

**Correct as at 26th June 2026. It may be superseded at any time.**

**Extract taken from:** Heavy vehicle specialist certification > Introduction > Definitions and abbreviations

## 8 Definitions and abbreviations

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| <b>Agricultural trailer</b>                                | means a trailer constructed to be operated in connection directly with the operation or management of a farm but does not include a logging trailer.  |
| <b>Appointment</b>   | means the appointment by NZTA of the HV Certifier under the Notice of Appointment (NoA) and pursuant to <a href="#">Land Transport Rule Vehicle Standards Compliance 2002</a> .   |
| <b>Applicable requirement</b>                              | means any requirement specified in an Act, Regulation or Rule that applies to a specific vehicle.   |
| <b>Approved vehicle standard</b>                           | means a vehicle standard with which a vehicle is required to comply by an applicable requirement.   |
| <b>Articulated vehicle</b>                                 | means any motor vehicle with a semi-trailer attached, so that part of the semi-trailer is superimposed on the motor vehicle and a substantial part of the mass of the semi-trailer and of its load is borne by the motor vehicle.   |
| <b>Aspect of a vehicle for heavy vehicle certification</b> | means an aspect of the vehicle which belongs within certifier categories. These include chassis and frame structures, towing connections, load anchorages, bolster attachments, brakes and SRT.   |
| <b>Axle</b>  | <p>means one or more shafts, spindles or bearings in the same vertical transverse plane by means of which, in conjunction with wheels mounted on those shafts, spindles or bearings, a portion of the weight of the vehicle is transmitted to the roadway, and:</p> <p>a) if two or more wheels of a motor vehicle are substantially in the same line transversely and some or all of them have separate axles, the axles of all those wheels are to be treated as one axle</p> <p>b) if the longitudinal centreline of an axle of a motor vehicle is less than 1m distant from the longitudinal centreline of another axle, the two axles are to be treated as one axle ('a dual axle').</p> |
| <b>Axle mass</b>   | <p>means the lesser of:</p> <p>a) the maximum mass that can be carried by the axle, including the mass of the axle, as determined by the axle manufacturer, or</p> <p>b) the maximum mass that can be carried by the suspension system, including the mass of the axle, as determined by the suspension system manufacturer.</p>  |
| <b>Axle set</b>  | means a single-axle set, a tandem-axle set, a twin-steer axle set, a tri-axle set, or a quad-axle set.  |
| <b>Axle-stop device</b>                                    | means a device to control the movement of the axle in the event of suspension failure.  |

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| <b>Ballrace turntable</b>      | means a device incorporating a low friction ball bearing fitted between two substantial structural components of a vehicle to enable rotational motion between those components about a vertical axis.   |
| <b>Body</b>                    | means the part of the vehicle that is designed for the use and accommodation of the occupants or to hold any goods.  |
| <b>Bolster Attachment Code</b> | means the Bolster Attachment Code of the Log Transport Safety Council, approved by NZTA.   |
| <b>Brake control assembly</b>  | means an assembly containing the brake pedal assembly, the master cylinder or treadle valve, and associated components.  |
| <b>Brake pedal assembly</b>    | means an assembly containing the brake pedal and pedal pivot, pedal bracket, pedal return spring and associated components.  |
| <b>Cab-guard</b>               | means a structure attached to a vehicle that provides protection to the cab occupants from the effects of load impact, and may include a headboard.  |
| <b>Certificate of loading</b>  | means a certificate of loading issued under any regulation or rule made under the <a href="#">Land Transport Act 1998</a>  |
| <b>Certify</b>                 | means in relation to a vehicle, or specific aspect of a vehicle, to make a record of determination under 6.6(1)(a) or 7.6(1)(a) that confirms that the vehicle inspector or inspecting organisation has determined that the vehicle or specific aspect of the vehicle complies with the applicable requirements. |
| <b>Chassis</b>                 | means the structural lower part of a vehicle to which the running gear and, as applicable, engine, transmission, steering system and body may be attached.   |
| <b>Chassis assembly</b>        | means a chassis with running gear attached and, as applicable, engine, transmission and steering system attached.  |

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| <b>Chassis rating</b>      | <p>means:</p> <p>a) for a vehicle first registered before 1 February 1989 that has not been modified on or after</p> <p>1 April 2005, a set of data, containing the gross vehicle mass, gross combination (if applicable) and maximum towed mass (if applicable), approved or determined by NZTA or a person appointed by NZTA</p> <p>b) for a vehicle first registered on or after 1 February 1989 or a vehicle that has been modified on or after 1 April 2005, a set of data, containing the permitted maximum axle and/or axle-set masses, gross vehicle mass, gross combination mass (if applicable) and maximum towed mass (if applicable), approved or determined by NZTA or a person appointed by NZTA.</p> |
| <b>Class</b>               | in relation to vehicles, means a category of vehicle of one of the groups A, L, M, N and T, as specified in Table A in <a href="#">Land Transport Rule Heavy Vehicles 2004</a>  |
| <b>Combination vehicle</b> | means a towing vehicle in combination with one or more trailers or other motor vehicle that is being towed.   |
| <b>Compliance label</b>    | means an attachment to the vehicle in the form of a label that confirms compliance with applicable requirements.  |
| <b>Construction</b>        | means the manufacture, assembly, reassembly or modification of a vehicle and includes all acts and activities related or incidental to the construction of a vehicle.   |
| <b>Coupling</b>            | means that part of a vehicle that is specifically designed to enable it to be connected to another vehicle; does not include a structural member of the towing or towed vehicle.  |
| <b>De-registered</b>       | means that a vehicle's New Zealand registration has been cancelled in accordance with the <a href="#">Land Transport Act 1998</a>   |
| <b>Drawbar</b>             | means an assembly of components that includes: the trailer coupling that connects the trailer to the coupling of the towed vehicle; hinges (where applicable); the structural and other related components between the trailer coupling and trailer bogie or chassis.   |
| <b>Drawbeam</b>            | means the part of the towing vehicle to which a coupling is fitted to enable a heavy trailer to be connected and includes the attached coupling.  |
| <b>Dual steering</b>       | in relation to a vehicle, means the vehicle is able to be steered from both the left-hand and right-hand side of the vehicle.   |

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| <b>EBS</b>                            | <p>means electronically controlled braking system. Refer to the Land Transport Rule: Heavy Vehicle Brakes 2006 for further information.</p> <p><u>Land Transport Rule: Heavy Vehicle Brakes 2006</u></p>  |
| <b>Enter service</b>                  | <p>in relation to a vehicle means to begin to be operated in-service for the first time. For Public Service Vehicles the date of entry refers to the most recent entry or re-entry. For other vehicles the date of entry is the date of the first entry into the New Zealand fleet.</p>   |
| <b>Evidence of vehicle inspection</b> | <p>has the same meaning as in the Act and the Rule.</p>   |
| <b>Fifth wheel</b>                    | <p>means a device fitted to a vehicle to enable a semi-trailer to be connected to it by means of a kingpin so that the semi-trailer may be towed.</p>   |
| <b>Fit and proper</b>                 | <p>has the meaning ascribed to it in Section 2 of the Rule.</p>   |
| <b>Force Majeure</b>                  | <p>means any cause beyond the reasonable control of the party claiming its benefit and which that party is unable to overcome by the exercise of reasonable diligence.</p>  |
| <b>g</b>                              | <p>means an acceleration of 9.81m/s<sup>2</sup>.</p>  |
| <b>Goods</b>                          | <p>means all kinds of movable property; includes articles sent by post and animals.</p>   |
| <b>Gross combination mass</b>         | <p>means, for a vehicle that is permitted to tow another vehicle, the maximum permitted combined mass of the towing vehicle and any combination of attached trailers or vehicles, determined by the vehicle manufacturer and approved by NZTA, or determined by NZTA.</p>   |
| <b>Gross mass</b>                     | <p>in relation to any vehicle or combination vehicle, means the mass of that vehicle and its load, equipment and accessories, which may be determined by adding the mass on the vehicle's axles or axle sets.</p>   |
| <b>Gross vehicle mass</b>             | <p>means either:</p> <p>a) the maximum permitted mass of a vehicle, which includes the mass of the accessories, the crew, the passengers and load, and is, unless (b) applies, the gross vehicle mass specified (subsequent to the latest modification, if any) by the manufacturer of the vehicle, or</p> <p>b) if a person approved for the purpose by NZTA determines that the gross vehicle mass should differ from that specified by the manufacturer, taking into account evidence on the capability of the systems and components of the vehicle, or the effects of any modification, that mass determined by that person.</p> |

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| <b>Headboard</b>   | means the substantially vertical part of the forward end of a flat deck or curtain-sided body of a vehicle.   |
| <b>Heavy motor vehicle</b>   | means a motor vehicle that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) is of class MD3, MD4, ME, NB, NC, TC or TD, or</li> <li>b) has a gross vehicle mass that exceeds 3500kg and is not of a class specified in <a href="#">Table 3-4-1. Vehicle equipment standards classifications</a></li> </ul>  |
| <b>Heavy vehicle Specialist Vehicle Inspection Requirements Manual</b> | means the revision that was current at the time of issue of certification of the document published by NZTA indicating to the HV certifier and inspecting organisation how any vehicle must be inspected under the Rule and their Notice of Appointment.  |
| <b>Hook truck</b>  | means a vehicle recovery service vehicle with a crane hoist that partially lifts the vehicle to be recovered, which is then towed in this position.   |
| <b>HVS certifier</b>   | means a heavy vehicle specialist certifier appointed by NZTA under the Rule to certify certain aspects of vehicles before the vehicle can be given a certificate of fitness.  |
| <b>Inspection and certification</b>                                    | means the performance of two or more of the following, for the purposes of determining compliance with applicable requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) examining vehicles</li> <li>b) determining whether or not a vehicle or specific aspect of a vehicle complies with applicable requirements</li> <li>c) issuing evidence of vehicle inspection</li> <li>d) recording and making available information about vehicles (including their systems, components, devices, fittings and equipment).</li> </ul> |
| <b>Inspection and certification document</b>                           | means a document required, produced or issued in the inspection and certification process, including a plate, a label, an electronic record and a check sheet.  |
| <b>Inspection and certification outcome</b>                            | in relation to a vehicle, means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) production of a record of determination as appropriate to the inspection and certification activity, or</li> <li>b) provision of other records and information about the vehicle to NZTA or other persons, or</li> <li>c) production of evidence of vehicle inspection.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Inspecting organisation</b>   | means an organisation appointed under 2.2 of the Rule to carry out inspection and certification activities. An HVS certifier is an inspector and an inspecting organisation.  |

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| <b>Kingpin</b>                 | means a pin attached to the skid plate of a semi-trailer and used for connecting the semi-trailer to the fifth wheel of a towing vehicle.   |
| <b>Land transport document</b> | has the same meaning as in the <a href="#">Land Transport Act 1998</a>  |
| <b>Lifting gear</b>            | in relation to a vehicle recovery service vehicle, means any equipment used to lift another vehicle, and includes towing attachments.   |
| <b>Light trailer</b>           | means a trailer that has a gross vehicle mass of 3500kg or less.  |
| <b>Load</b>                    | <p>includes part of a load and:</p> <p>a) includes covers, ropes, ties, blocks, tackles, barrows or other equipment or objects used in the securing or containing of a load on a vehicle or the loading or unloading of a vehicle, whether or not any other load is on the vehicle, and</p> <p>b) does not include animal wastes discharged from animals being carried on a vehicle at the time.</p>  |
| <b>Load anchorage point</b>    | means a device permanently attached to a vehicle to enable a load to be secured or attached to the vehicle.   |
| <b>Load rating</b>             | means the maximum force that can be withstood without incurring any loss of structural capacity.  |
| <b>Load securing equipment</b> | means equipment or a device permanently fitted to a vehicle to secure, either by itself or in conjunction with other equipment or devices such as lashings, a load to a vehicle.  |
| <b>Load-sharing axle set</b>   | <p>means an axle set suspension system that has effective damping characteristics on all axles of the set and is built to divide the load between the tyres on the set so that no tyre carries a mass more than 10% greater than the mass it would carry if:</p> <p>a) the load were divided in the axle set so that each tyre carries an equal load, or</p> <p>b) the axle set is a tandem axle set comprising a twin-tyred axle and a large single-tyred axle and is built to divide the load between the tyres on the set so that:</p> <p>i. 60% of the load is borne by the twin-tyred axle and 40% of the load is borne by the large single-tyred axle, or</p> <p>ii. 55% of the load is borne by the twin-tyred axle and 45% of the load is borne by the large single-tyred axle.</p> |

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| <b>Logging bolster</b>                 | means a vertically orientated member attached to a vehicle that is used to secure loads of timber logs.  |
| <b>Manufacturer's operating limits</b> | <p>means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) in relation to a motor vehicle, the allowance provided by the vehicle manufacturer in terms of performance capability and dimensions, relative to deterioration, malfunction or damage beyond which the safe performance of the vehicle, as defined by the vehicle manufacturer, is compromised, and</li> <li>b) in relation to a system, component or item of equipment, incorporated in or attached to a vehicle, the allowance provided by the system, component or equipment manufacturer in terms of performance capability and dimensions, relative to the deterioration, malfunction or damage, beyond which the safe performance of the system, component or item of equipment (and consequently the vehicle) is compromised.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Mass</b>                            | in relation to a vehicle, means the quantity of material contained in or on the vehicle that, when subjected to acceleration due to gravity, will exert downwards on a level surface a force that can be measured as the weight of the vehicle.  |
| <b>Maximum towed mass</b>              | means the maximum permitted mass of all vehicles that may be towed behind a vehicle as determined by the manufacturer of the towing vehicle and approved by NZTA.  |
| <b>Modify</b>                          | in relation to a vehicle, means to change the vehicle from its original state by altering, substituting, adding or removing any structure, system, component or equipment but does not include repair.   |
| <b>Monocoque</b>                       | in relation to a vehicle, means that the chassis of the vehicle is integral to the body.   |
| <b>Motor vehicle</b>                   | <p>means a vehicle drawn or propelled by mechanical power, including its structure, systems, components and equipment. This includes a trailer, but does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a vehicle running on rails</li> <li>b) an invalid carriage</li> <li>c) a trailer (other than a trailer designed solely for the carriage of goods) that is designed and used exclusively as part of the armament of the New Zealand Defence Force</li> <li>d) a trailer running on one wheel and designed exclusively as a speed measuring device or for testing the wear of vehicle tyres</li> <li>e) a vehicle designed for amusement purposes and used exclusively within a place of recreation, amusement or entertainment to which the public does not have access with motor vehicles</li> <li>f) a pedestrian-controlled machine.</li> </ul> |

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| <b>Operate</b>                       | in relation to a vehicle, means to drive or use the vehicle on a road, or to cause or permit the vehicle to be on a road or to be driven on a road, whether or not the person is present with the vehicle.  |
| <b>Original equipment</b>            | means equipment that is fitted by the vehicle manufacturer when the vehicle is manufactured or equipment that is approved by the vehicle manufacturer for use in a specific vehicle type for a specific purpose.  |
| <b>Outrigger</b>                     | in relation to a vehicle that is fitted with a crane or hoist, means a device fitted to the vehicle that extends and stabilises the vehicle while the crane or hoist is in use.   |
| <b>Payload capacity</b>              | means the gross vehicle mass of a vehicle less its unladen mass.  |
| <b>Pole trailer</b>                  | means a trailer that is attached to a towing vehicle by a telescoping or sliding pole, and is designed to support a common long load spanning between the trailer and the towing vehicle.   |
| <b>Power pack</b>                    | means the engine, its radiator/cooling pack, induction and exhaust system, including layout, and any accessories or emissions control equipment, such as 'addblue', specified by the manufacturer.  |
| <b>Procedure documentation sheet</b> | means a document that defines and records the procedures and calculations and design criteria and includes all documents relating to HVS specialist certification.  |
| <b>Quad-axle set</b>                 | means a set of four axles, where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the centres of the first and fourth axles are spaced not less than 3.75m and not more than 4m apart, and</li> <li>b) all axles contain an equal number of tyres, and</li> <li>c) none of the axles is a single standard-tyred axle.</li> </ul>                      |
| <b>Record of determination</b>       | means a record, in paper or electronic form, that a vehicle or specific aspect of a vehicle complies or does not comply with applicable requirements. If the specific aspect of the vehicle complies, this is to be shown on an LT400. The results of inspections before the aspect complies are recorded on the Procedure documentation sheet. |
| <b>Re-enter service</b>              | in relation to a vehicle previously certified for entry means to begin to be operated in-service again.   |
| <b>Registered</b>                    | in relation to a vehicle, means registered under the <a href="#">Land Transport Act 1998</a> .  |

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| <b>Registration number</b>                     | means the combination of numbers or letters on a registration plate, issued under the <a href="#">Land Transport Act 1998</a> , for use on a registration plate.   |
| <b>Repair</b>                                  | in relation to a vehicle, means to restore a damaged or worn vehicle, its structure, systems, components or equipment, and includes the replacement of damaged or worn structures, systems, components and equipment with equivalent undamaged or new structures, systems, components and equipment. |
| <b>Rigid tow-pole</b>                          | means an inflexible bar with a coupling at each end that can be connected to the coupling fitted to the rear of a vehicle recovery service vehicle and to the coupling fitted to the front of a vehicle to be recovered without lifting that vehicle.  |
| <b>Rule</b>                                    | means the <a href="#">Land Transport Rule Vehicle Standards Compliance 2002</a> and its amendments.  |
| <b>Safe tolerance</b>                          | means the tolerance within which the safe performance of the vehicle, its structure, systems, components or equipment is not compromised, having regard to any manufacturer's operating limits.  |
| <b>Semi-trailer</b>                            | means a trailer, with only one axle set, that is partially superimposed on the towing vehicle so that a substantial part of the trailer and its load is borne by the towing vehicle.   |
| <b>Sideboard</b>                               | means the substantially vertical part of the side of a flat-deck body of a vehicle.  |
| <b>Single-axle set</b>                         | means either one axle or two axles having their centres spaced less than 1m apart.   |
| <b>Skid plate</b>                              | means the plate structure forming part of the semi-trailer that houses the kingpin and that mounts on the coupler plate to form the connection between the towing vehicle and the semi-trailer.  |
| <b>Specialist inspection and certification</b> | means inspection and certification of a specific aspect of a vehicle.  |
| <b>Special purpose vehicle</b>                 | means a vehicle that is a street sweeper, refuse collector, weed sprayer or road marker.   |
| <b>Statement of compliance</b>                 | means a statement in a format specified by NZTA confirming that a vehicle or component complied with one or more approved vehicle standards when manufactured or modified.   |

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| <b>Statement of Design Compliance</b> | is a document that is drawn up and signed by an authorised HVS engineer certifier which contains the designs, calculations, materials, processes and methods for completing the design so that the finished vehicle or specific aspect will comply with all applicable requirements. |
| <b>Steering axle</b>                  | means the axle of a vehicle where the wheels can turn at an angle to the centreline of the vehicle.  |
| <b>Stinger-lift truck</b>             | means a vehicle recovery service vehicle with an arm that partially lifts the vehicle to be recovered, which is then towed in this position.   |
| <b>Stockcrate</b>                     | means a container designed for transporting livestock, which can be secured to a vehicle.  |
| <b>Stockcrate retention device</b>    | means one or more restraining devices or lashings to facilitate the attachment of the stockcrate to the deck or chassis of a vehicle.  |
| <b>Suspension system</b>              | means a system that allows controlled and limited movement of an axle relative to the chassis or body of a vehicle; includes a spring and damping system and any associated controls.  |
| <b>Tailboard</b>                      | means the substantially vertical part of the rear end of a flat-deck or curtain-sided body of a vehicle.   |
| <b>Tandem-axle set</b>                | means an axle set comprising two axles having their centres spaced not less than 1m and not more than 2m apart.  |
| <b>Three-point linkage</b>            | means, for a tractor or agricultural trailer, a towing connection that has three points of attachment.   |
| <b>Towbar</b>                         | means the part of the towing vehicle to which a coupling for a light trailer is connected.   |
| <b>Towing connection</b>              | means the combination of components that enables one vehicle to tow or be towed by another vehicle; includes a towbar, drawbar, drawbeam and coupling.   |
| <b>Traction engine</b>                | has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the <a href="#">Land Transport Act 1998</a>   |
| <b>Tractor</b>                        | means a motor vehicle (other than a traction engine) constructed principally for towing an agricultural trailer or powering agricultural implements.   |

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| <b>Trailer</b>                       | <p>means a vehicle without motive power that is capable of being drawn or propelled by a motor vehicle from which it is readily detachable, but does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a sidecar attached to a motorcycle, or</li> <li>b) a vehicle normally propelled by mechanical power while it is being temporarily towed without the use of its own power.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Transmission</b>                  | <p>in relation to a motor vehicle, means the gearing system and related components, including a driveshaft, by which power is transmitted from the flywheel or the engine output shaft to the input shafts of the powered axles.</p>   |
| <b>Transporter</b>                   | <p>in relation to a vehicle recovery service vehicle, means a vehicle equipped with a tray body that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) can move back and be tilted so that the rear end of the tray rests on the ground, or</li> <li>b) remains fixed and onto which the vehicle to be recovered is moved up ramps or lifted.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Tri-axle set</b>                  | <p>means a set of three axles, where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the centre of the first and third axles are spaced not less than 2m and not more than 3m apart, and</li> <li>b) all axles contain an equal number of tyres, and</li> <li>c) none of the axles is a single standard-tyred axle.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Twin-steer axle set</b>           | <p>means a tandem-axle set with single tyres, where both axles are connected to the same mechanism in order to steer similarly.</p>  |
| <b>Two-point linkage</b>             | <p>means, for an agricultural trailer, a towing connection that has two points of attachment.</p>  |
| <b>UN/ECE</b>                        | <p>is an abbreviation for a regulation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.</p>   |
| <b>Unladen mass</b>                  | <p>in relation to a vehicle, means the mass of the vehicle together with the fuel in its fuel system (if any) and the equipment and accessories on it that are necessary for its operation for the purpose for which it was designed.</p>  |
| <b>Vehicle identification number</b> | <p>means a group of letters and numbers consisting of 17 characters that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) is affixed to a vehicle in accordance with the relevant standard prescribed under the <a href="#">Land Transport Rule Vehicle Standards Compliance 2002</a>, and</li> <li>b) is capable of being decoded to provide identifying information about that vehicle.</li> </ul>   |

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| <b>Vehicle inspector</b>                      | means an individual appointed under section 2.2 of the Rule to carry out inspection and certification activities.   |
| <b>Vehicle standard</b>                       | means a technical specification with which a vehicle component or system must comply, and which is adopted by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the New Zealand Standards Council, or</li> <li>b) any international, national or regional organisation with functions similar to the New Zealand Standards Council.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Vehicle recovery service vehicle</b>       | means a vehicle used in a vehicle recovery service for towing or transporting on a road any motor vehicle; does not include a vehicle that is not designed or adapted for the purpose of towing or carrying motor vehicles.   |
| <b>Waka Kotahi, NZ Transport Agency, NZTA</b> | New Zealand Transport Agency established by section 93 of the Land Transport Management Act 2003.   |