

28 June 2021

Michael Brown
fyi-request-15605-05a1b8a0@requests.fyi.org.nz

REF: OIA-8205

Dear Michael

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 30 May 2021 regarding the response to your previous Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, reference OIA-8205. You have made a further request for the following information under the Act:

Given that the agency has not conducted staff unconscious-bias tests relating to different transport modes, how does NZTA ensure that staff do not have this form of unconscious bias and that this is not affecting NZTA decisions?

My queries are presented in the contemporary context of NZ needing to transition to a different balance of transport modes due to population growth and requirements to reduce carbon emissions. Such a transition is heightening conflicting needs across the transport sector, necessitating more scrutiny of NZTA decisions. Ensuring that NZTA staff do not harbour unconscious bias in their decision-making is one way to demonstrate transparency and identify issues.

Investment decisions are not made by individuals but instead are made by the processes described below as well as public consultation for Regional Land Transport Plans (RLTP).

Decisions about the activities that Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency invests in, either directly or in partnership with others, are directed by the Government Policy Statement (GPS). The GPS provides strategic direction on what outcomes and results are sought from investment, and how funding should be allocated across different types of activity or modes.

GPS 2021, which takes effect on 1 July 2021, is underpinned by the principle of mode-neutrality. GPS 2021 states that “mode neutrality means considering all transport options for moving people and freight, including multi-modal options, when identifying the best value-for-money transport solutions to deliver transport outcomes.” It is about ensuring people can choose the mode that best suit their task in order to get to their destination or to move freight.

Waka Kotahi must ‘give effect’ to the GPS and does this mainly through development of the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP). The NLTP is the list of activities that are eligible to be funded from the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF). In preparing the NLTP, we assess the range of activities that we and our investment partners, such as councils, consider are needed to deliver on the GPS. Councils’ proposals are included in their RLTP, and Waka Kotahi proposals are included in the Waka Kotahi Investment Proposal. In developing these proposals, we and our investment partners must show that we have considered a range of

options, across modes, for delivering the outcomes and results that are sought. Waka Kotahi assesses the proposals that will be included in the NLTP using the Investment Prioritisation Method (IPM).

GPS 2021 deliberately looks to prioritise investment in some modes over others. Through the 'better travel options' strategic priority, there is a strong focus on encouraging people to move out of their cars and onto public transport and active modes. The 'improving freight connections' strategic priority looks to provide a platform for rail and coastal shipping to play a greater role in meeting freight demand. The need to reduce transport emissions, as set out in the 'climate change' strategic priority, is a key driver for, and a key outcome sought, from both of these changes.

You can read more about the investment decision-making process (including the IPM) that Waka Kotahi uses to develop the NLTP and give effect to the GPS on the Waka Kotahi website at: www.nzta.govt.nz/planning-and-investment/planning-and-investment-knowledge-base/202124-nltp/

If you would like to discuss this reply with the Waka Kotahi, please contact Ministerial Services by email at official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Barbara Tebbs
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