

Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024

The Minister of Transport has signed the final Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024 to deliver on the Government's Accelerate NZ commitment to reverse the previous government's blanket speed limit reductions, require slower variable speed limits outside schools, and enable up to 120km/h speed limits on Roads of National Significance, where it's safe to do so.

Reversing the previous government's blanket speed limit reductions

New Zealanders rejected the previous government's blanket speed limit reductions on State Highways and local roads. The highest-income countries that have the lowest rates of road deaths all have speed limits of 50km/h on urban roads, with exceptions for lower speed limits. The Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024 takes this approach, standardising speed limits of 50km/h on urban streets, with exceptions for higher-risk urban environments.

Highest income countries with the lowest rates of road deaths and their urban road speed limits

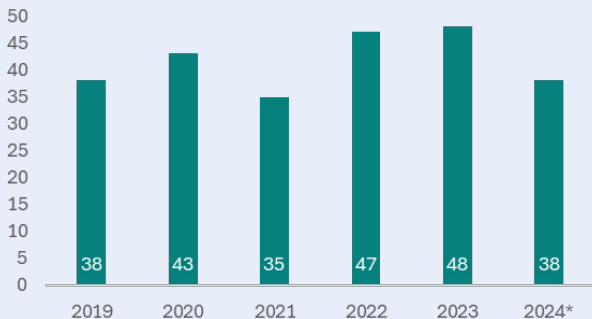


These countries have strong road safety records, targeting alcohol, drugs, and speeding. Alongside the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024, the Government has delivered record investment for road policing and enforcement to target the highest contributing factors to fatal crashes. Through the Road Policing Investment Programme 2024-27, the Government has increased alcohol breath testing targets to 3.3 million per year and is currently progressing legislation through Parliament to introduce roadside drug testing. We know that increased use of tools against impaired driving is effective in New Zealand, with data from the NZ Transport Agency showing a significant decline in alcohol-related fatalities on our roads following an increase in the number of alcohol breath tests undertaken by Police.

Number of alcohol breath tests undertaken compared to alcohol-related fatalities



Road deaths on local roads with 20km/h-50km/h speed limits



Source: Ministry of Transport
For the period 1 January to 19 September
*Provisional

To keep young New Zealanders safe as they arrive at or leave school, the Government is requiring slower variable speed limits outside schools. By 1 July 2026, local streets outside a school will be required to have a 30km/h variable speed limit no earlier than 45 minutes before the start of the school day, and no later than 45 minutes after the end of the school day. Rural roads that are outside schools will be required to have variable speed limits of 60km/h or less. The Ministry of Transport has advised that the rate of deaths and serious injuries for school-aged children on roads around schools during pick up and drop off times is 2.7 times higher than at other times. Despite the previous government's blanket speed limit reductions, fatalities on local roads with speed limits up to 50km/h have remained relatively unchanged since these reduced speed limits were introduced from 2020.

