

Gap Analysis: Above Average Road Deaths despite World Leading Enforcement

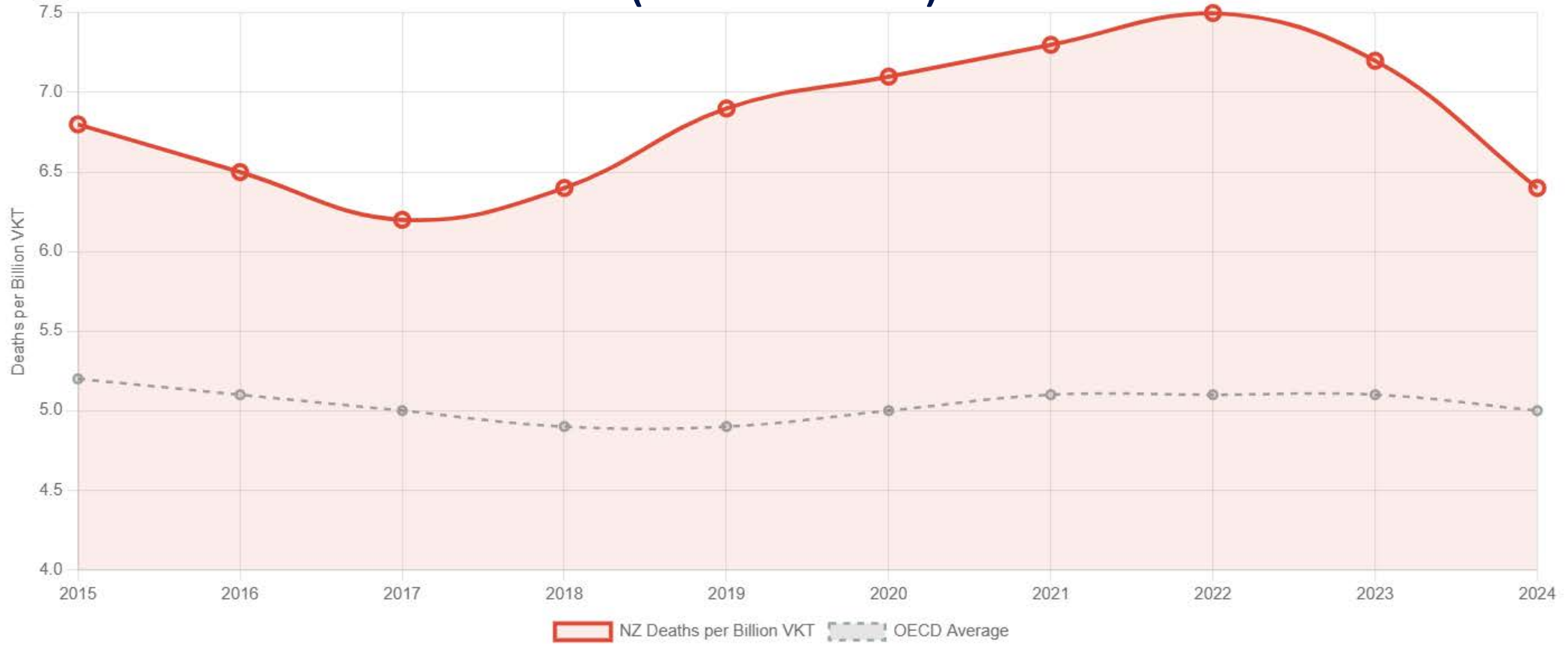
Transportation/Trafinz Conference 2026

Inspector Peter McKennie



**NATIONAL ROAD
POLICING CENTRE**

NZ Road Death Rate Trend (2015-2024)



NZ Road Death Rate (2023)

7.2

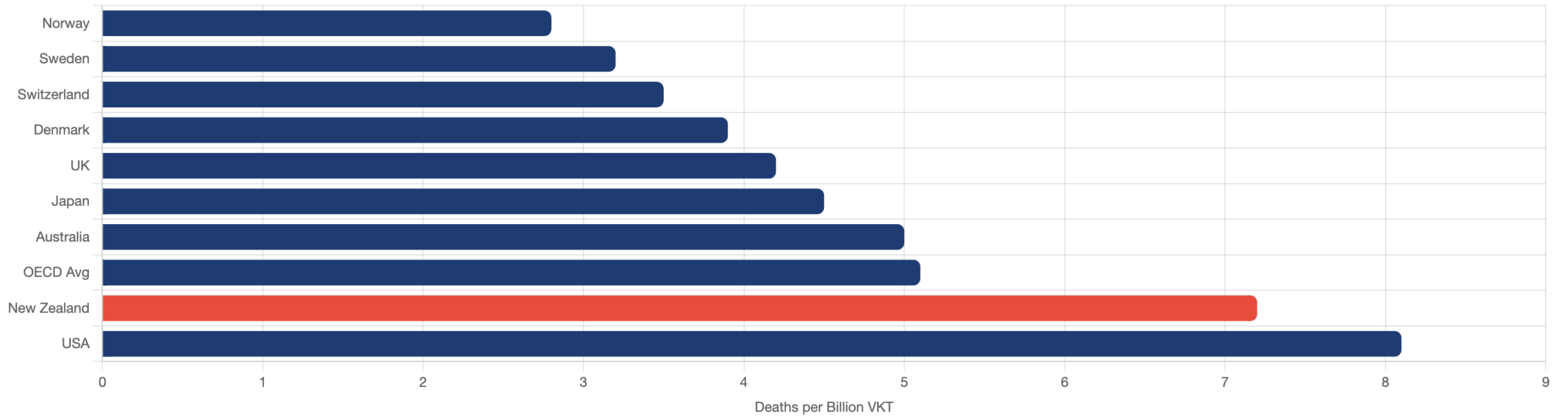
deaths per billion VKT

OECD Average

5.1

deaths per billion VKT

International Road Safety Comparison (2023)



Operation Open Roads

Commenced:
December 2022 - ongoing

- ▶ Number of notices issued for speeding offences
- ▶ Proportion of speeding notices <11km/h in excess of the speed limit
- ▶ Speeding notices issued on rural roads
- ▶ Number of breath alcohol screening tests
- ▶ Proportion of breath alcohol screening tests at high risk times and locations
- ▶ Number of notices for hand-held mobile phone use
- ▶ Number of notices for seatbelt/child restraint offences

Success Factors

- ▶ Restraints, Impairment, Distraction, Speed (RIDS)
- ▶ Mindset shift: understanding the “why”
- ▶ General deterrence principles
- ▶ Delivery dependant funding
- ▶ Active Executive support

RPIP Weekly Monitoring Report: FYTD to Mon 30 Jun (Week 52)

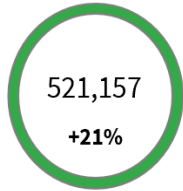
- Percentages
- Values

24/25 Fiscal Year Results

Delivery Dependant Funding Targets



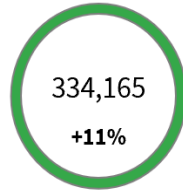
Officer Issued Speed Notices



Week 52 Target
430,000



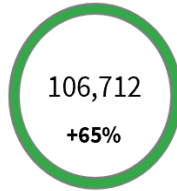
Open Road Speed



Week 52 Target
301,000



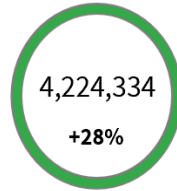
Under 11 km/h Speed Notices



Week 52 Target
64,500



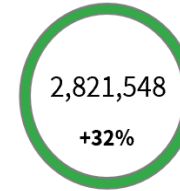
Breath Tests



Week 52 Target
3,300,000



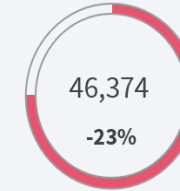
Breath Tests at High Risk Times



Week 52 Target
2,145,000



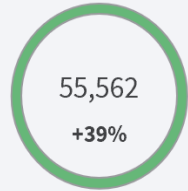
Restraint Offences



Week 52 Target
60,000

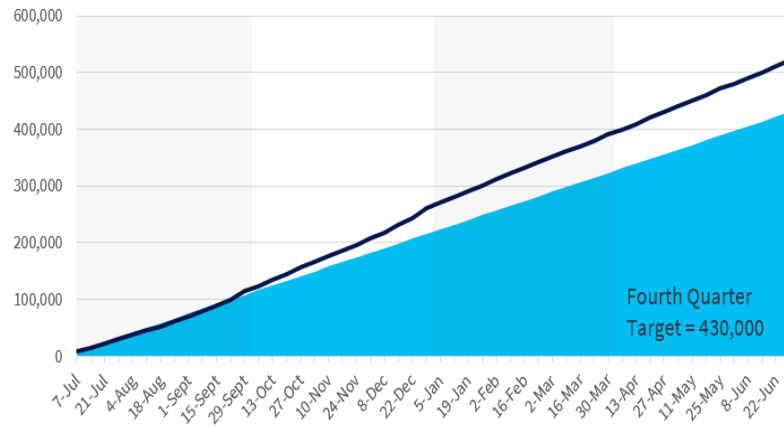


Mobile Phone Offences

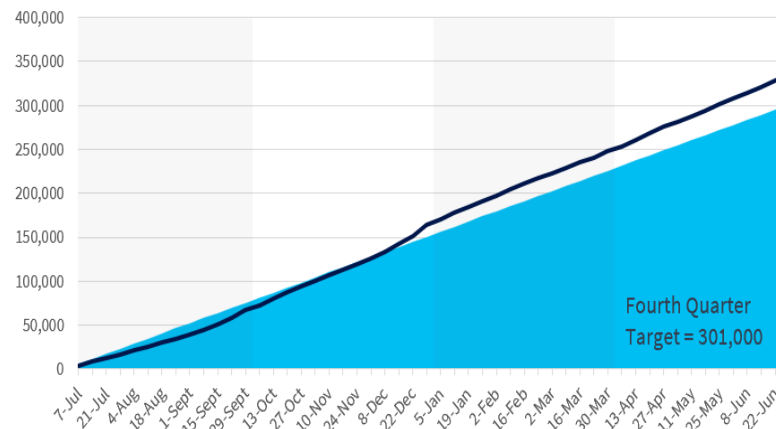


Week 52 Target
40,000

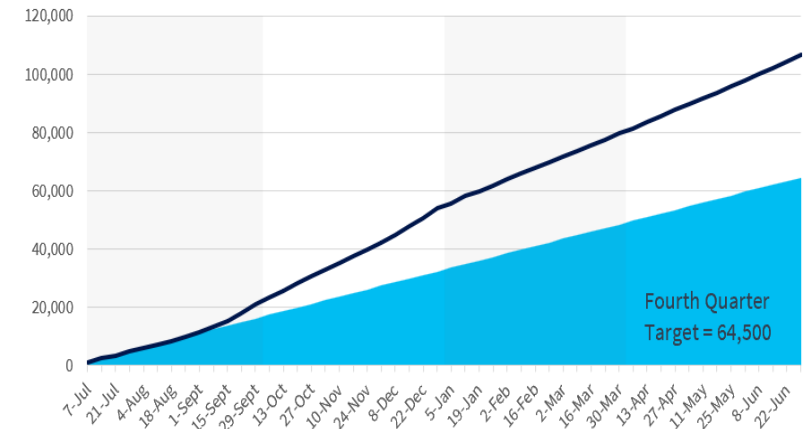
All Speed Notices



Open Road Speed Notices



Under 11 km/h Notices



RPIP Weekly Monitoring Report: FYTD to Mon 30 Jun (Week 52)

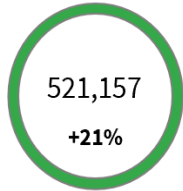
- Percentages
- Values

24/25 Fiscal Year Results

Delivery Dependent Funding Targets



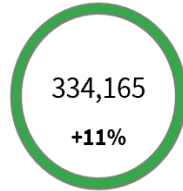
Officer Issued Speed Notices



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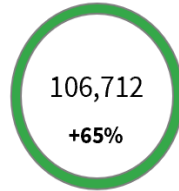
Open Road Speed



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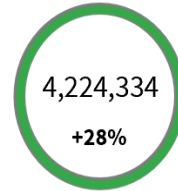
Under 11 km/h Speed Notices



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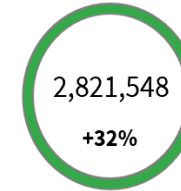
Breath Tests



Week 52 Target
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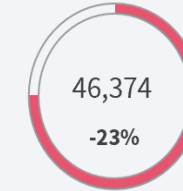
Breath Tests at High Risk Times



Week 52 Target
2,145,000



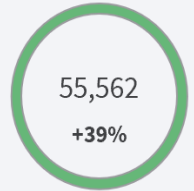
Restraint Offences



Week 52 Target
60,000

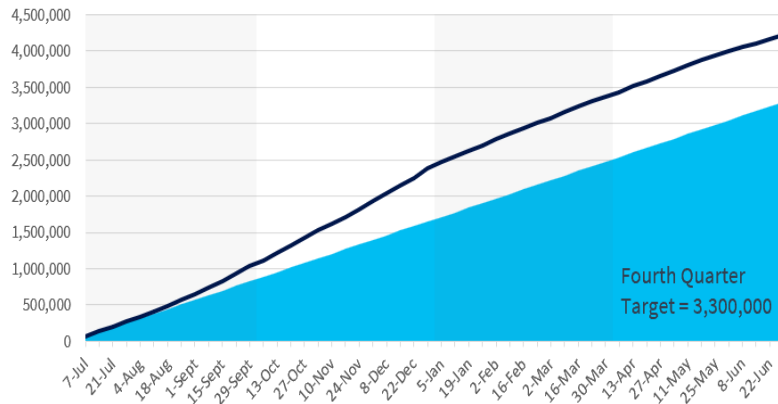


Mobile Phone Offences

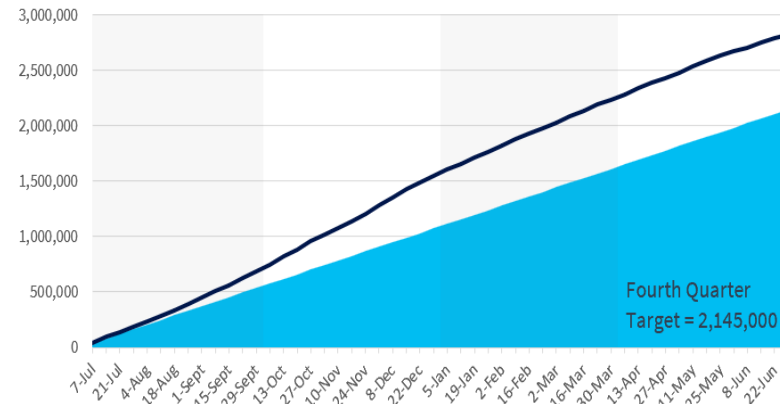


Week 52 Target
40,000

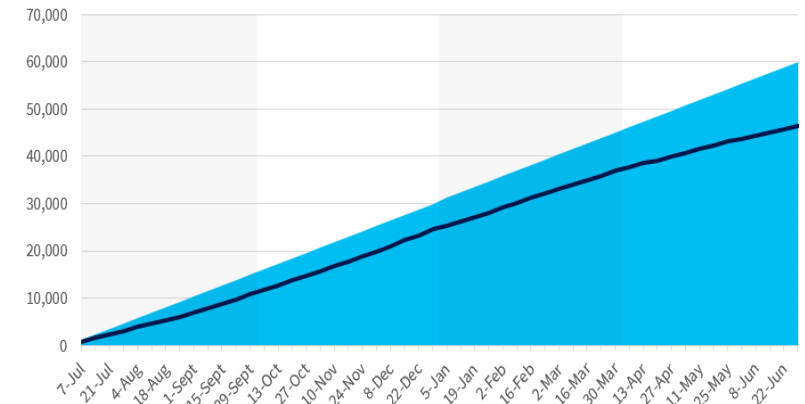
Breath Screening Tests



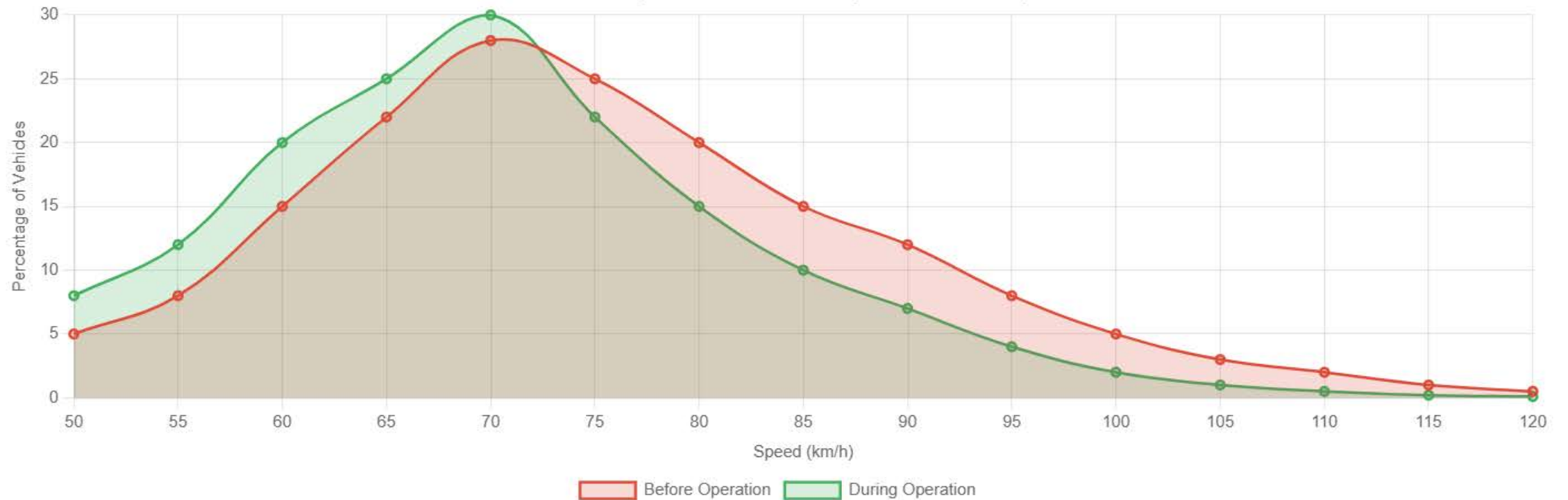
BSTs at High Risk Times



Non delivery dependant measures - Restraints Notices



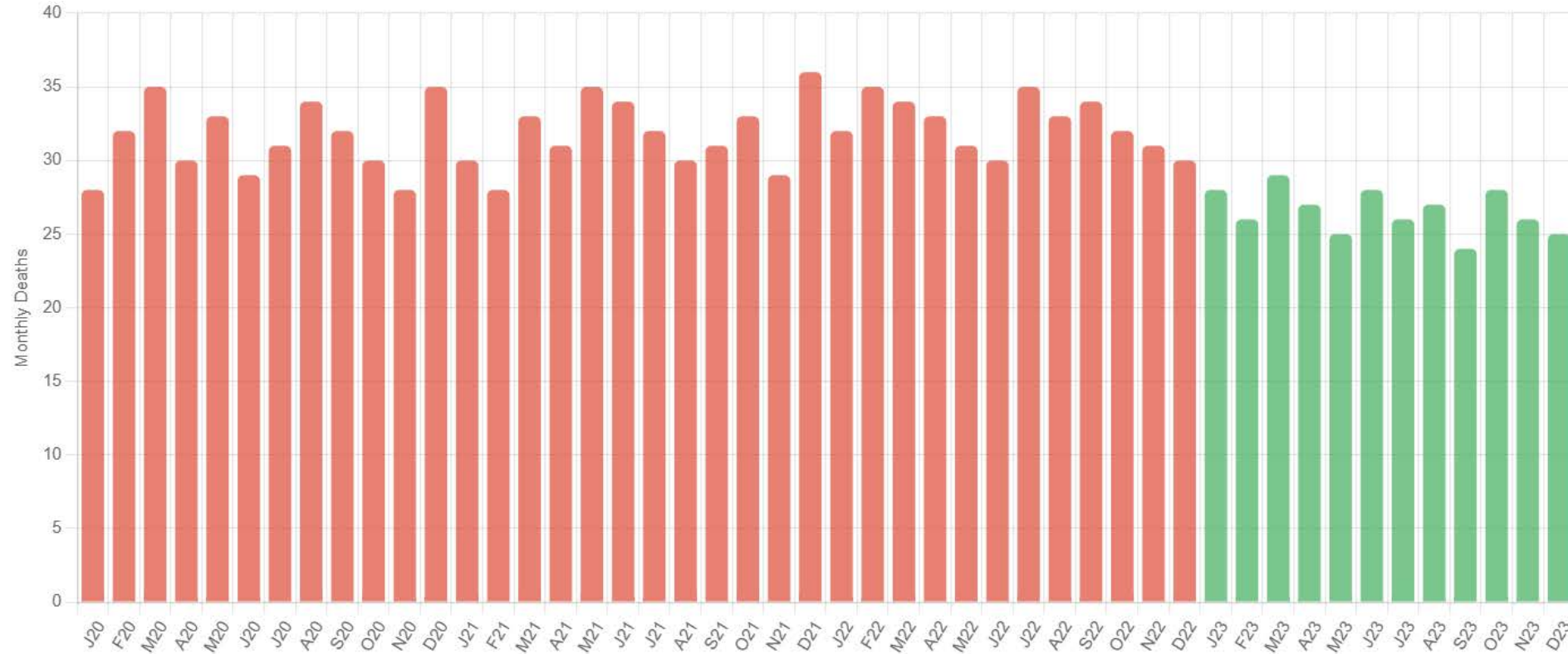
Vehicle Speed Distribution (100km/h zone)



Key Outcome:

32% reduction in vehicles traveling > 10km/h over the speed limit

Monthly Road Deaths: Before vs During Operation



Before Operation (2020-Nov 2022)

31.2

Average deaths per month

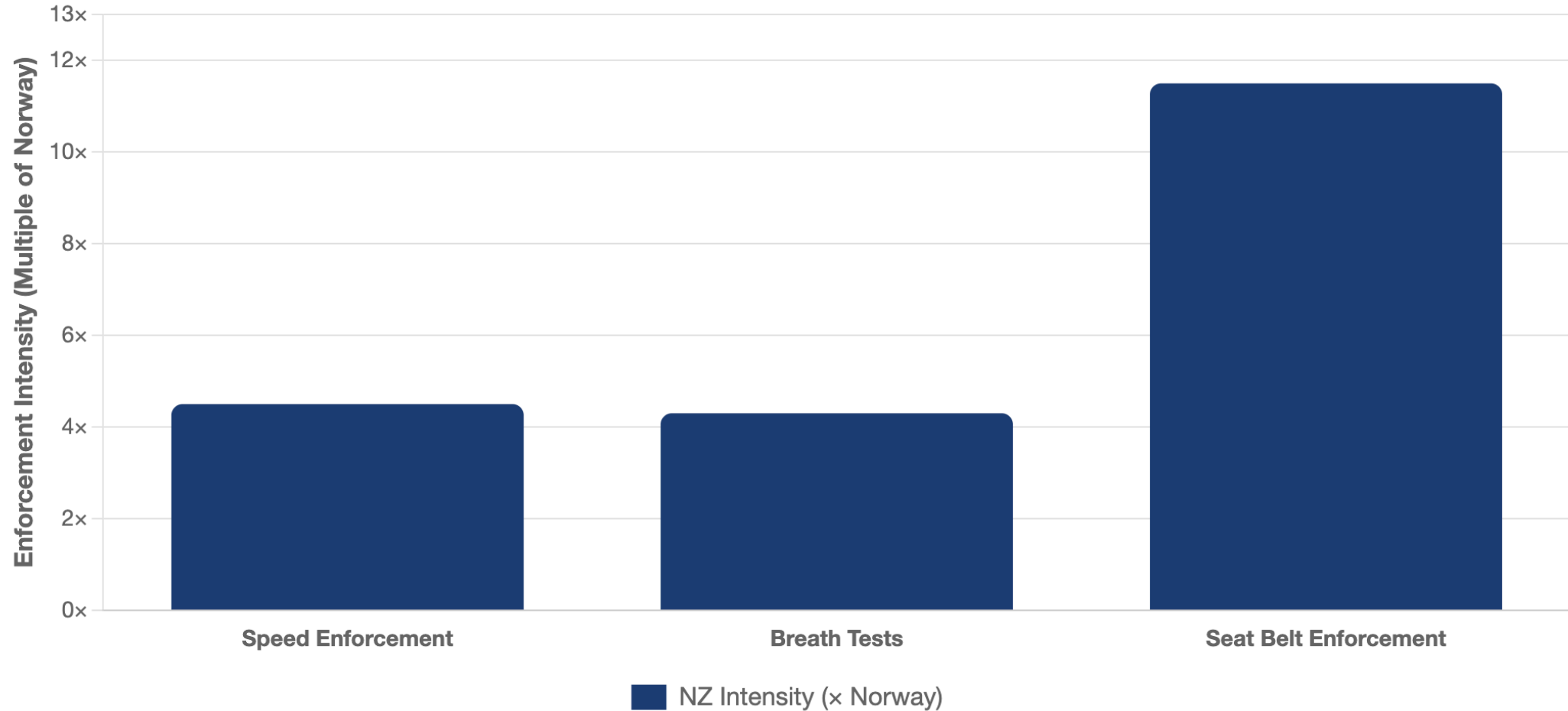
During Operation (Dec 2022-Present)

26.8

Average deaths per month

14.1% reduction

Level of Enforcement intensity in New Zealand vs Norway

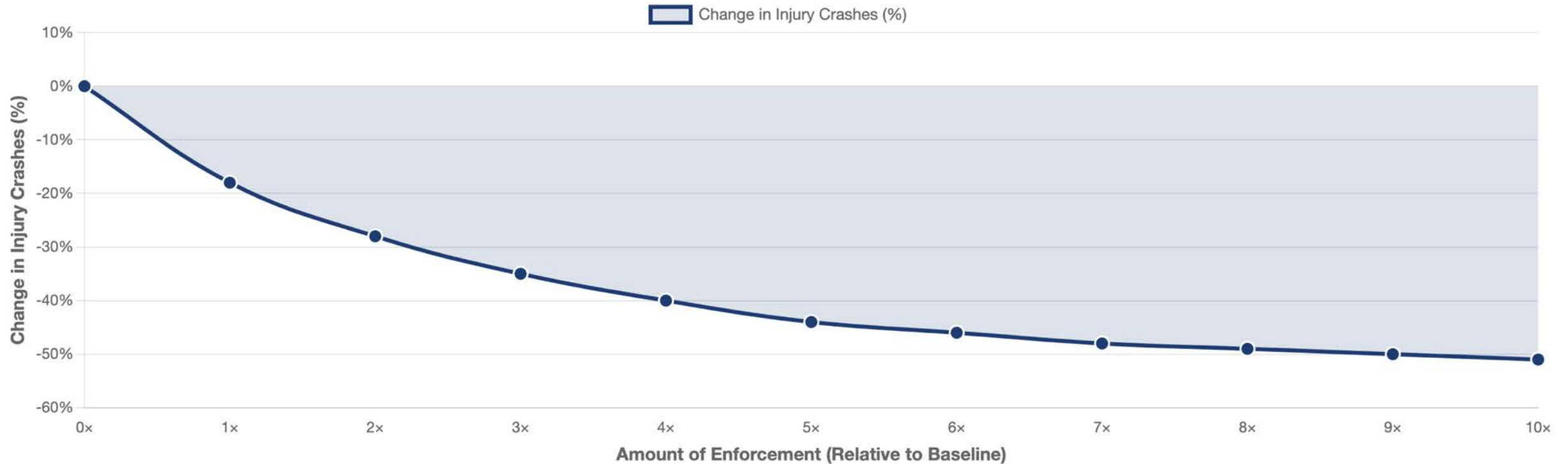


Contributing Factors – Safe System Gaps

- ▶ Speed limits not informing safe driving speeds (for the engineering and use of roads)
 - ❖ Deaths occurring when mistakes are made within legal speed limits
- ▶ Average vehicle age around 15 years– relatively high ratio of vehicles without modern safety features
- ▶ Perceived risks of being caught through enforcement
- ▶ Penalties have not been adjusted over time and don't provide a consistent deterrent influence on road user decisions

Amount of Enforcement vs Change in Injury Crashes

Dose-Response Relationship (Elvik 2001)

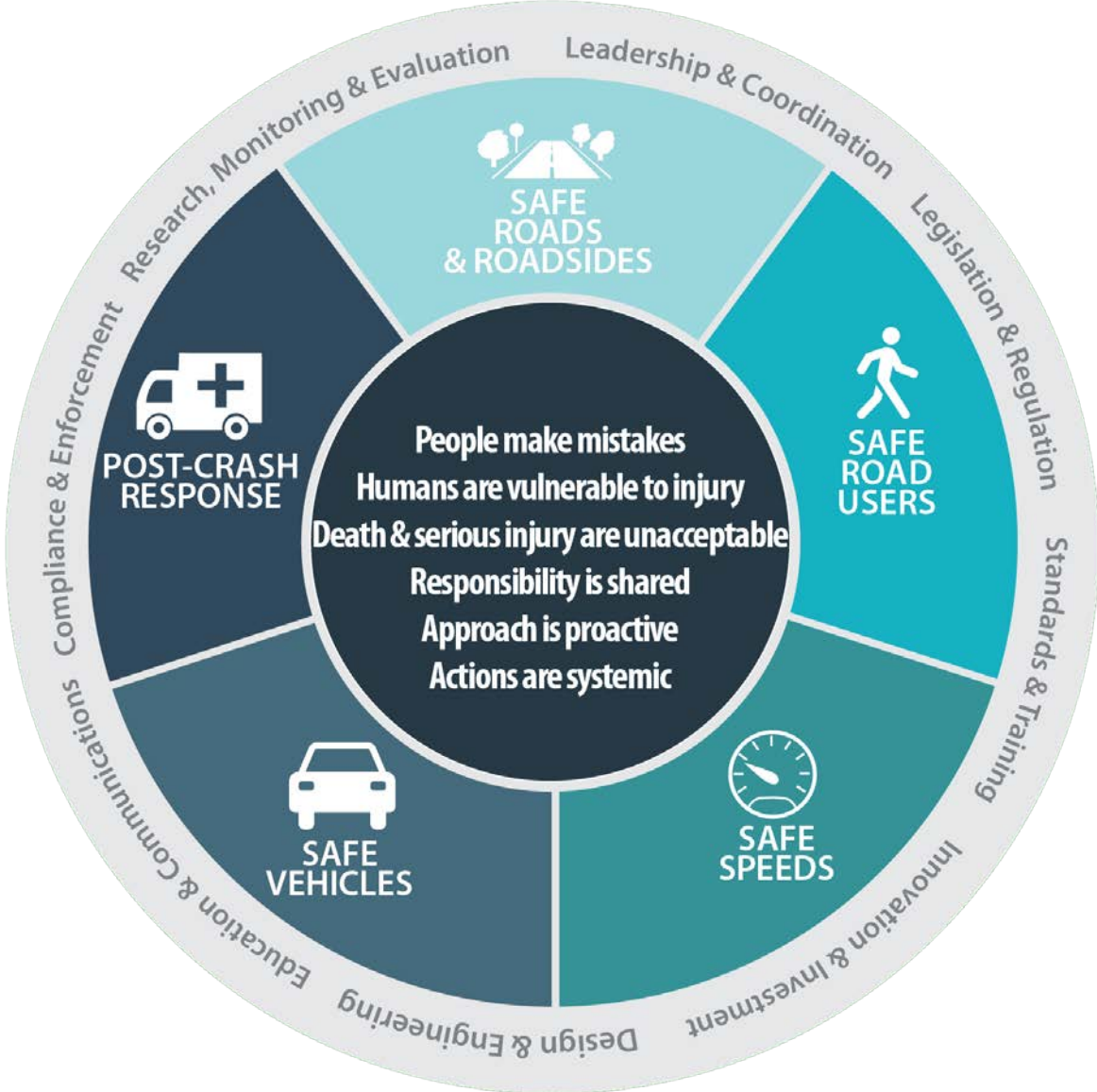


Motivation to Continue?

- ▶ Easing off equates to more lives lost
 - ❖ Record low road deaths over the last two years; tracking well again this year
- ▶ Shift in perceptions of getting caught and certainty of consequences (communications strategy)
- ▶ Penalties that influence decision-making
- ▶ Additional 500 officers

Whole of Safe System Application is Critical to Benefit Realisation

The weakest link in the chain proverb applies



Some considerations to ponder

We are dealing with human nature

People will make mistakes

Is it simply okay for people to die as a consequence of a mistake being made, or should we take every reasonable step to reduce the risks?

- ▶ Deliberate unsafe behaviour vs. momentary lapses
- ▶ Barriers work on open roads, but they can't be everywhere
- ▶ Most modern passenger vehicles are designed to protect occupants from serious harm up to about 80km/h in a frontal impact crash
- ▶ We travel towards each other on 100km/h roads separated by 100mm of paint
- ▶ Distraction and impairment, through alcohol, drugs or fatigue, increase the risks of crashing
- ▶ Impact speed and seatbelt wearing/protective attire influence the severity of outcome

Examples of getting it right, and one not so much

Just a few examples from my first-hand experiences

You will have others

- Barrier installation Pukerua Bay to Paekakariki
- SH6 diversion after the Kaikoura earthquake
- Speed limit change implementation

What matters to you most?

A few minutes saved every 100kms you travel or journey times and routes that you can rely on?

Getting somewhere a little faster or the safety of you, your family, your employees and others on the roads?

- The greater the risks of serious crashes occurring, the more frequently disruptions occur on the network
- The risks are reduced through safe drivers and driving behaviours, safe speeds for the conditions, use and engineering of the roads, and safe vehicles
- Even if you don't contribute to a mistake being made or a crash occurring, you can influence the severity of the outcome and flow on impacts

Outcomes Aligned to the Best in the OECD are not out of Reach

Influencing genuine application of Safe System to complement the World-leading enforcement efforts and realise World-leading benefits – safety, efficiency, health, social and economic

Welcome sector and stakeholder networking

- ✦ Lessons learned
- ✦ What works well
- ✦ Emerging risks
- ✦ Opportunities

