Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan – Pūrongo ā-Tau Aroturuki Annual Monitoring Report 2024

Greater Wellington
Te Pane Matua Taiao

Glossary

AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
AX	Airport Express
CAS	Crash Analysis System
CSC	Community Services Card
DSI	Deaths and Serious Injuries
ERP	Emissions Reduction Plan
EV	Electric Vehicle
FIGS	Freight Information Gathering System
FY	Fiscal Year
GPS	Government Policy Statement on Land Transport
HTS	Household Travel Survey
LNIRIM	Lower North Island Rail Integrated Mobility
NLTF	National Land Transport Fund
PHEV	Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle
RLTP	Regional Land Transport Plan
RCA	Road Controlling Authority
RSMP	Regional Speed Management Plan
RTC	Regional Transport Committee
SMP	Speed Management Plan
WTERP	Wellington Transport Emissions Reduction Pathway

Executive Summary

This Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) is the fourth report on the progress of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) 2021, covering the period from 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024. The AMR tracks progress against the three ambitious headline targets, measures, and indicators in the Wellington RLTP, which monitor how the region is progressing towards achieving our regional outcomes as well as priorities set out in the Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport.

Key findings from FY 2023/24 are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Headline targets and indicator summary

Headline Indicator	2030 Target	Result FY 2023/24	Change 1 year	Change 5 years
Combined mode share for public transport & active travel	39%	29% (3-yr ave) (2020-2023)	0%	0%
Deaths and serious injuries on region's roads	122 DSI	183 DSI	-6%	-13%
Land transport-generated carbon emissions	770 kilotonnes	1170 kilotonnes	-2%	3%

Measure	Indicator	Result FY2023/24	Change 1 year	Change 5 years
Public transport patronage	Bus, rail, and ferry boardings (peak times)	19.6 m in peak (37.6m overall)	6% peak (13% overall)	2%
Public transport journey times	Average travel times on core bus routes	AM 39 min PM 37 min	0% (AM) 4% (PM)	7% (AM) 6% (PM)
Public transport journey time variability	Average travel time variability on core bus routes	AM 2.6 min PM 4.8 min	-11% 3%	-11% 24%
Active travel and public transport (PT) journeys to work & education	Combined mode share of travel to work trips by walking, cycling & public transport (census)	32% (Census 2023)	N/A	-1.5% between Census 18 and 23
Deaths and serious injuries on region's roads	Percentage of DSI with speed as a factor	21% (5-yr ave)	-1%	-2%
Participation in active travel to school	% of students using active travel to journey to school	Data not yet available (Census 2023)		
Cyclist and pedestrian deaths and serious injuries	DSI for pedestrians & cyclists on roads	51 DSI (5-yr ave)	-7%	-9%
Road network resilience	Availability of viable alternative routes	No data available		
	Frequency of unplanned road closures	60 events	-29%	-23%
	Duration of unplanned road closures	115 hours	-88%	-16%
The efficiency of the road network on strategic routes	Average travel speeds on selected strategic routes	36km/hr (3-yr ave)	-1%	None yet
	Average travel time variability on selected strategic routes	7.6 mins (3-yr ave)	17%	None yet
Regional freight moved by rail	Annual freight volumes moved by rail	1.12 million tonnes	-17%	-13%
Transport generated emissions	Transport CO_2 emissions (per capita)	2.19 tonnes	-3%	1%
	Ambient air quality - Nitrogen dioxide	15.7 µg/m3 (CY2023)	1%	-8%
Vehicle fleet composition	% of new private vehicle registrations that are EV and hybrid vehicles	63% of new registrations	7%	45%
	% of the bus fleet that are EV and hybrid vehicles	22% of buses	-1%	20%

At a high level, with the first three-year period of the Wellington RLTP now drawn to a close, the AMR results indicate that current levels of progress and trends for transport-generated emissions reduction and mode shift are likely insufficient to meet two of the RLTP's headline targets by 2030. For the DSI reduction target, the current rate of progress would need to be maintained in order to meet the 2030 target.

More gradual progress continues to be made against some AMR indicators. Compared to FY 2022/23, notable improvements in FY 2023/24 included the continued uptick in public transport patronage, an increase in the proportion of new hybrid and electric vehicles registrations in the region, and a reduction in deaths and serious injuries (DSI) for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. Total land transport-generated CO_2 emissions decreased slightly year over year.

The resilience of the state highway network improved significantly compared to FY 2022/23. Fewer extreme weather events resulted in unplanned road closures, which decreased in duration by 88 percent in FY 2023/24.

FY 2023/24 was a year of significant cost of living pressures—while New Zealand narrowly avoided entering a technical recession, economic downturn affected the Wellington Region. Volumes of regional freight moved by rail in and out of the region decreased by 17 percent compared to the previous financial year.

The change of Government in November 2023 resulted in major policy changes that affected large transport projects in the region, and which changed approaches to speed management planning, incentivising lower emissions vehicles, and investment. Future AMRs (and the six-monthly progress reports to the Wellington Regional Transport Committee) will be able to better analyse effects of policy changes and National Land Transport Programme investment decisions on the region's progress towards meeting the objectives of the RLTP.

Introduction

What is the Regional Land Transport Plan?

The Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) is a statutory document developed by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington), local councils in the Wellington Region, New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA), KiwiRail, and other approved organisations. The RLTP sets the direction for the transport network in the region for the next 10-30 years, identifying regional priorities, policies, targets, and objectives. The RLTP must be consistent with the national direction set by the Government in its most recent Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport (for the period of this AMR, the most recent is GPS 2024—the Draft GPS 2024 was published for consultation in March, and finalised at the end of June 2024).

The 30-year vision for the RLTP 2021 is a connected region, with safe, accessible and liveable places – where people can easily, safely and sustainably access the things that matter to them and where goods are moved efficiently, sustainably and reliably.

The RLTP also sets the direction for investment in land transport projects. As the formal region-wide bid for transport funding to the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF), the RLTP sets out the transport projects that the region intends to deliver. The most recent RTLP for the Wellington Region was delivered in 2021.

Mid-Term Review 2024 of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan 2021

Every three years, the RLTP undergoes a mid-term review to ensure that the programme identified in the RLTP remains fit for purpose for the second half of its six-year duration. This review includes the formal bid for funding from the National Land Transport Fund through the preparation of the RLTP 2024-27 transport programme.

The Mid-Term Review 2024 of the Wellington RLTP 2021 was developed during FY 2023/24 to bring together new investment bids from all local councils, KiwiRail, NZTA Waka Kotahi, and the Department of Conservation, and was released for public consultation in May 2024. The final Mid-Term Review 2024 and NLTF funding decisions were released after the period of this report in FY 2024/25.

Read the Mid-Term Review 2024 of the Wellington RLTP 2021.

Check out our interactive network & transport programme maps:

- Our network
- Our programme

What is the Annual Monitoring Report?

Per the requirements of Section 16(6)(e) of the Land Transport Management Act 2003, an RLTP must describe how the region's plan will be monitored to assess progress. Section 5 of the Wellington RLTP 2021 sets out the monitoring framework with regional measures and indicators to track progress towards achieving the strategic objectives and outcomes of the RLTP. The RLTP 2021 notes that an annual monitoring report would be provided to the Wellington Regional Transport Committee (the RTC).

Each Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the RLTP 2021 tracks progress against the three ambitious headline targets set in the RLTP 2021. The headline targets (Figure A) demonstrate the scale of the transformation that the region hopes to achieve by 2030, proposing proxy measures to gauge whether we are heading in the right direction.

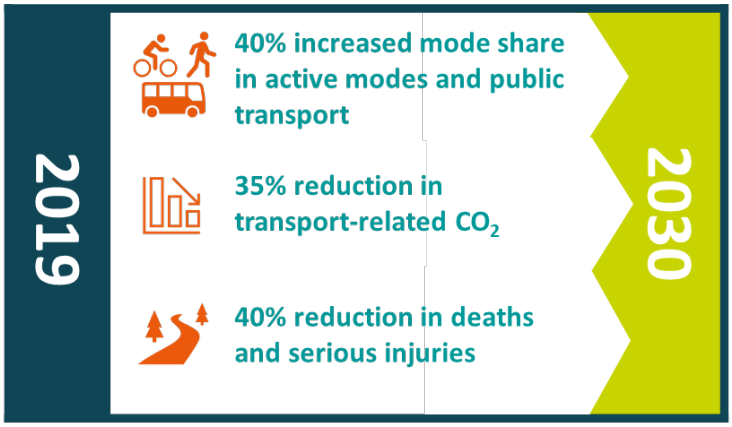


Figure A: Wellington RLTP 2021 Headline Targets

The AMR also reviews measures and indicators that track the region's contributions to the five transport outcomes in the Ministry of Transport's Transport Outcomes Framework (Figure B), which sets common objectives for the transport system centred around wellbeing and liveability.

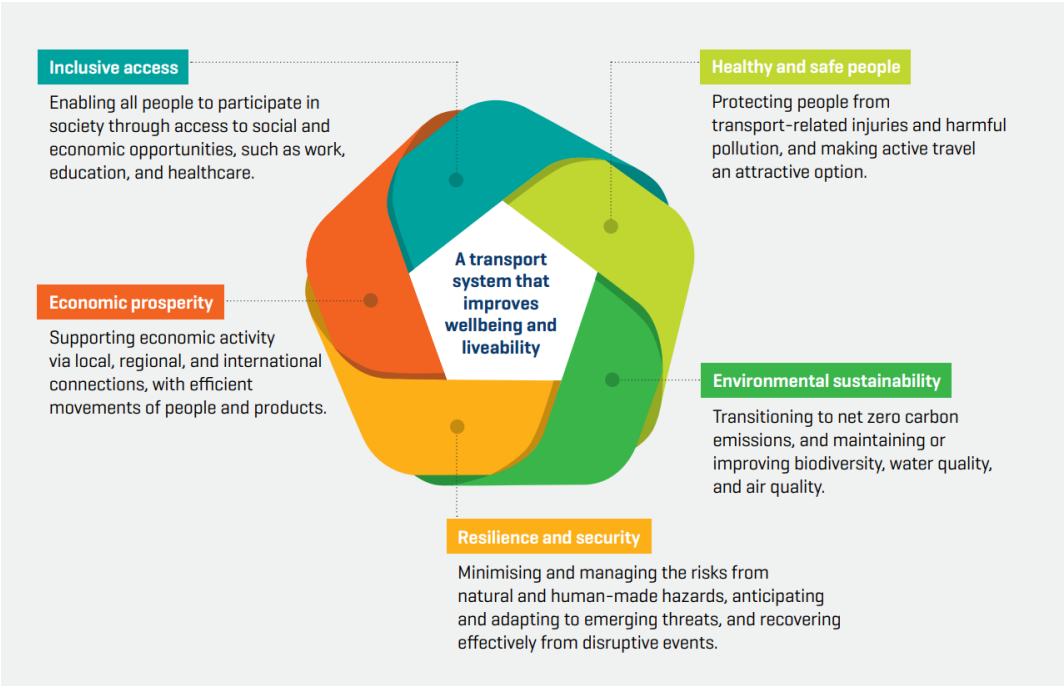


Figure B: Ministry of Transport – Transport Outcomes Framework

This AMR is the fourth report on progress, and represents data collected between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024 (FY 2023/24).

The AMR is developed by Greater Wellington and the Wellington Transport Analytics Unit using a variety of data sources. For several indicators, five-year averages are used rather than annual averages, in order to smooth out any annual variations and reveal longer-term trends. Information is sourced from the following:

- Metlink (Greater Wellington) provides public transport data (patronage, travel times, etc.).
- The Ministry of Transport Te Manatū Waka provides mode share data through the Household Travel Survey; information about private vehicle fleet composition; and freight supply chain information through the Freight Information Gathering System (FIGS).
- NZTA Waka Kotahi provides information on road deaths and serious injuries (DSI) through the Crash Analysis System (CAS), and information on the resilience of the network through MapHub.
- Greater Wellington collects data on ambient air quality and emissions.
- The census (Stats NZ) provides data on active travel to school (note the most recent Census data is from 2023, with data slowly released on a rolling basis through 2024).
- Other sources of data include TomTom (highway travel times) and Traffic Watcher (highway travel times).

Regional transport highlights for FY 2023/24

FY 2023/24 was a year of major policy change following the change of Government in November 2023, which in turn affected many significant transport activities underway in the region. In December 2023, the Government signalled the withdrawal of Crown investment from Let's Get Wellington Moving (discussed later in this section). Additionally, investment into KiwiRail's Inter-Island Resilient Connection (iReX) Project, including two new rail-enabled ferries by 2026 and an upgraded ferry terminal, was halted.

Further Government policy changes affecting transport nationally included the cessation of half-price public transport fares; the end of the Clean Car Discount and introduction of road user charges for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles (which had been signalled already under the previous government); and the replacement of the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2022, which removed the requirement for Road Controlling Authorities to develop speed management plans. These changes have the potential to affect indicators in the Annual Monitoring Report going forward.

The release of a new Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2024 (drafted in March 2024, with the final released at the end of June 2024) signalled the return of the Roads of National Significance (RoNS) programme, with three Wellington region RoNS identified as Government priorities for inclusion in NZTA's State Highway Investment Proposal 2024-27.

Planning for future investment was a key focus of local and regional councils, NZTA, and KiwiRail in FY 2023/24. Drafting and deliberations over Long-Term Plans, the State Highway Investment Proposal, the mid-term review of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan 2021, and the National Land Transport Programme (finalised after FY 2023/24) all took place in this financial year.

Cost of living pressures and inflation affected the region in FY 2023/24. Stats NZ reported that the national economy contracted by 0.3 percent in the three months ending September 2023, and a further 0.1 percent in the quarter ending December 2023. In the Wellington region, Government expenditure reduction measures resulted in more than 4,000 public service redundancies and job losses beginning in November 2023. Economic downturns reduce purchasing power (which in turn can affect regional travel patterns, such as quantity of consumer goods moved by rail freight and new vehicle registrations), while significant inflation in the construction industry placed pressure on organisations to re-scope transport projects to remain within budget envelopes.

Compared to previous Annual Monitoring Reports, the period of this report was less affected by COVID-19 disruptions to regional travel for annual indicators (though three- and five-year indicators still contain data affected by COVID-19 context). Trends (and the potential effects of the pandemic on creating lasting change in post-COVID travel behaviours in the Wellington region) can be better

monitored and understood going forward once rolling averages no longer include COVID-19 data.

Metlink

As part of Greater Wellington, the Metlink public transport network comprises the region's bus, rail, ferry, and Total Mobility services, and is delivered by six transport operators in the region.

The introduction of funding for the Community Connect concession in Budget 2023 ushered in a new public transport fare discount for Community Services Card (CSC) holders in FY 2023/24. From 1 July 2023, CSC holders began receiving half-price fares on their Snapper cards across the public transport network.

Budget 2023 had also expanded the Community Connect concession to include age-based discounts for children and young adults. Metlink extended half-price fares for all public transport customers in the Wellington region until these additional concessions came into effect on 1 September 2023. However, the change of Government led to the withdrawal of Government funding for age-based Community Connect concessions, which subsequently ended on the Metlink network on 1 May 2024 (the concession for CSC holders continues). Fare changes on the network in FY 2023/24 also included a Council decision to increase public transport fares by 10 percent starting on 1 July 2024, as part of efforts to reduce pressure on rates and debt funding in Greater Wellington's Long-Term Plan.

Significant improvements to delivery of bus services occurred across the network in FY 2023/24. With driver workforce numbers restored to the capacity needed to deliver the full Metlink timetable, Metlink reinstated the 67 timetabled Kinetic trips and 114 Tranzurban trips (from off-peak services) that had been temporarily suspended as a result of driver shortages.

On 28 January 2024, Metlink introduced the new Route 4 linking Strathmore Park and Northland bus routes to provide improved cross-city public transport access to Wellington CBD, Wellington Regional Hospital, and Victoria University of Wellington's Kelburn campus. The new Route 4, and extension to Wellington Station for the Route 20 gave effect to the final Wellington City Bus Network Review Actions approved by Council in 2019. At the same time as the Route 4 was introduced, additional peak capacity was also added to a number of corridors in the city including Karori, Newtown and Hataitai, supporting patronage growth. In FY 2023/24, Metlink experienced record-breaking patronage on the bus network, with significant uptake of both peak and off-peak travel.

To keep passengers informed about upcoming, ongoing, and completed projects on the public transport network, Metlink launched a new interactive map in February 2024. The Projects Timeline dashboard gives customers a longer-term view of the improvements being delivered across the region.

Rail

Progress continued on the Lower North Island Rail Integrated Mobility (LNIRIM) project, a partnership between Metlink, KiwiRail, and Horizons Regional Council that will deliver 18 new trains and infrastructure improvements to improve service delivery and frequency on the Wairarapa and Manawatū lines. In December 2023, LNIRIM went to market for Expressions of Interest to design, build, and maintain these trains. EOIs closed in February 2024. An RFP has since been issued to the shortlisted bidders and the contract is anticipated to be awarded in mid-2025.

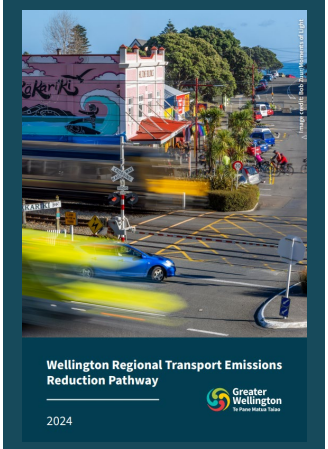
Released in May 2024, Budget 2024 included a Government contribution increase of $10.2 million to KiwiRail's Operating costs for the Wellington Rail Network, and allocated $107.7 million to KiwiRail for FY 2024/25 to cover a backlog of network renewals in Wellington and Auckland (Wellington renewals received $53 million of the $107.7million).

However, challenges continued on the rail network in FY 2023/24, with service continuity and customer experience affected by the need for buses replacing train services and temporary speed restrictions while KiwiRail assets were being maintained. Concerns over the shortfall in investment needed to replace and renew end-of-life rail assets, and concerns over the potential for rail network degradation to significantly affect Metlink's passenger service delivery, continued to be a key area of focus for Metlink, KiwiRail, and Greater Wellington councillors in FY 2023/24.

In FY 2023/24, rail patronage continued to increase gradually year over year, with a more significant increased observed for off-peak patronage compared to peak patronage (8 percent compared to 4 percent).

Wellington Transport Emissions Reduction Pathway

In June 2023, the Wellington Regional Transport Committee (RTC) approved the development of the Wellington Regional Transport Emissions Reduction Pathway (the Pathway). Informed by evidence and transport modelling, and with input from the Wellington Technical Advisory Group (a transport sector working group that supports the provision of advice to the RTC, with representation from all local councils, KiwiRail, and NZTA), the Pathway sets out interventions to reduce transport emissions in the Wellington region. The pathway identifies actions across three broad areas: creation of more transport choice through improvement of public and active transport; cleaner (electrified) fleet, especially buses; and decarbonisation and mode shift for freight. However, the Pathway also makes it clear that the region's councils cannot achieve these actions on their own. The Pathway identifies key dependencies, which include boosted funding, legislative change and streamlined business case processes.



Read the Wellington Regional Transport Emissions Reduction Pathway

The Pathway was approved by the RTC in March 2024 and endorsed by the Wellington Regional Leadership Committee in June 2024. It will inform the region's work to identify the future strategic transport network, to provide input into other processes such as the implementation of the Future Development Strategy, and to advocate for a more resilient, equitable and energy-efficient transport system.

Goals of the Pathway:

35% Reduction in road transport generated carbon emissions by **2030**

Reduce all road transport-generated carbon emissions by 35% by 2030 against a 2018 baseline (Regional Land Transport Plan headline target)

25% Reduction in per capita light vehicle VKT by **2035**

Reduce per capita light vehicle VKT by 25% by 2035 compared to 2019 baseline (national Emissions Reduction Plan derived goal).

Travel Choice

The Greater Wellington Travel Choice team develops and delivers programmes that make more travel choices available to people in the Wellington Region and help people to choose lower carbon emission transport options.

Māehe Manawa Ora Movin'March is a programme that encourages schools, students, and their whānau across the region to get involved in active travel, and enjoy the benefits of walking, scooting, and biking to and from school during the month of March. In March 2024, the programme welcomed commitment to active travel from 134 schools, with more than 36,000 students recording their participation in active travel. Movin'March is a gateway that encourages future school engagement, connects with other Travel Choice programmes such as

Pedal Ready, and provides tools and resources to families and schools that support active travel via its Walk or Wheel website.

The Pedal Ready programme, run in partnership with NZTA Waka Kotahi, councils, and other local organisations, delivers free cycle and scooter skills training to adults and school children across the Wellington Region. As New Zealand's first Bike Ready accredited cycle skills provider, Pedal Ready instils participants with road safety awareness and the skills they need to feel confident when cycling and scooting, including how to diagnose and repair bicycle issues and an overview of the rights and responsibilities that come with using roads, cycle lanes, and shared spaces. In FY 2023/24, the Pedal Ready programme trained 547 adults and 5,093 teenagers and children (compared to 366 and 5,275, respectively, in FY 2022/23). Additionally, scooter training was delivered to 2,647 children. This training occurred through a variety of courses delivered in Kāpiti, Porirua, Wellington City, Hutt City, Upper Hutt, and the Wairarapa.

Delivery of programmes such as Pedal Ready and Movin'March contribute to the RLTP high-level targets of mode share, carbon emissions and safety.

Other updates

Close-out of Let's Get Wellington Moving

In December 2023, the new coalition Government signalled the withdrawal of Crown investment from Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM), which was a significant joint initiative between Wellington City Council (WCC), Greater Wellington, and NZTA, supported by mana whenua partners Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika and Ngāti Toa Rangatira. Project partners mutually agreed to close out the programme by 31 March 2024.

Subject to funding decisions that may affect the scope of delivery, some improvements that were formerly part of LGWM will be progressed under a new joint work programme by Greater Wellington and WCC:

- WCC will progress Golden Mile, Thorndon Quay/Hutt Road, and central city pedestrian improvements (with Greater Wellington providing bus stop infrastructure for the Golden Mile).
- WCC and Greater Wellington will partner on progressing the Harbour Quays second bus spine to support projected growth in bus patronage; the Eastern Corridor (City to Miramar) enhanced bus improvements; and targeted improvements to enable bus priority on key routes.

Formerly part of the LGWM Transformational Programme, the Mount Victoria Tunnel and Basin Reserve upgrades on SH1 will now be progressed by NZTA as a Road of National Significance. The mass rapid transit component of the LGWM Transformational Programme will not progress.

Some travel behaviour change initiatives will continue to be progressed by Greater Wellington and WCC as part of their business-as-usual programmes.

Te Ara Tupua

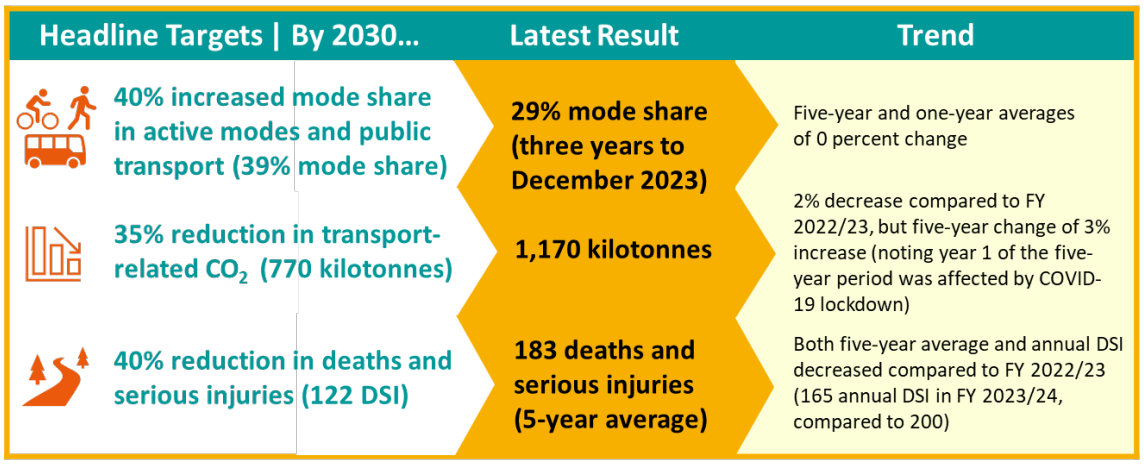
Progress continued on Te Ara Tupua, the coastal walking and cycling link between Lower Hutt and Wellington that improves transport resilience and delivers a safe route to connect more people to transport options in Wellington and the Hutt Valley. Te Ara Tupua is a partnership between NZTA; iwi mana whenua Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa; and the councils of Wellington City, Hutt City, and Greater Wellington. Key connecting projects include Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi (RiverLink) and the Thorndon Quay Hutt Road Project (led by Wellington City Council).

In September 2023, the new cycling and walking route through Honiana Te Puni Reserve—as part of the delivery of the Ngā Ūranga ki Pito-One section of Te Ara Tupua—was opened for use. The new purpose-built Rowing and Waterski Clubs Building at Honiana Te Puni Reserve was subsequently opened by the Te Ara Tupua project team in February 2024.

By June 2024, 1,898 units of the 6,700 units required to form part of the coastal edge were installed. The installation of 56 reef units to mitigate the loss of rocky reef habitat was also completed. The project is currently scheduled for completion in 2026.

Measuring against our headline targets

Headline targets and indicator summary



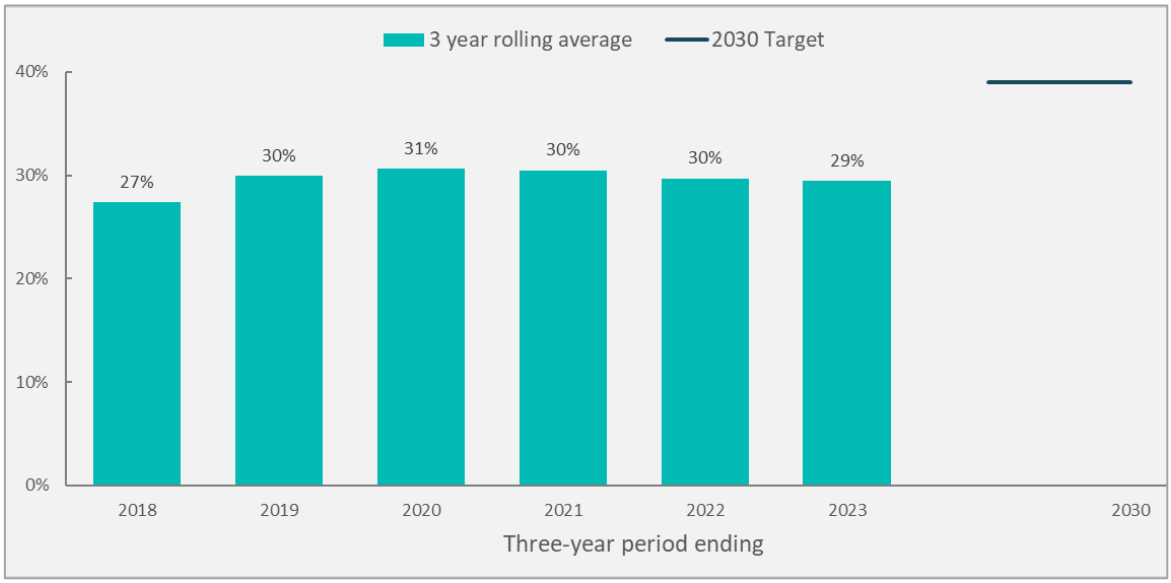
Target 1: 40 percent increase in active travel and public transport mode share by 2030

Active travel and public transport play an essential role in reducing transport-generated emissions. The reliability, speed, frequency, ease of use, and affordability of public transport and active modes are among the key factors that encourage mode shift away from private vehicles. For active modes, factors to encourage mode shift include providing and promoting safe routes and ease of access.

Measuring active travel and public transport mode share provides a helpful high-level indicator of how the region is progressing towards our longer-term vision for the transport system, which includes increasing the uptake of lower-carbon modes of travel.

For the AMR, progress towards the RLTP headline target 1 to increase active travel and public transport mode share is measured using the three-year average results of the New Zealand Household Travel Survey (HTS) delivered by the Ministry of Transport Te Manatū Waka. The HTS measures all types of household travel (e.g. travel to work, education, shopping, and leisure) by travel mode.

The methodology for reporting HTS results in the AMR has been updated (including the historic data in Figure 1 below) to align with the Ministry of Transport's 'weighted' methodology. To establish national-level results, the Ministry's weighted methodology adjusts HTS results to account for variations in days of the week that the survey was taken (e.g. to avoid disproportionate results of travel behaviours recorded on a Saturday) and stratifies demographic data by Stats NZ estimates for age / gender numbers in each regional council to keep demographic representation proportional in the survey results. Previous AMR results have been updated to align with the Ministry's weighted methodology per Figure 1 below.



Source: Household Travey Survey (Ministry of Transport)

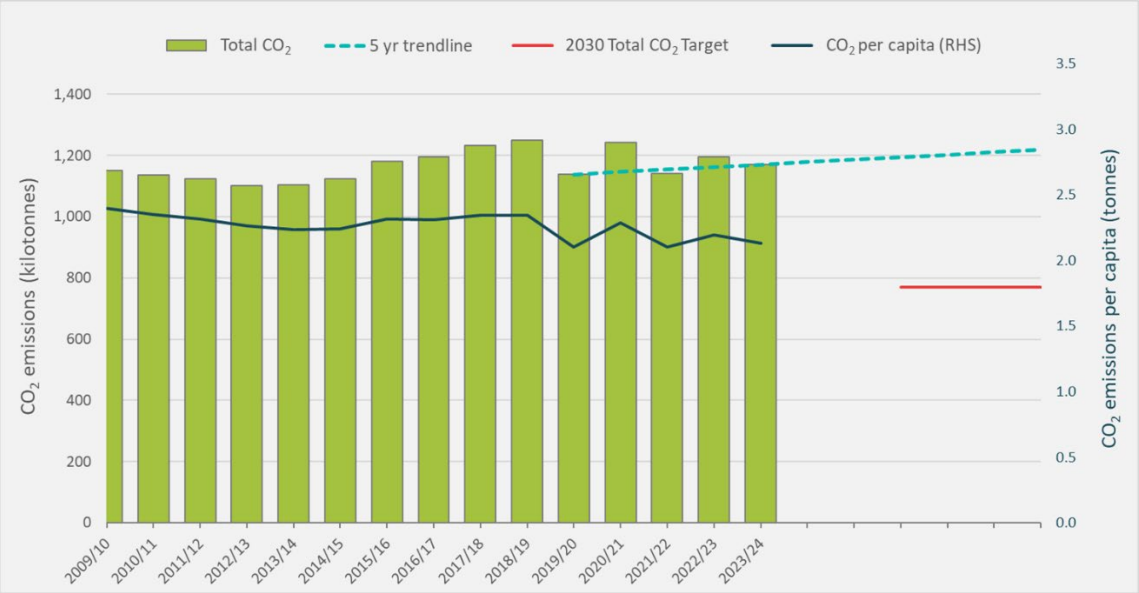
Figure 1: Active and public transport mode share

The HTS sample number for this period was smaller than in previous surveys (with 1,667 people recording their trips in the Wellington region compared to 1,994 people their trips from 2019-2022). From 2020-2023, the three-year average active travel and public transport mode share decreased slightly from 30 percent (in 2019-2022) to 29 percent. Percentages of public transport and cyclist mode share remained the same as 2019-2022 survey results, while the percentage of pedestrians dropped from 22 percent to 21 percent. As a three-year average, the impact of COVID-19 has now disappeared from the data.

The five-year average for this indicator shows 0 percent change (or rather a 0.46% decrease, to clarify that what appears to be a one percent decrease year to year in Figure 1 is due to rounding). Per this trend, it is unlikely that travel behaviours will shift significantly enough for the region to meet the RLTP mode share target by 2030.

Target 2: 35 percent reduction in transport-generated carbon dioxide emissions by 2030

With transport being the second highest emissions-producing sector in New Zealand, emissions reduction sits at the heart of the Wellington RLTP in this headline target and in many of the regional objectives. For the purpose of the AMR, reductions in transport-generated carbon emissions are measured by using regional fuel sales as a proxy for these emissions (Figure 2), and exclude emissions related to air travel.



Source: Fuel supply data from Wellington City Council and Masterton District Council

Figure 2: Transport CO_2 emissions (per capita)

Fuel sales (and subsequently transport CO_2 emissions) decreased by 3 percent in FY 2023/24 compared to FY 2022/23. While the HTS results under mode share (Target 1) show that active travel and public transport mode share remained the same, indicating that private vehicle mode share also remained consistent compared to FY 2022/23, one contributing factor to the decrease in emissions could be the uptake of lower-emission vehicles in the region and improvements to fuel efficiency and Euro emissions standards in the internal combustion engine (ICE) fleet. New vehicle registrations in FY 2023/24 primarily composed of hybrid and electric vehicles (discussed later in this report). Given that the uptake of lower-emissions vehicles is one lever to support emissions reduction, future reports will be able to show the impact of this year's Government policy change (ending the Clean Car Discount and introducing road user charges for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles) on how fuel sales and transport-generated CO_2 emissions are tracking in the region.

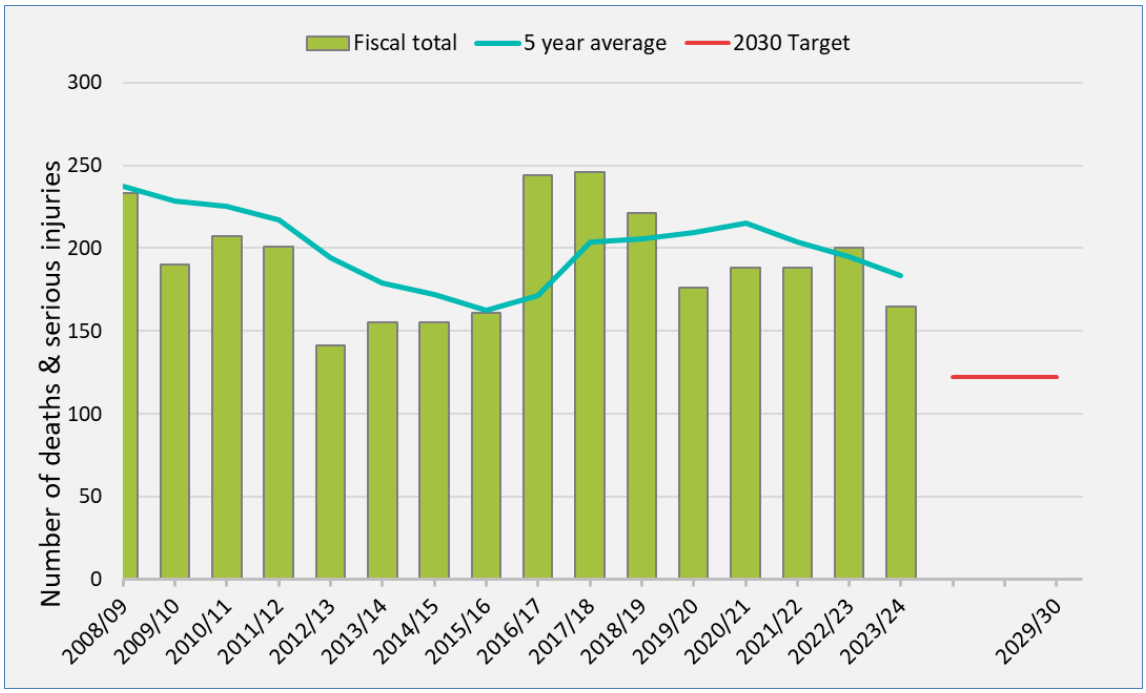
Compared to FY 2022/23, the 5-year trendline in FY 2023/24 has shifted from showing a general decrease in emissions to showing a slight increase. However, it is important to note that the trendline starts on FY 2019/20, which recorded reduced emissions as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown and significantly reduced travel. Given the uncertainties still present in the five-year average, it is difficult to identify a discernible or statistically significant trend.

In reaching the end of the first triennium of RLTP 2021, results show that the current rate of emissions reduction and continuation of the projected trendline would be insufficient to meet the region's 2030 CO_2 reduction target. As set out in the WTERP, a broad variety of interventions would need to be leveraged to accelerate the rate of emissions reduction.

Target 3: 40 percent reduction in deaths and serious injuries on regional roads by 2030

The target adopted in the Wellington RLTP is to reduce the 2018 five-year rolling average of 204 DSI by 40 percent (or to below 122 DSI). In FY 2023/24, the total number of deaths and serious injuries decreased on regional roads, dropping to 165 (compared to 200 DSIs in FY 2022/23 and 188 DSIs on regional roads in FY 2021/22). This is the lowest number of DSIs recorded in the region since FY 2015/16.

Per Figure 3 below, the overall five-year average continues to decline (an average of 183 DSI compared to an average of 195 DSI in FY 2022/23). This rate of decline would need to continue for the next five years in order for DSI to meet the 2030 target.



Source: NZTA Crash Analysis System (CAS)

Figure 3: Deaths & serious injuries on region's roads

Safe speed limits and quality safety infrastructure are two key contributors to reducing the road toll. In FY2023/24, NZTA completed a significant package of SH2 Wairarapa safety improvements, resulting in three new roundabouts, a turning bay at Clareville, widened road, and the installation of 5.8 km of wire-rope median barriers. In May 2024, NZTA reported that the new median barriers had experienced at least 10 hits from vehicles that would have otherwise taken out rows of white posts and risked endangering other drivers.

In FY 2023/24, progress on delivering a coordinated Wellington Regional Speed Management Plan (RSMP) stopped with the change of Government. In December 2023, the Minister of Transport released an amendment to the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2022 that removed the requirement for RTCs to coordinate RSMPs and made the development of speed management plans

optional for Road Controlling Authorities. In March 2024, the Wellington RTC agreed to pause work on progressing the combined Wellington RSMP until the release of the new Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024 (the Rule 2024), with the understanding that Road Controlling Authorities (RCAs) could choose to progress their own SMPs at their discretion.

The draft Rule 2024 was published for consultation on 13 June 2024. It has since been finalised in FY 2024/25, with a key requirement for RCAs to reverse speed limits introduced under the 2022 Rule back to the speed limits that were in place on 31 December 2019. These reversals must be enacted by 1 July 2025.

The final Rule comes into effect on 30 October 2024. Future Annual Monitoring Reports will provide more insight on the potential impact of speed limit reversals on the overall number of DSIs, and DSIs where speed is a contributing factor, in the region.

Measuring against the five transport outcomes

Inclusive access

As defined in the Ministry of Transport's Transport Outcomes Framework, "inclusive access" enables all people to participate in society through access to social and economic opportunities such as work, education, and healthcare. To achieve this outcome, the transport system must be accessible to all people in New Zealand, including those with disabilities, low-income earners, and people of different ages, genders, and ethnicities.

Measures:
Public transport patronage, journey times on core bus routes, active travel and public transport journeys to work

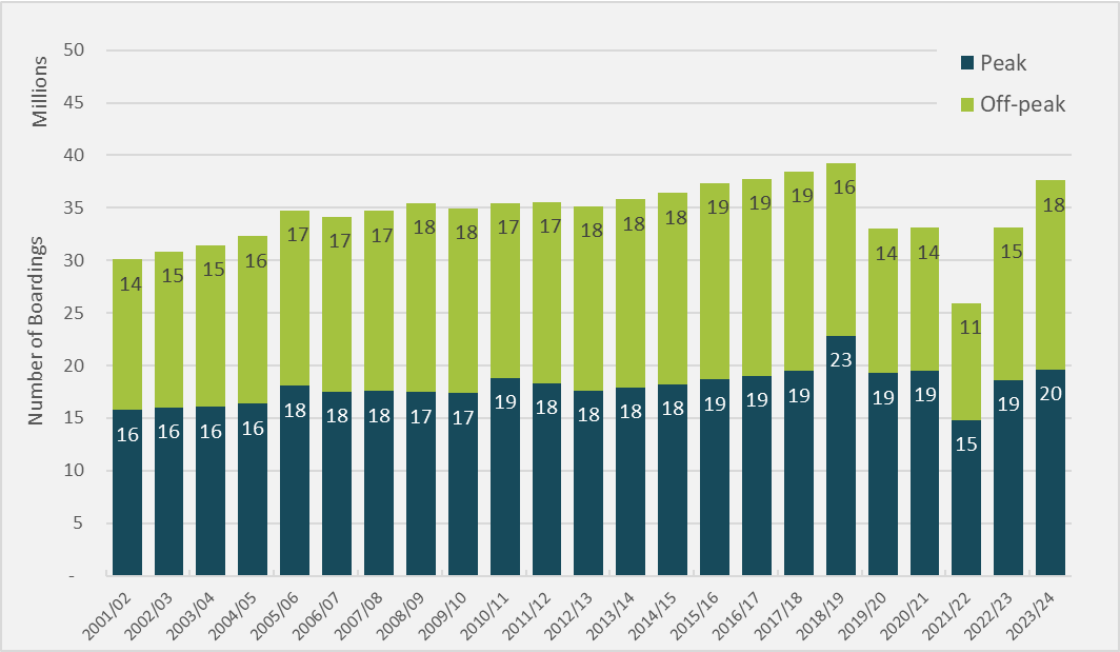
Updated indicators on inclusive access

Indicator	Latest Result	Trend	Comment
The number of people boarding bus, train, and ferry services during peak and off-peak times	Peak times: 19.6m Off-peak: 18.0m	Peak boardings increased by 6%, and off-peak by 23% compared to FY 2022/23	Combined off-peak patronage has exceeded FY 2018/19 (pre-COVID) levels
Average travel times on core regional bus routes	AM: 39 mins PM: 37 mins	AM travel times stayed the same, and PM times increased by 6%, compared to FY 2022/23	Both travel time variance and the changes in average travel times are likely influenced by the return to pre-COVID traffic volumes on core routes in FY 2023/24 compared to FY 2022/23
Travel time variability on core regional bus routes	AM: 2.6 mins PM: 4.8 mins	AM travel variance decreased by 11% and PM variance increased by 3%, compared to FY 2022/23	
Combined mode share of travel to work trips by walking, cycling, & public transport	32% (Census 2023)	Between Census 2018 and Census 2023, percent change of combined mode share decreased by 1.5%	Cordon Survey results no longer contain walking & cycling data. For the purpose of this report, Census 2023 'journeys to work' data is used to provide these results.

Public transport patronage

A number of the RLTP objectives and targets are progressed via the uptake of public transport, giving people access to reliable and affordable travel choices that minimise environmental harm and reduce congestion on our roads. The indicator measured in this report monitors annual public transport boardings during peak (6am–9am and 3pm–6:30pm on weekdays) and off-peak periods (between 9am–3pm on weekdays, and all day on weekends).

Figure 4 shows the number of people boarding rail, bus, and ferry services during peak and off-peak times. Overall public transport patronage increased by 13 percent in FY 2023/24, with a 23 percent increase in off-peak patronage that meant total off-peak boardings surpassed the off-peak numbers observed in FY 2018/19. Peak patronage increased by 6 percent overall compared to FY 2022/23. Factors contributing to the particular uptake of off-peak travel could include the continuation of Metlink's off-peak fare discounts and flexible working arrangements in the post-COVID environment.



Source: Metlink (Greater Wellington)

Figure 4: Public transport patronage for off-peak and peak travel

Year on year, bus patronage increased at a faster rate than rail patronage in FY 2023/24. While the five-year change for bus and ferry patronage shows patronage increasing over time, the five-year change for rail patronage shows an 8 percent decrease in peak patronage, and a 12 percent increase in off-peak patronage.

Factors contributing to the five-year decrease of peak rail patronage include:

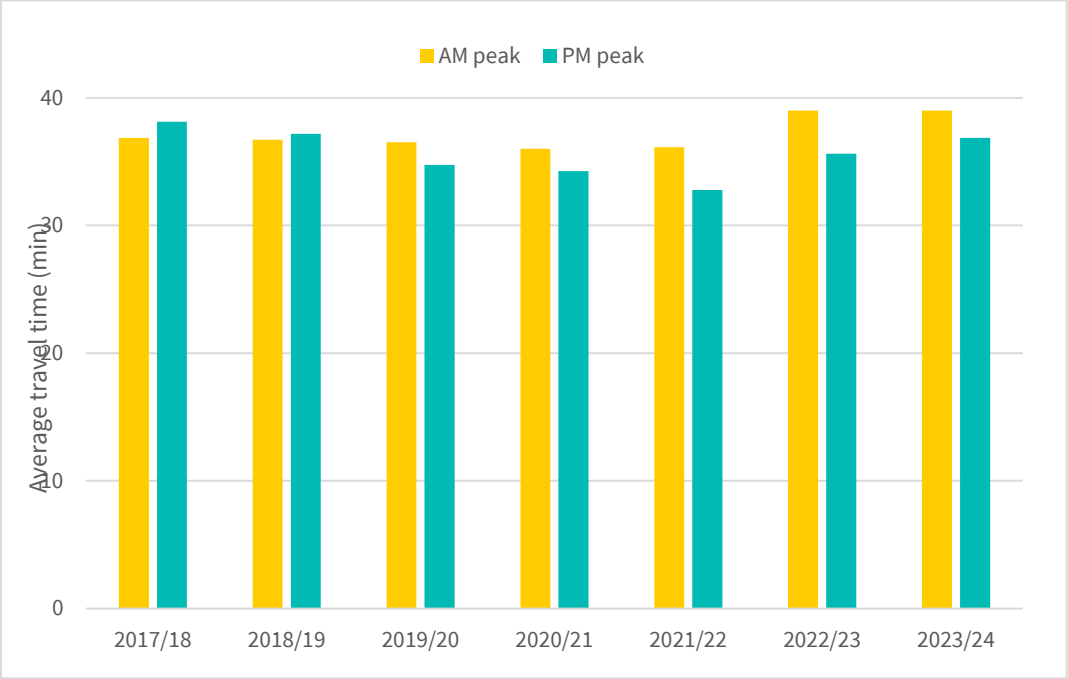
- Overall slower recovery from pre-COVID-19 levels, compared to bus,
- Recent service disruptions affecting the punctuality and reliability of rail services, which can discourage passenger uptake of peak services,
- Potentially lower numbers of longer-distance rail trips likely driven by flexible working habits after COVID-19; the fares increase from July this year; and the removal of the government age-based concessions, and
- Continuous higher unemployment rate and lower economic activity.

Bus journey times and variability

Reliable, consistent journey times are a key factor in making public transport an attractive option for public transport users. Public transport particularly incentivises mode shift away from private vehicles if these journey times are competitive with journey times by car. This indicator measures the average travel times on select core bus routes for both AM and PM peaks, on specific core corridors (Figure 5). To reflect general commuting patterns, AM averages are recorded for inbound travel (predominantly coming in the direction of Wellington CBD) while PM averages are recorded for outbound travel.

"Core" bus routes are defined in the Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan 2021 as those that "operate at least every 15 minutes during the day, and often more frequently during busy periods." The core bus routes included in the

indicator for this report are different segments of routes 1, 2, 3, 110, 120, 130, and 220.

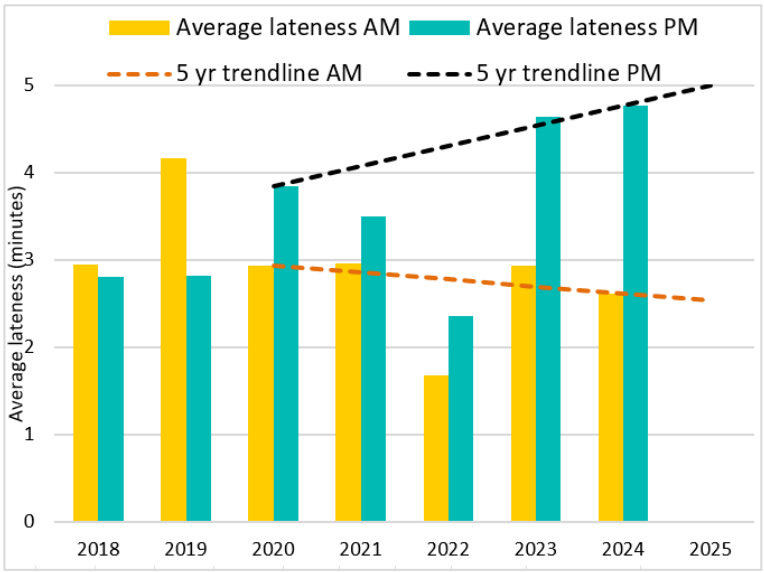


Source: Metlink (Greater Wellington)

Figure 5: Travel times on core bus routes, FY2017-2024

In FY 2023/24, average travel times on core bus routes increased slightly above the levels observed in FY 2022/23 and FY 2021/22 in the PM peak (by an average of 1 minute). Influencing factors include the increase in public transport patronage (with more customers meaning longer boarding times) as well as road congestion caused in part by road works, which can create diversions and delays). In FY 2023/24, this higher peak-time volume of traffic included some re-instated bus trips that had previously been suspended as a result of the driver shortage.

In the AM, average inbound travel times on these core bus routes in FY 2023/24 remained consistent with FY 2022/23 levels



Source: Metlink (Greater Wellington)

Figure 6: Travel time variability on core routes

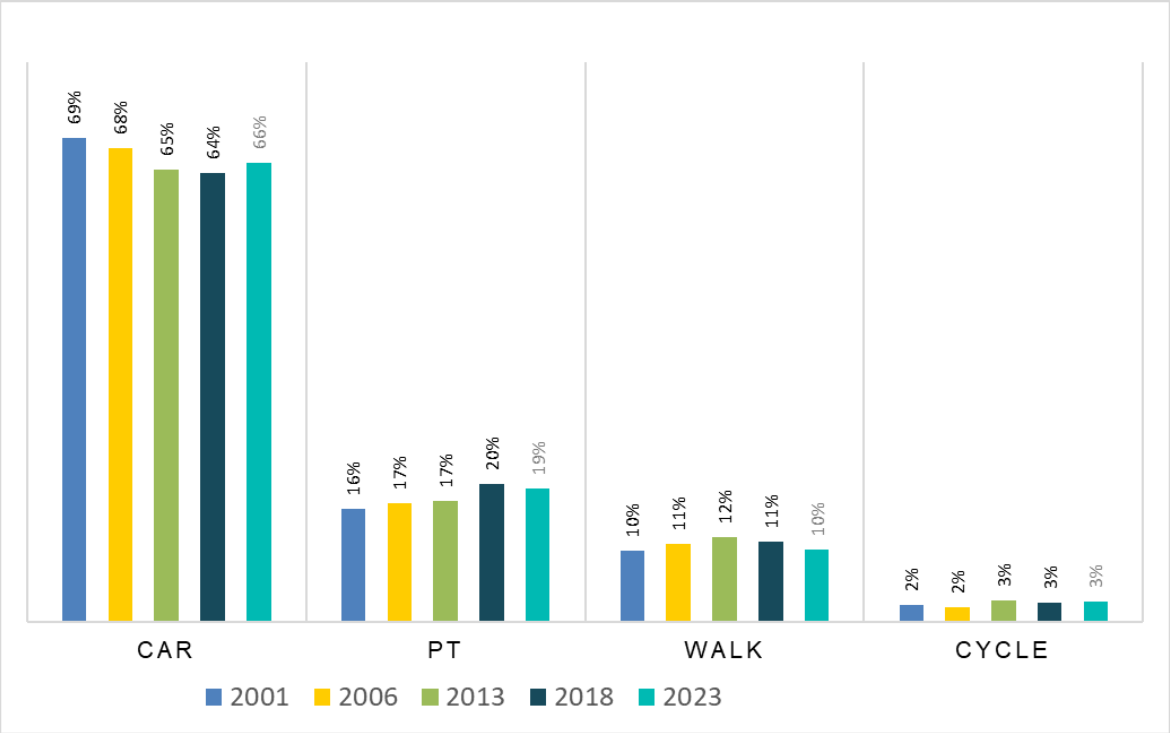
(an average of 39 minutes).

Figure 6 shows travel time variability (as an average of lateness) on these same core regional bus routes. Compared to FY 2022/23, average lateness increased very slightly on PM trips (by an average of 12 seconds), and decreased slightly on AM trips (by an average of 18 seconds).

Combined mode share of travel to work trips by walking, cycling, & public transport

The release of Census 2023 data has provided updated insight on how people are travelling to work in the Wellington Region, and how work from home patterns during and after COVID-19 may be affecting mode share results. Per Figure 7, regional data shows a slight increase in car mode share (rising from 64 percent in Census 2018 to 66 percent) and a very slight 1 percent decrease in public transport and walking mode shares, which statistically would almost be within margins of error. Proportions of car usage increased across all territorial authorities except for Wellington City, where car mode share decreased from 39 percent to 38 percent and mode share increased for public transport (from 19 to 20 percent) and cycling (from 4 to 5 percent).

However, understanding what trends can be drawn from this data remains to be seen. Figure 7 does not represent the proportion of people working from home. Respondents to the question in the census would have indicated primary mode of travel to work, so if an individual worked from home two days per week and travelled to the office three days per week, they would have indicated mode of travel for their three days in the office and not record information about working from home. Census 2018 results showed that people who mostly worked from home made up approximately 11.9 percent of people employed, which increased to 17.7 percent in Census 2023 (a significant increase of nearly 60 percent).



Source: Stats NZ (Census 2023)

Figure 7: Mode share of regional travel to work

Other activities

In August 2023, Metlink's Accessibility Action Plan (AAP) was presented to Greater Wellington's Transport Committee with the programme of work for FY 2023/24. Developed following significant engagement with the disability community, the AAP outlines network-wide strategies to improve accessibility to the public transport network.

Improvements delivered in FY 2023/24 under the AAP included the rollout of on-board bus announcements starting in September 2023 after the completion of a successful trial. Automated audible announcements provide passengers with the name of the next bus stop, with digital screens onboard buses displaying bus stop names as well as nearby local attractions. These improvements provide customers with a greater level of certainty and confidence in accessing on-board information to negotiate the bus network. Announcements are provided in English and te reo Māori.

Healthy and safe people

Per the Ministry of Transport's Transport Outcomes Framework, "healthy and safe people" envisions a transport system that protects people from transport-related injuries and harmful pollution, and makes physically active travel an attractive option.

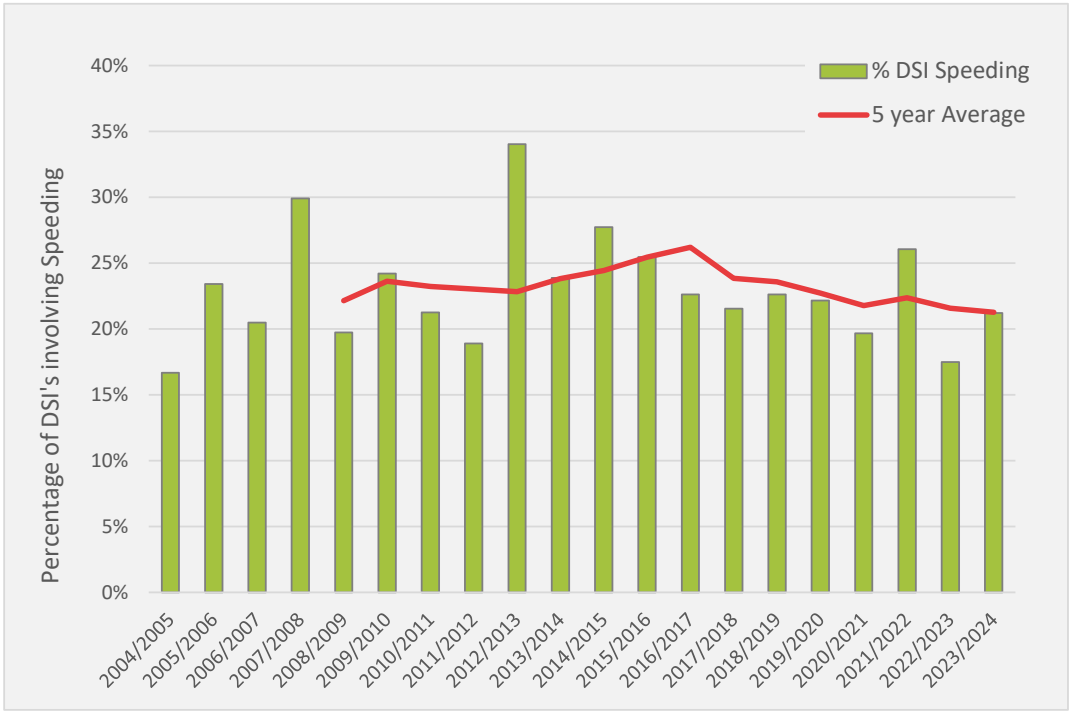
Measures:
Deaths and serious injuries from road transport, participation in active travel to school

Updated indicators on healthy and safe people

Indicator	Latest Result	Trend	Comment
Percentage of crashes involving DSI where inappropriate speed is a contributing factor	21% of DSI for FY 2023/24	5-year change shows DSI are trending downwards (1% decrease)	One-year change increased (from 18% of DSI in FY 2022/23)
Percentage of students cycling, scooting, and walking to school by school sector	32% active travel for ages 5–9 years, and 34% for ages 10–14 (Census 2018)	No trend yet	Disaggregated results from the 2023 census have not yet been released, but will be included in the AMR 2025
Number of deaths and serious injuries for pedestrians and cyclists	51 DSI (5-year average), 45 DSI (FY 2023/24)	5-year change indicates DSI trending downwards (1% decrease); 19 fewer annual DSI than FY 2022/23	Annual DSI dropped particularly for cyclists (from 25 to 8 in FY 2023/24)

Deaths and serious injuries when speed is a contributing factor

As reported earlier under Figure 3, the RLTP sets the headline target to reduce the 2018 five-year rolling average of 204 DSI by 40 percent (or to below 122 DSI). Driving at unsafe speeds risks seriously endangering drivers, passengers, cyclists, and pedestrians on the road.



Source: NZTA Crash Analysis System

Figure 8: Proportion of deaths & serious injuries when speed is a contributing factor

Infrastructure improvements and lowering speed limits are interventions that discourage driving at unsafe speeds and make the roads safer for all users. In FY

2023/24, significant safety improvements were completed on State Highway 2 in the Wairarapa.

Per Figure 8, in FY 2023/24, the proportion of DSIs with speed as a contributing factor increased compared to FY 2022/23 (from 18 percent to 21 percent). However, the five-year average decreased from 22 percent to 21 percent. Overall, the total number of DSIs with speed as a contributing factor remained the same (35 in both FY 2023/24 and FY 2022/23) and the number of DSIs where speed was not reported as a contributing factor decreased from 165 in FY 2022/23 to 130 in FY 2023/24.

As noted in last year's AMR, this data is drawn from NZTA's Crash Analysis System (CAS). For DSIs to be recorded as having speed as a contributing factor, a traffic report must be filed by the New Zealand Police that reports speed as a 'causative or contributory factor,' which would be based on the legally posted speed limit on the road. However, legally posted speed limits are not the same as a 'safe and appropriate speed': NZTA's Setting of Speed Limits Framework accompanying the NZTA Speed Management Guide 2022 (which remains the most recent version of the Guide[1]) estimated that only 15 percent of New Zealand's roads had limits set to safe and appropriate speeds (as at July 2022). Therefore—and per more recent research—DSIs that involve unsafe and inappropriate speed as a contributing factor will likely continue to be underreported in CAS, until such a time as posted speed limits align with what evidence and NZTA guidance shows are safe and appropriate speeds.

In terms of speed management planning, the publication of the draft Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024 (subsequently finalised after FY 2023/24) signalled a reversal in direction from the previous Government's approach to reducing speed limits, removing the process for developing Regional Speed Management Plans set out under the previous Rule 2022 and requiring RCAs to reverse (where practicable) speed limits introduced in the region from 1 January 2020 onwards.

With the final Rule 2024 coming into effect on 30 October 2024, the effects of the Rule 2024 (and the reversal of previously implemented speed limits) on DSI in the region, and on DSI where speed is a contributing factor, will be able to be monitored in future AMRs.

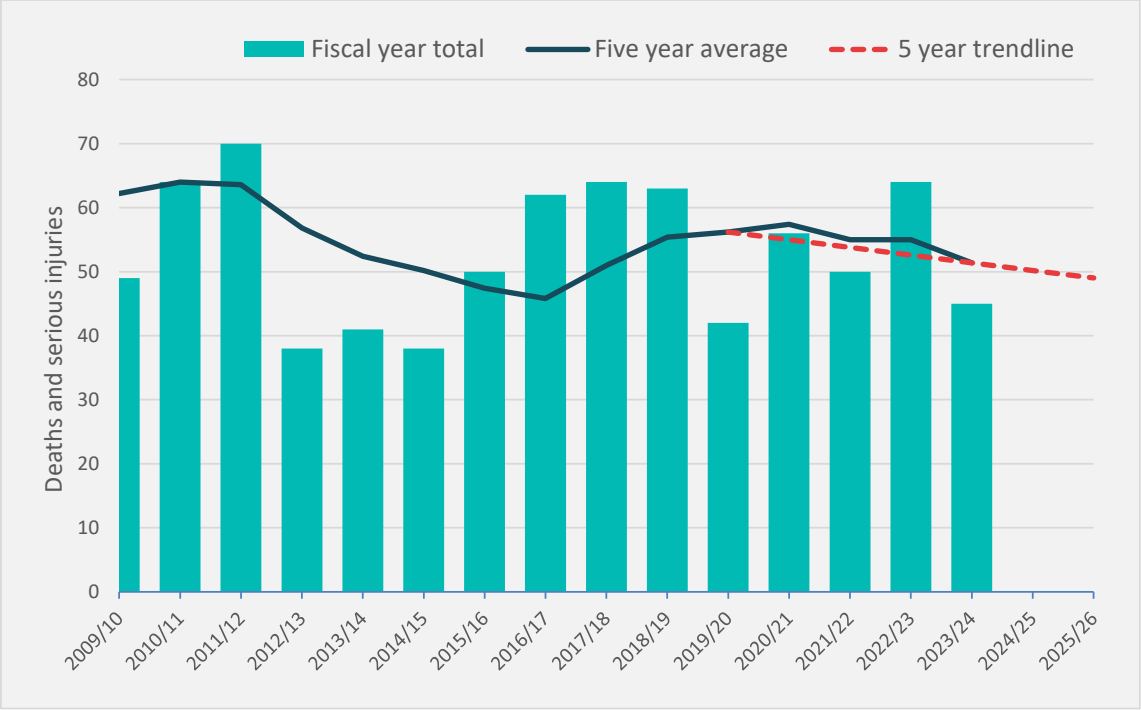
As preparations begin on the development of the next RLTP 2027 and setting indicators to track progress, per the limitations of CAS, this AMR indicator will be subject to further analysis as to its value in understanding the full picture of where unsafe speeds are contributing to DSI, and likely revised.

[1] Since the writing of this report, NZTA published an updated speed management guide on 30 October 2024.

Pedestrian and cyclist deaths & serious injuries

To ensure our transport network contributes to health and safety outcomes for our region, our roads must be safe for all users and particularly those who are more vulnerable to the risk of transport-related injuries, such as cyclists and pedestrians. Infrastructure improvements play a key role in ensuring that all road users are given adequate space and protection to minimise the risk from other traffic. Wellington-region projects such as Te Ara Tupua seek to deliver safer, connected and resilient routes for cyclists and pedestrians, which in turn encourages mode shift away from private vehicle use.

In FY 2023/24, the overall number of DSIs for pedestrians and cyclists decreased to 45 (from 64 in FY 2022/23, per Figure 9). Annual DSIs decreased most significantly for cyclists from 25 to 8, marking the lowest number of DSIs recorded for cyclists in at least 20 years (per CAS). Factors that influence cyclist safety include the availability of traffic-separated cycle paths and lower speed limits, which reduce the risk of fatalities and serious injuries particularly for vulnerable road users.



Source: NZTA Crash Analysis System

Figure 9: Deaths & serious injuries of pedestrians and cyclists on the road

Participation in active travel to school

The New Zealand census measured what percentage of children aged 5-9 years and 10-14 years travel to school by active transport. While the first release of Census 2023 data was published in 2024, data on active travel to school is not yet available by age group, so the most recent results remain the Census 2018 data.

The AMR for FY 2024/25 will provide an update to the 2018 census results for this indicator.

In FY 2023/24, Greater Wellington, in collaboration with Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington, ran an active travel behaviour change pilot in 10 primary schools across the region. Kia mura te ara kura ('Cool way to school'), aimed at new primary students and their families, to increase trips to school using active modes. Baseline data showed that 66 percent of year 0-4 students were dropped to school by private vehicle: the next Annual Monitoring Report will be able to results of the pilot, once data collection is completed in Q2 2024/25.

Resilience and security

Per the Ministry of Transport's Transport Outcomes framework, "resilience and security" signifies a transport system that minimises and manages the risks from natural and human-made hazards; anticipates and adapts to emerging threats; and recovers effectively from disruptive events.

Measures:
Road network resilience

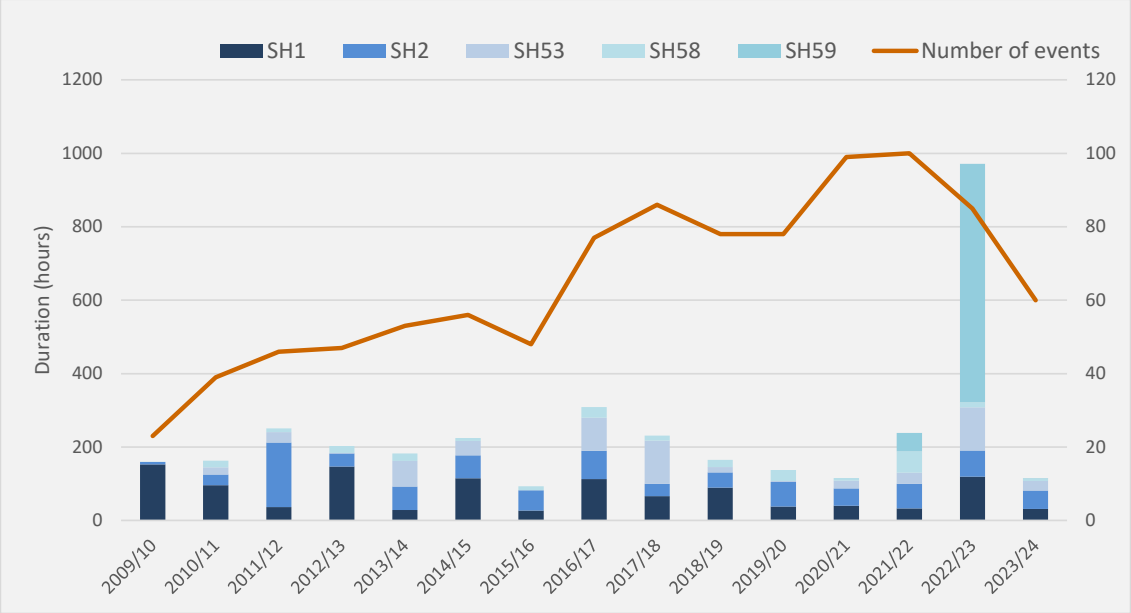
Updated indicators on resilience & security

Indicator	Latest Result	Trend	Comment
The availability of a viable alternative to high-risk and high-impact routes	No result	*An indicator to measure this regionally has not yet been identified.*	
The frequency and duration of resolved road closures on major roads	60 events and 147 hours of road closures in FY 2023/24	Five-year change is a 23% decrease (frequency), and a 16% decrease (duration)	Fewer extreme weather events occurred in FY 2023/24, reducing the number of unplanned closures

A resilient road network

A key objective in the RLTP is to ensure journeys to, from and within the Wellington Region are connected, resilient and reliable. At this time, there is no suitable data source for the availability of alternatives to high-risk routes across the region. However, in FY 2022/23, the opening of Transmission Gully demonstrated the important role that alternative routes provide when other regional links are affected by road closures—after slip damage caused by extreme weather events, SH59 remained closed during an extended period of time to allow for full remediation of damage to the route.

For FY 2023/24, Figure 10 shows a significant reduction in the duration and frequency of state highway closures compared to FY 2022/23. The longest closures (totalling 50 hours) occurred on State Highway 2 in FY 2023/24.



Source: NZTA

Figure 10: The duration and frequency of unplanned road closures on state highways

The overall number of unplanned state highway closures dropped significantly in FY 2023/24—to the lowest level observed since FY 2015/16. Fewer major weather events causing slips or other damage to the regional road network occurred in FY 2023/24, minimising unplanned disruptions to travel on the network.

Overall, these results demonstrate a strong level of state highway network resilience for FY 2023/24. Planned state highway closures (separate from the data above) also occurred to allow for essential planned maintenance work and safety improvements to install new side barriers and motorcycle under-barriers.

Economic prosperity

Per the Ministry of Transport's Transport Outcomes Framework, "economic prosperity" describes a transport system that supports economic activity via local, regional, and international connections, with efficient movements of people and products.

Measures:
The efficiency of the road network on strategic routes, and regional freight moved by rail

Updated indicators on economic prosperity

Indicator	Latest Result	Trend	Comment
Average travel speeds on selected strategic routes	36kmph (three-year average to Feb 2024)	Decreased by 1% from FY 2022/23 results	Decrease across all routes with the exception of Waikanae to Wellington Airport on SH1 (which increased from 48 to 52 kmph) and Karori to Quays (stayed the same year to year)
Average travel time variability on selected strategic routes	7.6 mins (three-year rolling ave)	Increase of 17% from last year's rolling ave (6.5 min rolling ave in FY 2022/23)	This metric reflects inbound peak results—outbound results remained the same as last year's result (4.7 min three-year rolling ave).
Annual freight volumes moved by rail	1.12 million tonnes	One-year change is a 17% decrease from FY 2022/23; 5-year change shows decrease of 13%	

An efficient road network

A key investment priority of the Wellington RLTP is to improve strategic access to key regional destinations for people and freight, including the port, airport, and hospitals. Strategic routes comprise state highways and regional roads with high traffic volumes that are essential to regional productivity, in connecting people and goods with regional hubs.

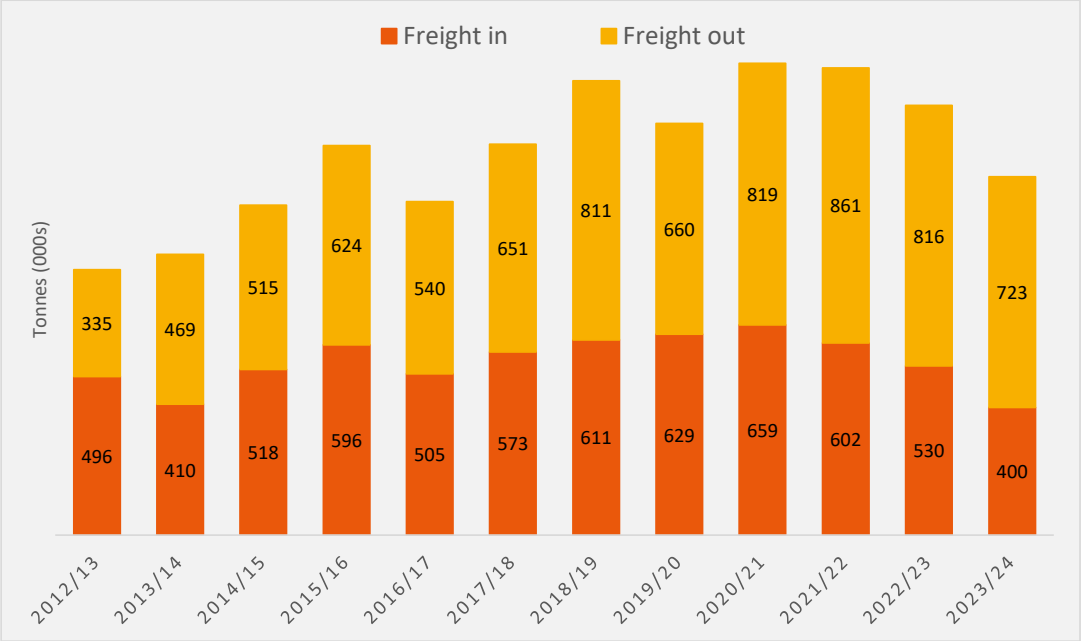
The efficiency of the road network can be estimated by trends in travel speed at peak travel times, which for the purposes of this indicator is measured in February 2024 on select strategic routes (Waikanae to the Wellington Airport; Island Bay to Wellington Station; SH58 Paremata to Seaview; Karori to Quays; Upper Hutt to Wellington CBD; and Seaview to CentrePort).

As measured in February 2024, the latest three-year rolling average is 36 km/h for the AM peak (down from 37 km/h in February 2023, and 38 km/h in February 2022). For off-peak travel, the three-year average stayed the same as February 2023 at an average of 45km/h. While average speeds for most corridors decreased, likely influenced by increased traffic volumes, speeds from Waikanae to Wellington Airport on SH1 rose from a three-year rolling average of 48 km/h up to 52 km/h (likely due to the increased utilisation of Transmission Gully).

Average travel time variability (as a measure of lateness) on these same corridors increased to 7.6 minutes (as a three-year rolling average) in February 2024, an increase of 54 seconds compared to last year's recorded average. This increase in lateness is likely influenced the most by increased congestion on strategic routes compared to FY 2022/23, with the return of pre-COVID-19 traffic volumes.

Regional freight moved by rail

The Wellington region relies on our road, rail, and coastal shipping networks to move freight efficiently. Developing the rail network to increase the volume of freight moved by rail will not only benefit the regional economy, but also contribute to emissions reduction objectives by transporting freight via a more carbon-efficient mode compared to trucking. Transporting freight via rail instead of trucking also reduces the wear and tear caused by heavy vehicles on the region's roads and highways.



Source: Freight Information Gathering System (Ministry of Transport)

Figure 11: Freight moved by rail in and out of the region

The Ministry of Transport's Freight Information Gathering System provides annual estimates of rail freight volume nationwide and within each region. In FY 2023/24, freight travelling in and out of the region by rail decreased by 17 percent compared to FY 2022/23, dropping to the lowest volume observed in the region since FY 2016/17. Freight coming into the region decreased more significantly than freight exiting the region, dropping from 530 thousand freight-tonnes in FY 2022/23 to 400 thousand in FY 2023/24. Year on year, freight leaving the region decreased from 816 to 723 thousand freight-tonnes.

Factors influencing this decrease include the overall economic downturn in FY 2023/24, which affects supply and demand for both international and domestic goods and services. This reduction included a decrease in Wellington port (CentrePort) freight volumes transported by rail. For rail freight, Waingawa log hub volumes dropped by 13 percent compared to the previous year (which roughly aligns with the 10 percent year-on-year decrease reported by CentrePort on the Japanese Agricultural Standard, the global industry standard measurement of log volume, in their FY 2023/24 Annual Report). Rail freight volumes of CentrePort import-export goods decreased by 22 percent compared to FY 2022/23.

KiwiRail's domestic volume of goods decreased by 19 percent compared to FY 2023/24, reflecting the impact of economic conditions.

Environmental sustainability

In the Ministry of Transport's Transport Outcomes Framework, "environmental sustainability" involves a transport system that transitions to net zero carbon emissions, and maintains or improves biodiversity, water quality, and air quality.

Measures:
Transport-generated emissions and vehicle fleet composition

Updated indicators on environmental sustainability

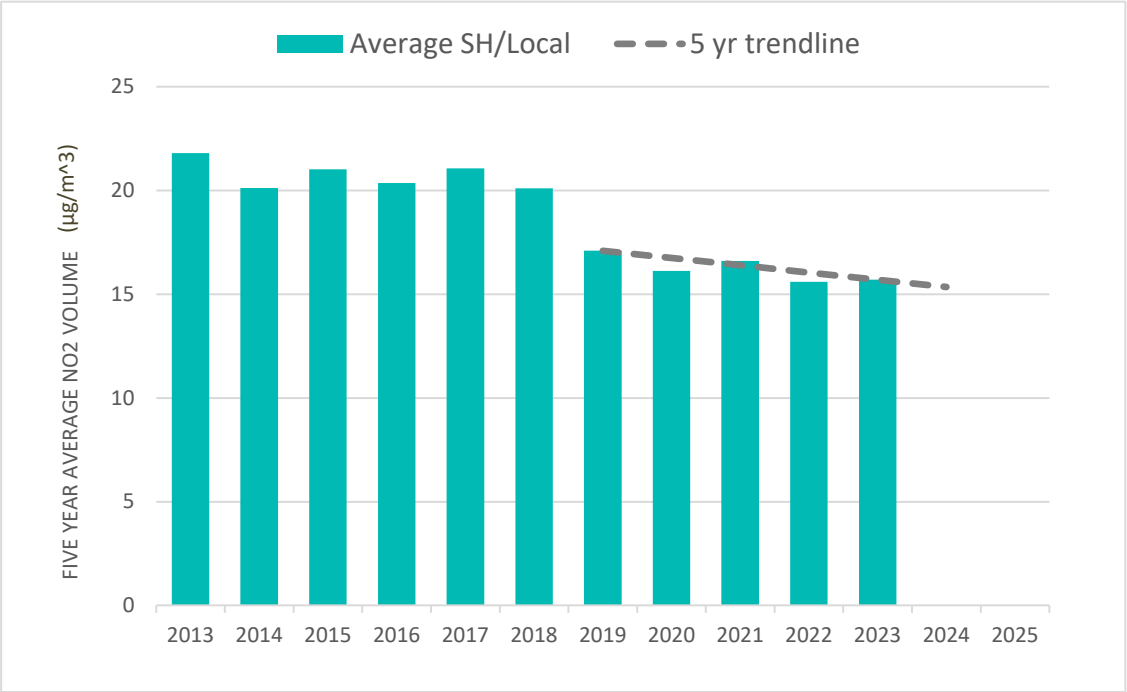
Indicator	Latest Result	Trend	Comment
Transport CO_2 emissions	**1,170 kilotonnes of total CO_2 (2.13 tonnes per capita)**	5-year change indicates an 3% increase, and one-year change indicates a 2% decrease (for total CO_2)	Year 1 of 5-year change now starts on FY 19/20 when levels were particularly low due to COVID-19
Ambient air quality (nitrogen dioxide and black carbon matter)	**Nitrogen dioxide is 16.2 µg/m³ (5-year average to Dec 2023)**	While one-year change increased slightly (from 15.6 to 15.7 µg/m³), nitrogen dioxide has decreased by 21% over 5 years	
Percentage of the private car fleet that are EV and hybrid vehicles	**63% of new registrations are hybrid or electric**	Five-year change indicates a 45% increase; one-year change a 7% increase	Indicator includes light private vehicles only
Percentage of the bus fleet that are EV and hybrid vehicles	**22% of the bus fleet are EVs (as at June 2024)**	Decreased by 1% compared to FY 2022/23	Five-year absolute change is 20%

Air quality – nitrogen dioxide

The RLTP supports initiatives that contribute to ongoing improvement of the vehicle fleet to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality, including uptake of electric vehicles, alternative fuel options, and improved fuel efficiency.

For the purpose of this report, air quality is monitored based on levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), a harmful pollutant arising from vehicle emissions. The data is gathered from Waka Kotahi's national air quality (NO_2) monitoring network including multiple sites across the region (except the Wairarapa). The NZTA sites are mostly located along the state highways, but include a small number of local roads.

Figure 12 (which is a calendar year indicator) shows the results from NO_2 monitoring sites: in 2023, NO_2 volumes recorded a five-year rolling average of 16.2 µg/m^3, compared to 17.1 µg/m^3 reported last year. While annual results for 2023 showed an NO_2 level of 15.7—a 0.1 µg/m^3 increase from 2022's annual average—levels of NO_2 have decreased by 21 percent over the last 5 years. As this indicator is a five-year rolling average from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2023, improvements in air quality continue to include the significant reduction in regional traffic that had occurred during the height of COVID-19.



Source: Greater Wellington

Figure 12: Air quality – nitrogen dioxide

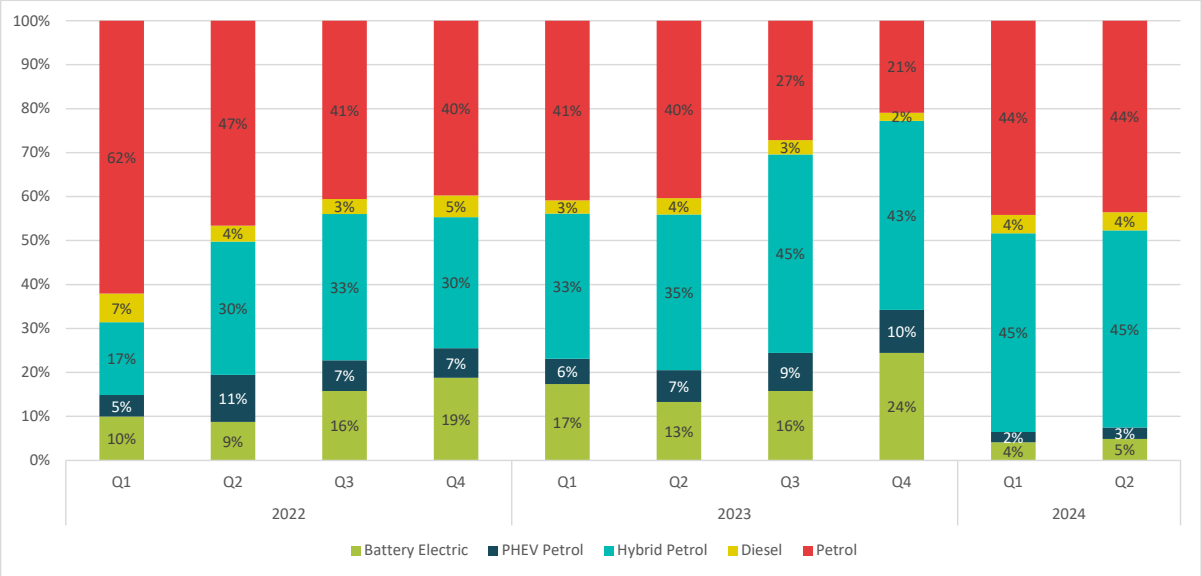
The year-to-year increase in NO_2 is likely due to the increase in vehicle kilometres travelled by diesel buses (some of which were re-introduced in FY 2023/24 to address capacity needs on the network). An environmental performance report on Metlink's bus fleet emissions for FY 2023/24 showed that the bus fleet's total NOx emissions increase to 24.3 tonnes, compared to 20.4 tonnes in FY 2022/23—of these emissions, 35 percent were a result of kilometres travelled by diesel buses of a Euro III emissions standard, even though Euro III buses accounted for only 5 percent of fleet kilometres travelled in FY 2023/24.

Changes to the vehicle fleet

Changes to the vehicle fleet to reduce the prevalence of pollutants and emissions are essential to improving air quality. This indicator monitors the transition from fuel-powered internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles to low-emissions vehicles such as EV or hybrid cars and vans in the Wellington region.

In FY 2023/24, the proportion of new vehicle registrations for hybrid vehicles continued to increase in line with previous years, increasing from 40 percent in FY 2022/23 to 50 percent per Figure 13b. Diesel registrations remained consistent with FY 2022/23, comprising 3 percent of new vehicle registrations, while electric vehicle registrations decreased from 16 percent to 13 percent.

However, of these EV sales, 84 percent of new EV registrations occurred in calendar year 2023, with EV sales plummeting in 2024. The sale of plug-in hybrid vehicles (PHEV) also declined in January 2024, while hybrid petrol vehicle sales remained comparatively consistent. Figure 13a shows the quarterly proportions of new vehicle registrations by vehicle type, which shows the significance of the drop-off observed in the second half of the financial year (where Q3 2023–Q2 2024 is equal to FY 2023/24).

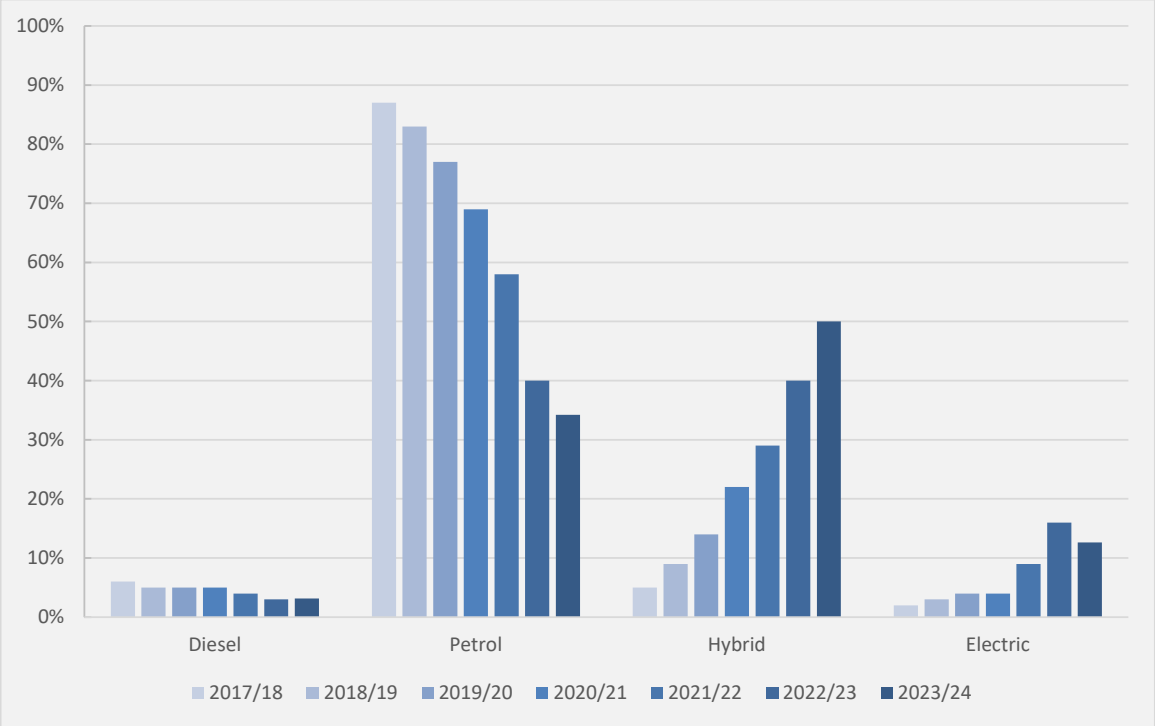


Source: NZTA

Figure 13a: New registrations for private vehicle fleet by quarter and engine type

Influencing factors for the decrease in PHEV and EV sales in 2024 include the removal of incentives that had encouraged the uptake of low-emissions vehicles, after the change of Government. Effective 31 December 2023, the new Government ended the Clean-Car Discount, which had qualified zero or low-emissions light vehicles (PHEV and EV, but not hybrid-petrol vehicles) for a rebate and had set fees for high-emissions vehicles. Road user charges (RUC) for EV and PHEV, which had previously been exempt from RUC if they could charge their batteries from an external source, were also introduced from 1 April 2024.

Overall, per Figure 13b, hybrid (PHEV and hybrid petrol) and electric vehicles accounted for 63 percent of new vehicle registrations for cars or vans in the Wellington region for the full financial year, increasing from 56 percent in FY 2022/23.



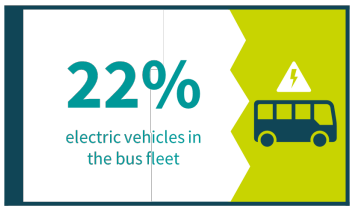
Source: NZTA

Figure 13b: New registrations for private vehicle fleet by engine type

Electric bus fleet

From 2021 onwards, per Greater Wellington policy, all new buses purchased for Metlink public transport operations must be electric vehicles with the goal of having an emissions-free fleet by 2035.

While the transition of the Metlink bus fleet from diesel to electric vehicles (EVs) will continue to progress per Greater Wellington's commitment in its LTP to reducing emissions, capacity pressures on the network meant that Greater Wellington's Council agreed to allow some diesel buses back on the network temporarily, in order to run the full reinstated timetable without service disruptions. In June 2024, the EV fleet composition therefore decreased slightly from 23 percent in FY 2022/23 to 22 percent in FY 2023/24.



However, per Metlink's FY 2023/24 environment performance report on Metlink bus fleet emissions, the proportion of service kilometres travelled by electric buses increased relative to diesel bus service kilometres—electric buses performed 27 percent of total fleet kilometres in FY 2023/24, continuing the trend of improving network carbon efficiency as emissions per kilometre reduces.

Conclusion

Overall, FY 2023/24 showed a region experiencing a different set of changes and challenges than in FY 2022/23. While the region has fully emerged from the last COVID-19 disruptions to ways of living and working, economic downturn and expenditure reduction measures after the change of Government have heightened concerns about cost of living, inflation, and transport investment. AMR results such as the significant reduction in volumes of freight transported by rail are likely to have been influenced by economic pressures and inflation that affect both international and domestic markets.

Fewer extreme weather events challenged the resilience of the state highway network, with road users benefitting from fewer disruptions and unplanned road closures. Road users, pedestrians, and cyclists experienced improved safety outcomes with positive reductions in DSIs, with safety improvements on routes such as State Highway 2 contributing to these reductions—however, unsafe speed continued to contribute to a large proportion of road user DSIs in the financial year.

Public transport patronage continued to increase compared to FY 2022/23, most significantly in off-peak patronage and on bus, with strong improvements to bus service performance and the re-introduction of bus trips suspended during COVID-19. However, the rate of increase of rail patronage has slowed overall, and the delivery of a reliable rail service continues to experience challenges in the face of significant work required to improve the resilience of the rail network.

Significant policy changes as a result of the change of Government resulted in the end of several key transport projects in the Wellington Region. It also led to revised approaches to speed management planning, incentivising the uptake of low-emission vehicles and active travel modes, and investing in land transport. While some of these changes appear to have affected AMR indicators already (including 84 percent of new EV registrations in FY 2023/24 occurring before 31 December 2023), future reports will better be able to analyse the longer-term effects of Government policy changes on AMR indicators.

Now that the RLTP 2021-24 triennium has ended, the next three years will provide an opportunity to fully observe post-COVID travel behaviours and any lasting trends. With current projections showing that two of the three RLTP headline targets are unlikely to be achieved by 2030, future AMRs will provide helpful insight into the scale of the change necessary in the Wellington Region to achieve the outcomes set out under the Ministry of Transport's Transport Outcomes Framework, and results will inform the development of the next Wellington RLTP 2027.

Reporting on the RLTP Programme 2024-27

The next Annual Monitoring Report on FY 2024/25 (July 2024–June 2025) will be presented to the Wellington RTC in the final RTC meeting of 2025. It will cover the

first year of the next RLTP triennium (2024-27) included in the Mid-Term Review of the Wellington RLTP 2021.

In addition to the Annual Monitoring Report, the Wellington Regional Transport Committee receives regular reports on the progress of the RLTP transport programme to the March and September meetings of the RTC. These can be found in the order papers for the relevant meetings on the Greater Wellington website. The March 2025 progress report will include a summary of National Land Transport Programme investment decisions, and how the region intends to progress transport activities in the 2024-27 triennium.

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