

# ROAD SAFETY

Building a Safer New Zealand



## Safer journeys, safer roads

National is determined to keep reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

We will make common-sense law changes that clearly target the groups and behaviours that have the most impact on our road toll. Each decision will be based on evidence, and we will be careful not to impose unnecessary additional costs on general road users.

### Tackling our road toll

Over the past three years, National has made tackling our road toll a key priority as we work to build a safer New Zealand.

We have focused our activities on groups of road users that have the worst accident record on the road. These are young drivers, reckless speeders, repeat drink-drivers and those well over the limit, unlicensed drivers, and motorcyclists.

### Safer Journeys

Our new *Safer Journeys* road safety strategy targets these groups, and takes a “safe system” approach to road safety. It targets safer roads, safer speeds, safer vehicles, and safer driving.

Our huge and ongoing investment in the Roads of National Significance (RONS) and the State Highway network will considerably improve road safety on New Zealand’s busiest roads.

*“National will stop young drivers abusing the graduated-licence system, and introduce a tougher restricted licence test to encourage 120 hours practice. We will invest just under \$300 million a year from the National Land Transport Fund on safety improvements on our roads.”*

## Key facts

- Outlawed hand-held mobile phone use while driving.
- Targeted high-risk drivers through:
  - Confronting illegal street racing.
  - Zero blood alcohol for repeat drink-drivers.
  - Introducing alcohol interlocks.
  - Doubling time in jail for dangerous driving and drink driving causing death.
- Tackling the youth road toll:
  - Zero blood alcohol for under 20s.
  - Raised the driving age.
  - New tougher restricted licence tests.
  - Will prevent licence pooling.
- The road toll is starting to fall – the nine months to Sept 2011 was the lowest ever.
- Passed drugged driving legislation – 313 drugged drivers convicted so far.
- Street-racing offences are down by 15 per cent.
- Investing \$12.2 billion over 10 years improving our state highway network.
- Changing the give way rule to make it safer.

## National has...

### Outlawed mobile phone use while driving

- ✓ Passed a new law banning the use of a hand-held mobile phone to call or text while driving.

### Confronted illegal street racers

- ✓ Passed comprehensive legislation tackling illegal street racers. This includes:
  - Anti-cruising bylaws.
  - Car crushing laws.
  - Demerit points for illegal street-racing offences.

### Tackled drink driving

- ✓ Introduced a zero blood alcohol limit for young drivers.
- ✓ Introduced a zero blood alcohol limit for repeat drink-drivers.
- ✓ Passed a law to introduce alcohol interlocks.
- ✓ Doubled the maximum penalty for dangerous driving and drink driving causing death from five years to 10 years.

### Raised the driving age

- ✓ Lifted the driving licence age from 15 to 16.

### Clamped down on drugged driving

- ✓ Passed New Zealand's first drugged driving legislation, to make it easier for police to capture those under the influence of drugs while driving.

### Given Police more tools

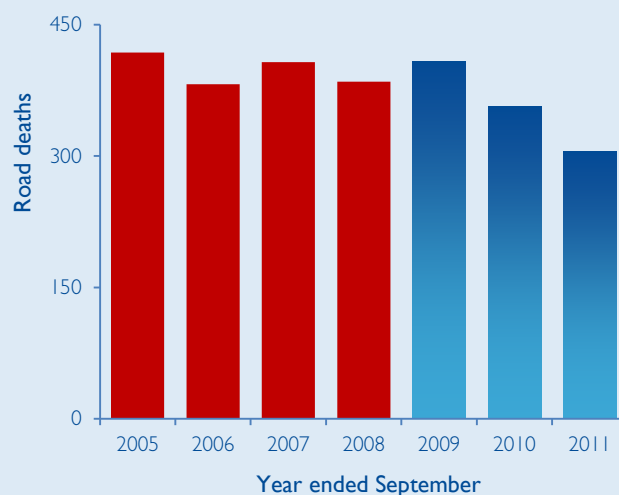
- ✓ Introduced new automatic number plate recognition devices for police to make it easier to track down unlicensed and high-risk drivers.

## Our results so far

### The road toll is coming down

The road toll is starting to trend down, with the number of accidents, serious injuries, and deaths starting to drop.

- In the 12 months to September 2011, the road toll was the lowest recorded, with 305 people dying on our roads compared to 357 the previous year.



Many of National's new road safety measures have come into effect only recently, so New Zealand can expect further progress over the next term of government.

### Street racing offences are declining

- Street-racing offences have come down by 15 per cent under National.
- 77 boy racers are on their first or second strike towards getting their car crushed.

### Drugged drivers are being taken off our roads

- 313 drugged drivers have been arrested and convicted under our new legislation.

## Licence pooling – a growing problem

Compliance with licence conditions at the learner and restricted licence stages reduces the crash risk of new drivers and riders. It is important that licence conditions are not seen as optional.

Currently, 40 per cent of learner licence holders and 36 per cent of restricted licence holders have been on their current licence for more than five years.

Licence stage	People who have held the licence for more than five years*
Learner licence	113,350
Restricted licence	122,825

\* Includes car and motorcycle licences

This 'pooling' at the learner and restricted licence stage is increasing.

Licence pooling can lead to the following problems:

- Increased incidences of licence-condition breaches, and a lack of respect for the graduated-licence scheme, reducing its effectiveness.
- Drivers haven't had their driving skills, ability to perceive hazards, or driving attitudes assessed at the higher level required by the full licence test.

## What we will do next...

### 1. Improve driver licensing

- Introduce legislation to stop drivers staying on their learners and restricted licenses for long periods – so that they respect the graduated-licensing system and learn to drive properly.
- Introduce a tougher restricted licence test early in 2012 to encourage young people to get 120 hours practice before getting their restricted licence.
- Strengthen motorcycle licence testing and introduce a power-to-weight restriction for novice drivers.

These actions will help to increase the skill of drivers as part of an across-the-board approach to road safety.

### 2. Invest in road safety

- Invest around \$620 million annually on road safety over the next three years, including \$295 million a year on safety improvements and \$300 million per year on road policing.
- Continue to implement our 10-year road safety strategy *Safer Journeys*.

### 3. Confront dangerous driving

- Rebalance speeding penalties in favour of demerit points and away from fines. Evidence shows that demerit points are more effective at changing driver behaviour than fines.

### 4. Scientifically determine the harm from drink driving

- Use the new drink driving law to determine the actual level of harm caused by drivers with a blood alcohol limit between 0.05 and 0.08 milligrams of alcohol per litre of blood.

## 5. Improve safety at intersections

- Change the give way rule in March 2012 to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists and consistent with every other country in the world.

This will reduce confusion on our roads, improve the safety of all road users and bring New Zealand into line internationally.

- Introduce red light cameras where they are shown to be effective.

## 6. Improve our state highways

- Keep improving our state highways with a \$12.2 billion investment over 10 years.
- Continue to build the Roads of National Significance (RONS) as fast as we realistically can. This will mean our busiest highways are built to eliminate the risk of head-on crashes and risky passing manoeuvres.

RONS include:

- Puhoi to Wellsford
- Auckland's Western Ring Route
- Victoria Park Tunnel
- Waikato Expressway
- Tauranga Eastern Link
- Wellington Northern Corridor
- Christchurch motorways.

## Labour would take New Zealand backwards

### When it was last in government, Labour:

- ✘ Made few changes to road safety policy during its nine years in office.
- ✘ Introduced a road safety strategy, and then took almost no steps to action it.
- ✘ Threw money at road safety, but made no attempt to hold people accountable for the money spent.
- ✘ Made very limited progress reducing the road toll over nine years.

### We can't afford to repeat that again.

National has made great progress on making our roads safer and reducing the road toll.

### Labour would put that all at risk.