



Report 10.513
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Committee Regional Transport
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Programme for Regional Freight Plan update

1. Purpose

This report sets out the proposed programme for the review of the Regional Freight Plan.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

The current Regional Freight Plan was adopted in July 2007. The Freight Plan was based on the *Wellington Freight Movements Study 2006*.

A review of the Regional Freight Plan has been scheduled in the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) 2007 - 2016 to occur in 2009/10 but was delayed due to other planning commitments.

3.1 Strategic Context

The RLTS 2010 – 2040 identifies efficient freight movement as essential to economic growth in the region. There is a direct relationship between economic growth and increased freight movement.

The RLTS objectives of ‘assisting economic and regional development’ and ‘improve access, mobility and reliability’ have become more prominent in the Strategy as a response to Government’s focus on economic growth in the Government Policy Statement on land transport funding 2009. The Regional Freight Plan is an important step in implementing those RLTS objectives.

There are a number of RLTS outcomes and targets of particular relevance to the Freight Plan, including:

RLTS outcomes	2020 RLTS targets
7.1 Improved regional freight efficiency	Improved road journey times for freight traffic between key destinations
7.2 Improved inter-regional freight efficiency	Infrastructure constraints to rail freight movements are removed
8.1 Improved safety, efficiency and reliability of road, public transport and freight links to the north of the region	Progress measured using information collected for congestion (4.1), reliability (4.3), safety (5.1) and inter-regional freight (7.2)
4.1 Reduced severe road congestion	Average congestion on selected roads will remain below year 2003 levels despite traffic growth (20 seconds delay/km in 2003; 23.4 seconds delay/km in 2010)
4.2 Maintained vehicle travel times between communities and regional destinations	Average vehicle journey 'speeds' shown in travel time surveys for selected key routes will remain at or above year 2003 levels (55 km/h in 2003; 52 km/h in 2010)
4.3 Improved reliability of the strategic roading network	Continual reduction in total incident hours
6.3 Sustainable economic development supported	Continued reduction in vehicle kilometres travelled per GDP

A number of RLTS policies also refer directly to the freight network.

3.2 Performance of current Regional Freight Plan 2007

The Freight Plan 2007 contains three specific actions.

3.2.1 Facilitate rail based transfer of logs to CentrePort

This action is to advocate for the Wanganui/Manawatu (Horizons) RLTS to support the development of log transfer sites at Marton and Wanganui.

The Wairarapa Corridor Plan 2010 contains an action to “ensure provision in the Wairarapa Combined District Plan that facilitate the development of a log transfer and storage site at Waingawa are retained” and to “support commercial development of a log transfer and storage site at Waingawa”.

This action is currently in progress.

3.2.2 Protect short haul rail freight

This action is to advocate to ONTRACK (now KiwiRail) and Hutt City Council for the protection of the Gracefield/Seaview rail corridor.

The designation for the Gracefield Spur rail corridor (NZR 2) remains in Hutt City's District Plan.

This action is currently in progress.

3.2.3 Improve long haul rail freight efficiency

This action is to advocate to ONTRACK (KiwiRail) for removal of the Kai Iwi tunnel constraint (between Marton and New Plymouth).

The Kai Iwi rail tunnel is on the Marton to New Plymouth rail line. Recent improvements have allowed the transport of modern Hi-Cube containers, and more than 4,000 Hi-Cube containers passed through the Gorge by rail over the last 9 months.

This action has been completed.

4. Scope of review

The review is intended to be comprehensive, but will utilise the existing 2007 Freight Plan as a base. The review process will include the development of a 'background and issues' document, from which the action programme of the new Freight Plan will be based.

Information available from Greater Wellington's Annual Monitoring Report, the Ministry of Transport's Transport Monitoring Indicator Framework and other sources will be used to highlight the emerging issues facing the freight sector in the Wellington region. The new Plan will also incorporate any changes to legislation, Central Government policy direction and a number of recent studies.

There are two recently published studies dealing with the freight sector. These studies will form the basis of the 'background and issues' document and provide most of its content.

The 2008 National Freight Demands Study was published by the Ministry of Transport, New Zealand Transport Agency and the Ministry of Economic Development.

The *Freight Analysis* report 2009 was prepared by Hyder Consulting. It was commissioned by the NZ Transport Agency to analyse of the freight task and associated issues and opportunities in the Wellington, Nelson, Marlborough and Tasman regions.

A gap analysis did not highlight any areas of significant conflict between the two studies.

4.1 Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Amendment 2010

The process to implement the Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Amendment 2010 Rule will also be an important contributor to the review of Regional Freight Plan. This amended Land Transport Rule allows longer heavy vehicles in some

instances and creates a new permitting category for high performance motor vehicles (HPMV) at increased weights.

The HPMV permitting category allows divisible loads (for example, a truck with two trailers) to go over the current weight limit of 44 tonnes and to have longer than current 'as-of-right' lengths (20 metres). However, these allowances will only be with a permit and only on roads approved as suitable for such trucks.

This review of the Regional Freight Plan will include a 'regional freight network map' of approved HPMV routes within the Wellington region.

4.2 Technical/stakeholder group

The Regional Freight Plan will be developed with the assistance of a technical/stakeholder group comprised of representatives from Greater Wellington, the region's Territorial Authorities (TAs), New Zealand Transport Agency, KiwiRail, Ministry of Transport, CentrePort, Wellington International Airport, Wellington Employers' Chamber of Commerce, Automobile Association, New Zealand Police and several freight sector industry groups.

4.3 Consultation

Consultation for this review will involve the technical/stakeholder working group as well as submissions from interest groups and the general public on a draft version of the Freight Plan. The draft Freight Plan will be accompanied by a media release and public notice inviting public submissions as well as be published on Greater Wellington's website.

5. Key steps

The key steps and expected time frames for the Regional Freight Plan review are shown in the following table.

Key Step	Who	Timing
Process report to RTC (this report)	GW	14 September 2010
Drafting of background and issues document	GW officers with T/S Group	September – November
Draft action programme for new Freight Plan	GW officers with T/S Group	January – February
Approve draft Freight Plan for consultation	RTC	March
Consultation		April – May
Appoint Hearings Subcommittee	RTC	May
Hearing submitters	Hearing Subcommittee	June
Draft Regional Freight Plan for approval	RTC	June/July 2011

6. Communication

Greater Wellington officers will engage with key stakeholders, primarily through the Technical/stakeholder Group, when developing the Regional Freight Plan.

7. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Agrees** to commence a review of the Regional Freight Plan in accordance with the process and timeframe set out in sections 4 and 5.

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