

To: Forum Directors, Presidents, CEOs & Area Executives
From: Nick Leggett, Chief Executive

COVID-19 update as at 30 March 2020

The RTF is the central point of communication to and from Government and the national media for the road freight transport industry.

We are in ongoing discussions with the government officials putting all the measures in place during the National State of Emergency in New Zealand. This is a moveable feast as we try and unblock the areas restricting the movement of freight and the health and safety of the workers involved in that.

We will continue to update the industry as soon as we have information. As with any crisis situation, it is important to follow accurate information verified by the New Zealand Government. That will be on our website here <https://www.rtfnz.co.nz/covid-19/>

We expect all road freight transport operators to take the fight against COVID-19 seriously and to do their bit to keep other New Zealanders alive. The Government has a dedicated website, where you can find all health and business information, here <https://covid19.govt.nz>

This is a time to stay calm and wait for the right information, as frustrating as that may be.

Update from the Ministry of Transport

On Saturday, the Ministry of Transport made further changes to the movement of non-essential goods and added guidance on identification for essential workers and PPE. Additional guidance on WOFs and COFs was added to Friday's update. You can find the most up to date version [here](#).

This includes information about **Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)** for essential workers:

Personal Protective Equipment requirements for essential workers not in the health sector is available at the www.covid19.govt.nz website. covid19.govt.nz/latest-updates/guidance-for-wearing-protective-equipment/

And this information about **Identification for essential workers**.

Police are taking every measure to help keep the supply chains flowing as efficiently as possible, whilst still limiting the movement of non-essential people.

Police will take a reasonable approach and endeavour to confirm the role of anyone spoken to, for example by the individual producing to the Police officer a:

- *letter of authorisation on company letterhead, or*

- *company identification card, or*
- *business card with company logo, or*
- *copy of an email from a company manager.*

If they have doubts about any identification produced, Police officers have been directed to make enquiries by telephone to confirm identification.

There is no official or standard identification card or similar for workers who are required to be out in the community delivering essential services.

And this information about **WOFs and COFs - 29 MARCH 2020 AT 1800 HOURS**

Warrant of Fitness (WOF) and Certification of Fitness (COF)

The Ministry of Transport and NZ Transport Agency are working to put in place formal regulation relating to WOFs and COFs during the Level 4 Alert Period. In the interim, the following guidance is provided.

Personal and private vehicles: WOF requirements

- *Obtaining a new WOF is not regarded as an essential trip during Alert Level 4. Members of the public should not travel for this purpose, and businesses should not provide WOF services to the general public who are not essential workers.*
- *Due to the inability to obtain a new WOF at this time, for the period of Alert Level 4, all expired WOFs will be deemed current.*
- *Any person driving a private vehicle during Alert Level 4 (limited to essential purposes), with a current or expired WOF, has a responsibility to ensure the vehicle is safe to operate.*
- *Essential maintenance and repairs can be provided in order to ensure that a private vehicle remains safe and operational when used for essential purposes.*
- *Police are focussed on road safety. As such, vehicles with serious safety issues identified (i.e. those that threaten a vehicle's safe operation) may be ordered off the road by Police until essential safety repairs have been completed. However, Police will not issue infringement notices for an expired WOF during Alert Level 4.*

Essential services: WOF/COF requirements

- *Obtaining a WOF/COF is regarded as an essential trip for vehicles involved in essential services, and their supply chains, during Alert Level 4.*
- *Essential services can request and be provided with COF services, including any maintenance or repairs required.*
- *During the period of Alert Level 4, an expired WOF/COF on a vehicle used for essential services will be deemed current, if it is impractical for it to be renewed.*
- *If driving an essential service vehicle without a current WOF/COF, operators and drivers continue to have responsibilities to ensure the vehicle is safe for operating.*
- *Repairs needed to make a vehicle safe to carry out an essential service, are themselves an essential service and can be commissioned and carried out.*
- *Police are focussed on road safety. As such, drivers of vehicles used for essential services where serious safety issues are identified (i.e. those that threaten the vehicles safe operation) may have that vehicle ordered off the road by Police, until essential safety repairs have been completed. However, Police will not issue infringements for an expired WOF/COF to essential service vehicle drivers during the Alert Level 4 period.*

Identification for essential workers – wine industry

Further to the Government advice above, some sectors are implementing identification processes and on-site processes in line with their MPI essential business registration for the Level 4 Alert. Below is information about the wine industry from New Zealand Winegrowers.

Wine has gone digital: The wine industry has adopted strict guidelines to be followed by vineyards and wineries operating as Essential Businesses over the harvest period. Winegrowers will need to prove to MPI that they are enforcing these guidelines. These guidelines include the following:

- All personnel (including service providers) must respect the **2m distance** rule at all times.
- Truck drivers should **remain in the vehicle** unless it is necessary for them to get out of the vehicle and there has been a discussion about this.
- All **written records to be converted to digital:** eg where previously load information was recorded on written forms that were handed over in person, photos of the form (which remains with the person who completed it) will be sent by email/SMS. The intent here is to ensure physical separation between driver and vineyard/winery staff.

The wine industry has asked us to let you know to seek your cooperation, and make sure truck drivers are not surprised by these measures when they arrive at a vineyard.

Authorisation letter: Where movement of goods is essential to vineyard or winery operation, MPI's guidance to the wine industry is clear: the operators in the freight supply chain do count as Essential Businesses. Freight businesses must register online, or be exempt under the Essential Business rules.

To assist drivers, the wine industry has prepared three template letters that can be adapted and issued (by email) by the freight business or winegrower, and then carried by the driver in case they are stopped by the Police for verification. You can access those template letters and guidance on the NZ Winegrowers COVID-19 website here: <https://www.nzwine.com/en/covid19/practical-advice-for-vineyards-and-wineries/template-letters/>

Essential and non-essential freight

We have had some gains in the movement of non-essential freight, but we are continuing our discussions with Government to have the term removed completely. All freight needs to be able to move to enable the goods deemed essential to get through. So it is confusing and counterproductive to use the term "non-essential".

Operational updates

Health and safety on the road – food and rest areas

You may have seen a lot of media over the weekend about the situation truck drivers are finding themselves in during the COVID-19 lockdown, with little or no access to food and rest areas.

I have spoken directly to Sarah Stuart-Black the Director of Civil Defence and Emergency Management about this situation.

She has issued guidelines to open up public toilets on key freight routes. We understand that those running petrol stations have also been informed that they are permitted to open their facilities and sell food to essential workers. This will be a choice by operators.

The general public are behind the call to look after essential workers, including truck drivers.

NZ Trucking Magazine and NZ Truck and Driver are promoting lists that are keeping updated list of places truckers can get food and access toilets, as well as those available for parts and services during the lockdown.

The North Island food and rest areas list is [here](#).

The South Island food and rest areas list is [here](#).

A list of those available for parts and servicing is available [here](#).

[Please email jenny@rtf.nz where public toilets on key routes are found to be closed. We will then inform officials so they can communicate to councils.](#)

Vehicle inspections

VINZ has been granted NZTA approval to offer limited services to essential service vehicles and vehicles of essential service workers. The details are [here](#).

AA and VTNZ have also put together a reduced inspection network across New Zealand to meet the requirements of essential service vehicles. You can find information about that [here](#).

Role of the RTF

Please rest assured our entire team is working on how road freight will operate during the COVID-19 pandemic. We urge you not to believe everything you read in the media, but to wait for the accurate and verified information via our webpage and all our other forms of communication.

As this is uncharted territory, it is important for the RTF to be aware of any issues operators come across so we can address them with Government. Please email us at forum@rtf.nz or call one of us.

As soon as we know, we will tell you. We know you have a critical role to play in this uncertain time for New Zealand and we are here to ensure you can do that safely.

Nick Leggett
Chief Executive Officer