

18 December 2015

M Grainger
fyi-request-3426-5b22a2f3@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear M Grainger

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 29 November 2015, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982:

- 'Can you please supply data to prove that the two 90kph safer speed sections on SH2 between the SH1 intersection and the SH25 intersection are effective in saving lives?'

The following summary and graphs will outline the purpose, background and outcomes of the speed management initiatives that were implemented on State Highway 2 between State Highway 1 and State Highway 25. Road safety is a key priority for the NZ Transport Agency and its partners, and we always welcome feedback on any initiatives we implement.

Purpose of the speed reduction from 100km/h to 90km/h along State Highway 2:

- To help reduce crash risk and harm to our community; and to
- Provide an interim safety measure until the planned infrastructure improvements are funded and implemented through the National Land Transport Programme.

I have provided a brief summary to show the overall assessment of the speed reduction on State Highway 2 along with some more detailed background information for your information.

Overall assessment:

In summary:

- As a result of the posted speed limit being reduced from 100km/h to 90km/h there has been, on average, a 8-10km/h reduction in mean vehicle speeds (where those 90km/h posted speed limits are present); and
- A 27 percent reduction in deaths and serious injuries.

Background and process for implementation:

This portion of the State Highway 2 corridor was highlighted as one of the worst performing sections of state highway in the Waikato region in terms of safety performance.

This length of State Highway 2 has very high traffic volumes which can vary from 14,500 vehicles per day up to 24,000 vehicles per day during peak holiday periods. It is very busy on Friday evenings and Sundays as many people take this route to access the Coromandel area, or continue on towards Tauranga or the central Waikato network.

As a result of the poor safety performance, recommendations were made to consider a reduced speed limit until further works could be investigated and implemented along the corridor.

During 2011, the Transport Agency undertook extensive consultation with the local and wider community with regards to a speed management proposal which included a recommended reduction of rural speed limits from 100km/h to 80km/h through the majority of the route and from 70km/h to 60km/h the through Maramarua urban length.

Following feedback from the consultation process, some of the rural posted speed limits were changed, including:

- a reduction of the posted 100km/h to 90km/h on sections of open road between State Highway 1 and State Highway 25 with the exception of the Mangatawhiri Deviation section which remained at 100km/h, and
- Maramarua urban section which remained 70km/h.

Outcomes:

A number of surveys were undertaken both before the reduced speed limit was implemented and after to determine its effectiveness. The outcomes of those surveys showed a good reduction in the travelling mean speeds (averaged over both directions). This is shown in the table below.

Section	current speed limit (km/h)	Change in mean speed (km/h)
Previously 100km/h	100	-4.6
Previously 100km/h	90	-8 to 10
Previously 70km/h	70	-2.3

Refer Attachment 1 graphs for more information

Corridor crashes:

Over the first 2.5 years since implementation, the corridor showed a 27 percent reduction in deaths and serious injuries and 26 percent reduction over all crash types. Please refer to the graphs in Appendix 1 for updated trends.

State Highway 2 from State Highway 1 to State Highway 25 Crash Numbers

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	TOTAL
Fatal	3	3	5	3	0	4	2	2	2	2	3	0	1	30
Serious	8	3	6	2	4	5	1	3	0	5	1	3	1	42
Minor	11	10	11	11	5	10	17	11	5	6	9	2	4	112
Total	22	16	22	16	9	19	20	16	7	13	13	5	6	

Further work:

The Transport Agency acknowledges that this is a reasonably unforgiving environment if people make a mistake, and has committed to a capital works project along the length from State Highway 1 to State Highway 25. This corridor project is currently between investigation and design phases and it is hoped that construction will commence during the current 2015–2018 period.

Speed management is only one element of creating a safe transport system. We also rely on vehicle safety features, drivers' attention to the driving task, the perception of risk as conditions change during journeys and road safety infrastructure. One thing we do know is that the impact speed when vehicles crash is directly related to the injury outcomes. So this interim measure is a way we can contribute by highlighting to our communities that this is a corridor that needs care to be taken as well as hopefully achieve travelling speeds more appropriate for the road environment. We acknowledge there is more to do and we are working on other initiatives to help make this corridor more forgiving.

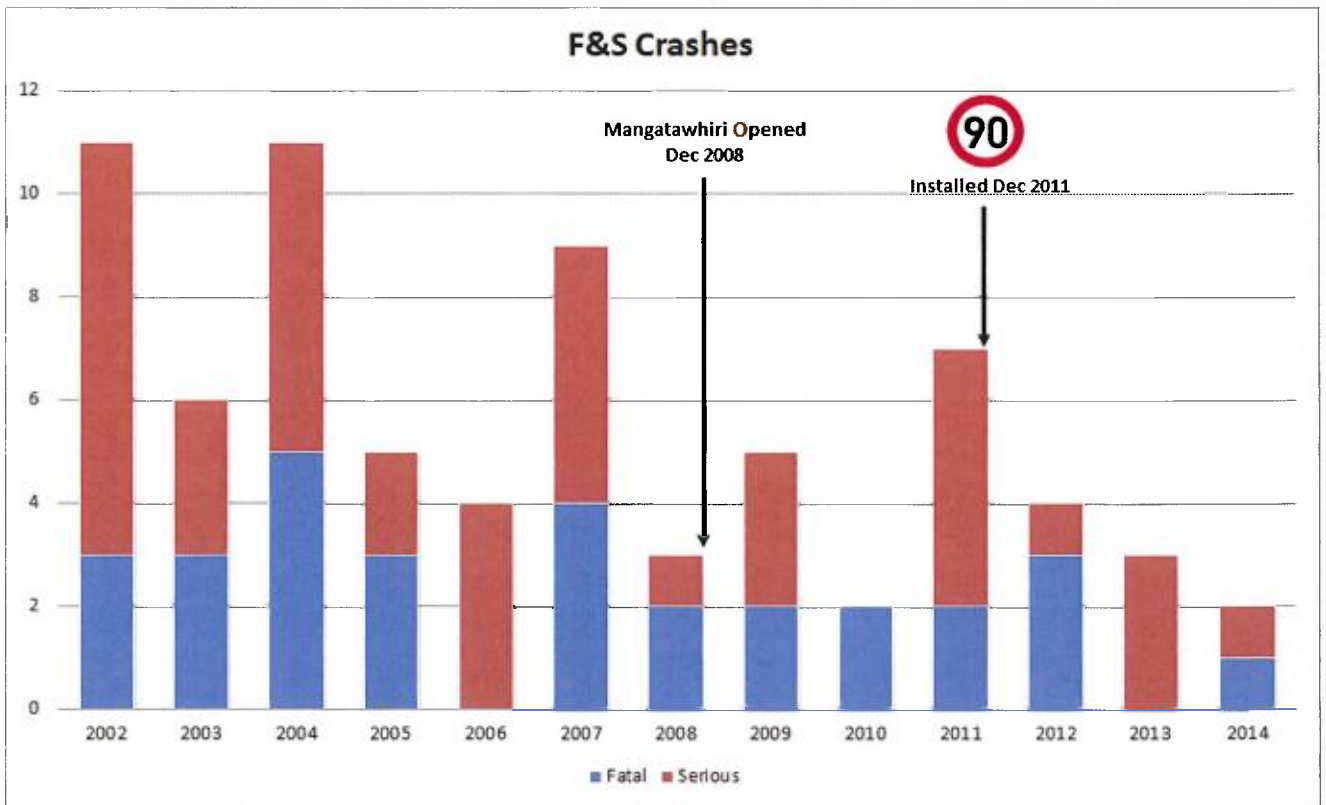
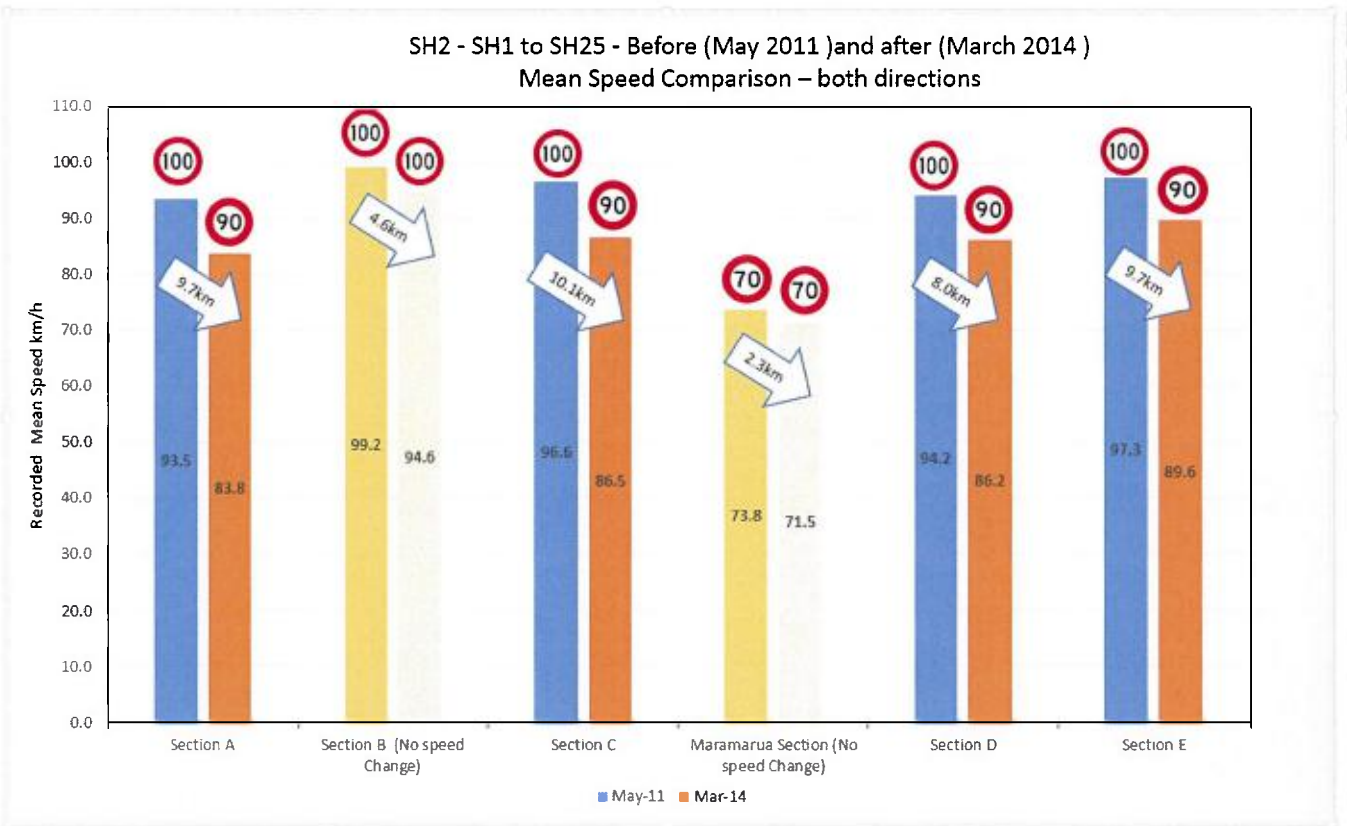
Thank you for taking an interest in road safety in our region. If you would like to discuss this reply with the NZ Transport Agency, please contact Michelle Te Wharau, Principal Safety Engineer by email to michelle.tewharau@nzta.govt.nz or by phone on (07) 958 7220.

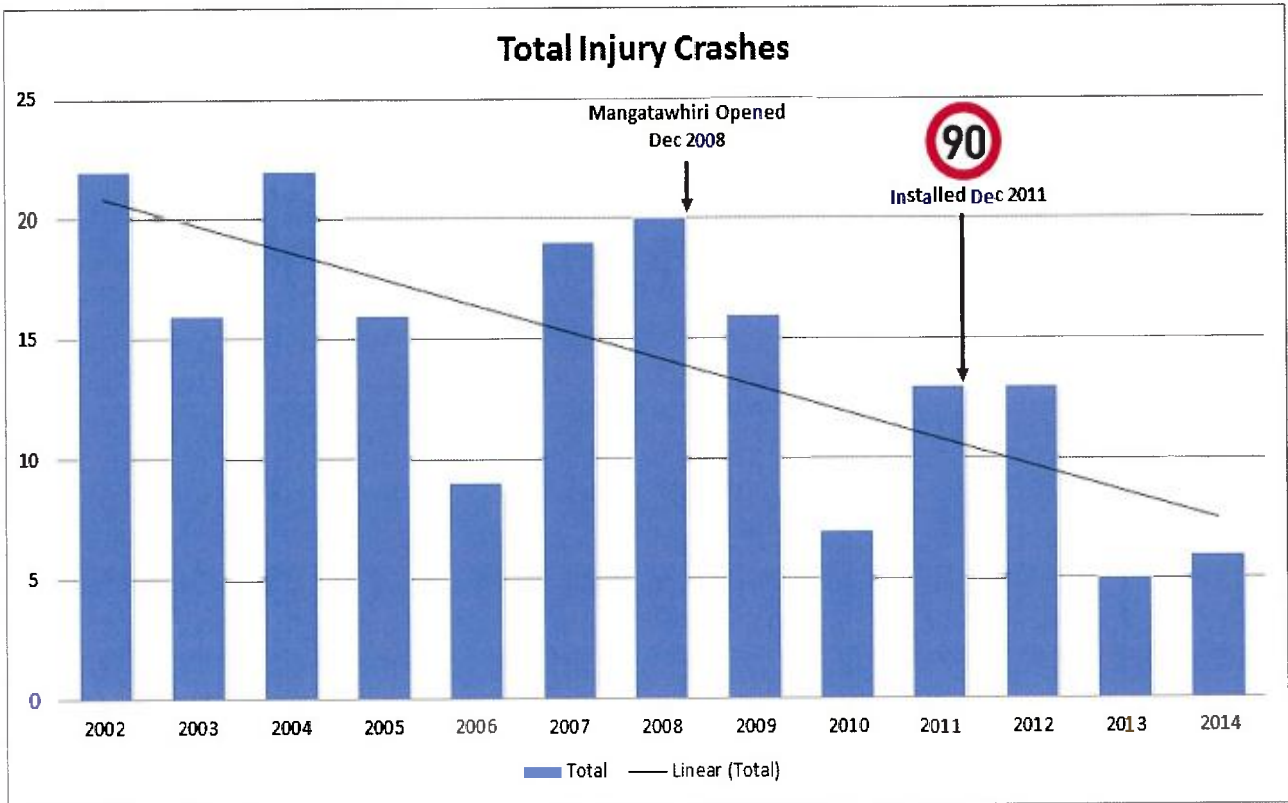
Yours faithfully

Kaye Clark

Highway Manager Hamilton
For Chief Executive

ATTACHMENT 1 – State Highway 2 Speed Management Monitoring Graphs – 2014





2.5 Years Comparison before and after Speed Change (between SH1/SH2 Interchange and SH2/SH25 Interchange)

