aotearoa