

ENVIRONMENT

Realistic transition

The challenge

National Road Carriers supports a low emissions, climate resilient future and the legislated target for net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

At the current time, important details about what makes up current emissions within the transport sector, and in particular the trucking sector, are limited. When combined with limited knowledge about the timing and viability of future technology, the planning of a successful transition is challenging.

Trucking operators invest in their fleets and equipment for the long term, with trucks purchased today designed to deliver a return on investment for at least 25 years¹. This means if managed transitions to new, lower emissions technology are unable to take place at a planned and fair pace, it will compromise the trucking industry's capacity and ability to operate without significant costs for consumers, exporters and the economy. In the worst case, it may impact the viability of operators and the industry and have a negative economic impact.

What is National Road Carriers' position?

National Road Carriers and its members acknowledge they have an important role to play in reducing transport emissions. National Road Carriers advocates for:

1. A realistic transition that recognises success depends on alternatives that are available, affordable and fit-for-purpose.

- The transition must recognise the significant and long-term capital expenditure required by the road transport industry, which is made up largely of small operators. It should also take into account the broader societal benefits brought about by a successful transition.
- A successful transition to lower emissions requires an evolution in the entire roading infrastructure ecosystem. This ranges from the quality of the roading network to alternative fuel or charging infrastructure being rolled out nationwide.
- National Road Carriers maintains an open mind on the technologies that may emerge to support a transition to lower emissions and which may be the right solution. Solutions may include lowering emissions of the existing fleet or new vehicles or fuels. As a general principle, National Road Carriers does not believe the solution lies in reduced usage or the imposition of consumption-based levies or taxes, which harm the wider economy.

¹ Based on 5-7 years in primary role before up to 20 years in secondary role (NRC estimate).

- National Road Carriers welcomes any opportunities for New Zealand to be a test environment for new technology by manufacturers.

2. Basing the transition and achievement of government targets on a detailed understanding of what currently drives transport emissions.

- Understanding the details making up current emissions totals in the transport industry and specifically from trucking - to provide a credible baseline.
- Ensuring the plans and measures to reduce emissions are set with reference to this baseline.
- Emissions should be measured in a standardised way against the kilometres travelled.
- To avoid inhibiting transitions and future states, regulations must be adjusted to allow flexibility for new technologies and approaches.