



GUIDING  
LIFE'S  
JOURNEYS  
FOR OVER  
110 YEARS.

New Zealand  
Automobile  
Association



# AA Election Calls **2020**



*Better, safer, cleaner transport*

The AA wants  
New Zealand's next  
Government to  
**deliver 12 significant  
changes** that will  
make transport better,  
safer and greener.





Whether it's someone visiting their family, going to work, buying their groceries, moving freight or heading to the coast for a holiday – transport is the link that lets us do more or less in our lives.

The years ahead are going to be challenging ones for New Zealand and the rest of the world as we navigate not just a global pandemic's impact but other major issues around our future environment and economy, while trying to maintain the lifestyle and choices that New Zealanders want.

The changes we are calling for are based on a combination of our regular surveys of our Members' views, the thinking of our 17 AA District Councils around the country, and analysis from our policy team and specialist staff. These have been brought together to identify 12 calls that would mean fewer deaths and injuries on the roads, less environmental harm from driving, less time wasted in congestion, and more enjoyable travel.

With more than 1 million Personal Members, there will always be diverse views on any issue among our membership, as there is in the wider community. But these calls reflect areas of strong common ground and support, as well as being realistic and achievable actions that are possible for the authorities to deliver.

The AA is calling on the next Government to commit to these calls to meaningfully improve New Zealand's transport both now and into the future.

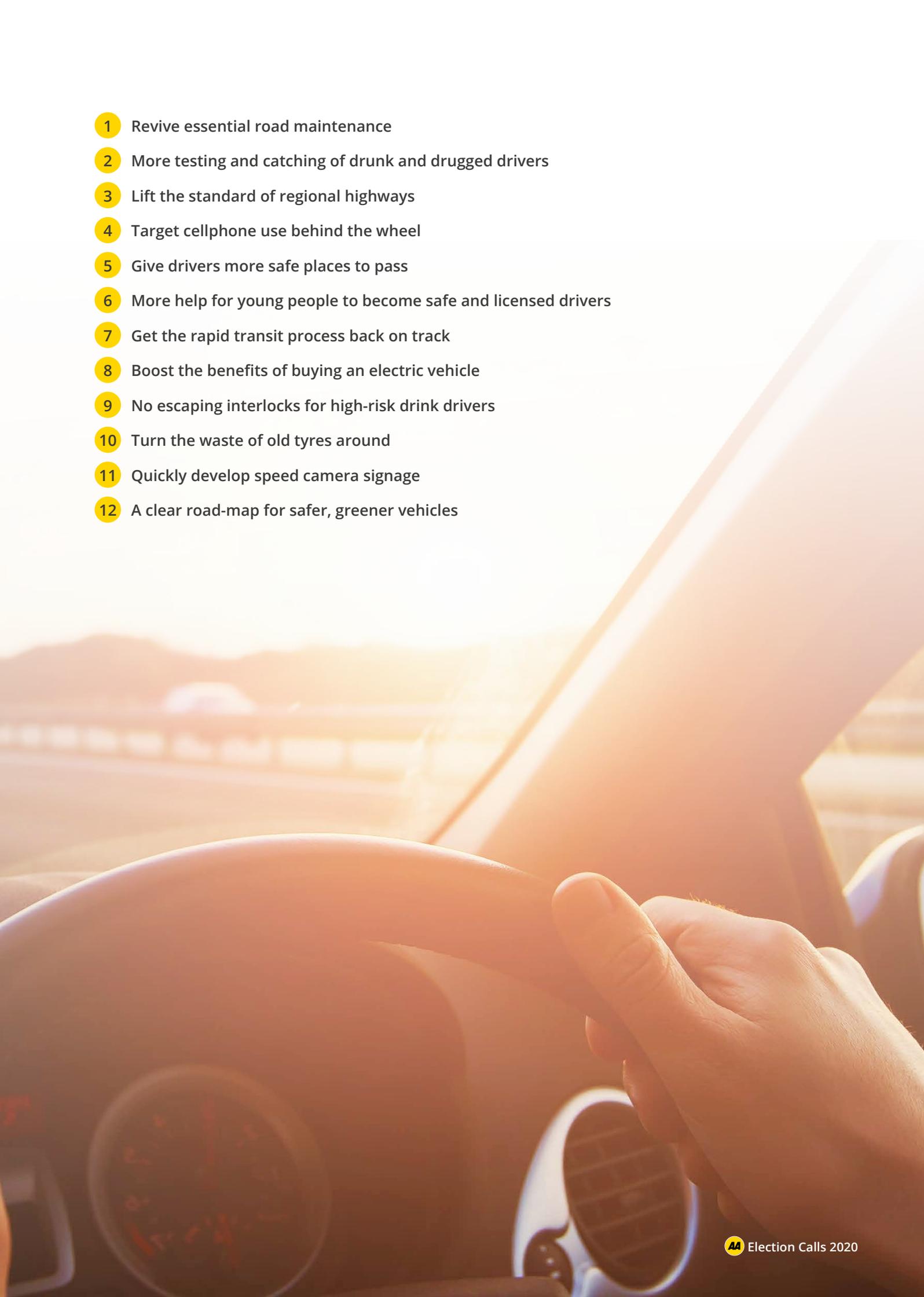


With  
**1 million+**  
Personal Members the  
AA aims to be a voice  
for the reasonable  
motorist



# **12 ways the Government can make transport better**



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- A close-up photograph of a person's hand resting on a steering wheel. The scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of a sunset or sunrise, with a blurred highway and hills in the background. The image has a soft, hazy quality with lens flare effects.
- 1 Revive essential road maintenance
  - 2 More testing and catching of drunk and drugged drivers
  - 3 Lift the standard of regional highways
  - 4 Target cellphone use behind the wheel
  - 5 Give drivers more safe places to pass
  - 6 More help for young people to become safe and licensed drivers
  - 7 Get the rapid transit process back on track
  - 8 Boost the benefits of buying an electric vehicle
  - 9 No escaping interlocks for high-risk drink drivers
  - 10 Turn the waste of old tyres around
  - 11 Quickly develop speed camera signage
  - 12 A clear road-map for safer, greener vehicles

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# Reviving essential road maintenance



## THE PROBLEM

Over much of the last decade our roads have not had the maintenance they need to stay safe and fit for purpose.

Road quality is one of the highest concerns across our districts nationwide and the evidence is clear: the quality of the road surface has a real impact on safety. Drivers continue to pay increasingly more through fuel taxes and Road User Charges, yet have growing dissatisfaction about the quality of road surfaces and frequency of repair work. While there has been a welcome increase in road maintenance investment in recent years there are further safety

gains to be had from lifting the level of funding higher – especially with the amount of vehicle kilometres travelled having increased 20% in the last decade.



## THE CALL

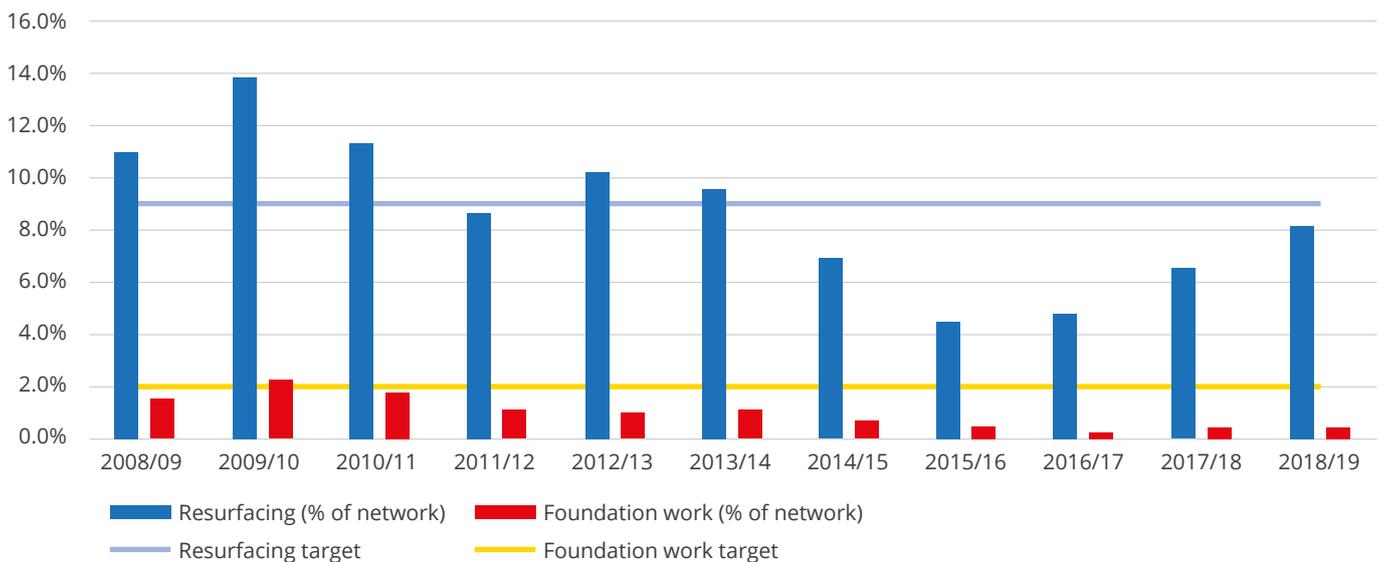
Funding for road maintenance needs to increase by more than \$300m p.a for the next three years, with the bulk needing to go into work on state highways. Even the best drivers risk losing control if the road surface they are driving on doesn't provide vehicles with good grip and control.



**OUR MEMBERS' TWO BIGGEST CONCERNS AROUND ROAD MAINTENANCE ARE**



**Road resurfacing and pavement replacement**



# More testing to catch drunk and drugged drivers



## THE PROBLEM

About 1 in 3 fatal crashes involve drunk or drugged drivers and there has been little progress made reducing these numbers in recent years. Large-scale testing of drivers for alcohol or drugs is a critical element in catching and deterring people from getting behind the wheel when they are impaired, and New Zealand is not where it needs to be in this area. The number of alcohol tests being conducted has dropped from 3 million in 2013 to less than 2 million in recent years while it is still unclear when drug testing will be introduced on our roads.



## THE CALL

The new roadside drug testing regime needs to be introduced as soon as possible by Police and alcohol testing numbers need to return to their previous high levels.



56%  
fewer annual alcohol  
tests than in 2013



# Lifting the standard of regional highways



## THE PROBLEM

Many of the highways that are key regional connections are not up to the standard they should be. Improving our existing road network is the number one action that our Members want to see from the next Government but much of the upgrades and safety work planned in recent years has struggled to be delivered. The Road To Zero road safety strategy for the upcoming decade states that there will be greater investment in road improvements and the AA wants to ensure that a substantial share of this lifts the quality of regional roads.



## THE CALL

The AA wants to see clear and concrete plans for upgrading regional roads produced and then delivered on by authorities as part of the Road To Zero programme. These works need to take a route treatment approach of upgrading entire roading corridors to a quality that fits the use and purpose of the road and ensures safe and fast travel on key regional links.

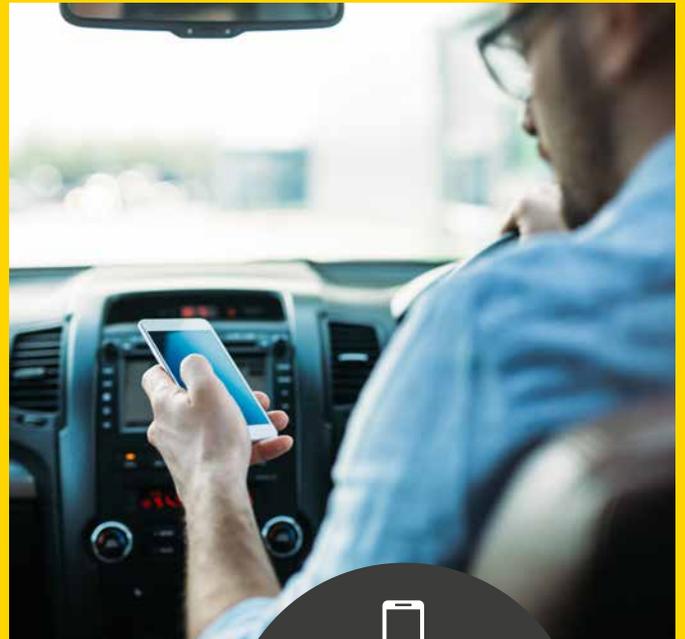
# Target cellphone use behind the wheel



## THE PROBLEM

Far too many people are using phones when they are driving and putting themselves and others at completely unnecessary risk. The largest study done in New Zealand indicated about 1 in 40 drivers at any time will be on a phone.

Using a phone while driving is not something that can be done by mistake. People have to deliberately choose to do it and the more drivers on the roads that are distracted by phones, the greater the risks that one will have something unexpected happen in front of them and be too slow to react. There is also a danger that high numbers of drivers getting away with using their phone normalises the behaviour and encourages others to do it.



**1 in 40**

drivers at any time  
will be on a phone

## THE CALL



Reducing cellphone use by drivers needs to be made an urgent road safety priority by the authorities. A coordinated plan and package of actions is required to change people's behaviour – combining better detection, effective penalties, awareness campaigns and technology solutions.

# Give drivers more safe places to pass



## THE PROBLEM

Many of our highways have long stretches where the only opportunity to pass a slower vehicle requires overtaking on the other side of the road. This can lead to situations where people attempt to overtake in risky locations, frustrations for those wanting to pass and pressure for those travelling slowly. So it is no surprise that a Member survey found 79% supported increasing the number of passing lanes in New Zealand.

Adding a substantial amount of median barriers to our highways is an essential part of the country's road safety goals for the next decade and by combining many of these with passing lanes we can achieve a win-win of better safety in a way that is welcomed by the public and improves the driving experience.



## THE CALL

Projects to add median barriers to highways should be combined with passing opportunities or space for slower/stopped vehicles to be out of the main traffic flow wherever practicable. Standards for minimum levels of safe passing opportunities (including passing lanes and/or slow vehicle or stopping bays) need to be developed. Work should be prioritised to upgrade highways with few passing opportunities and high volumes of traffic.

# More help for young people to become safe and licensed drivers



## THE PROBLEM

A substantial number of young people are driving without the proper licence. They might not have a licence at all, or they got a learner or restricted licence but then never went on to the next steps. This means that not only have they not been tested and shown they are a competent driver to be on our roads, but not having a licence can also void insurance policies, limit employment opportunities and clog the justice system. Driving without a proper licence is one of the most common offences for young people, and can snowball into unpaid fines and further charges with long-term consequences. There are multiple groups providing targeted training and assistance in this

space in different communities but the challenge is to scale-up the reach and consistency of the work to reach more of the young people that need it.



## THE CALL

The Government needs to fund a large-scale, nationwide programme to help young people that would otherwise struggle to obtain a driver's licence and learn to drive safely. This has even more relevance in the economic recovery from Covid-19, as young people are likely to suffer the worst impact in terms of employment and having a driver's licence is crucial for many jobs.



# Get the rapid transit process back on track



## THE PROBLEM

Our Members in New Zealand's main cities are desperate for high-quality public transport options, but they are not seeing results. With rapid transit in Auckland, the Government has pursued a completely different approach to funding and building big infrastructure, in the hope of delivering a project with larger scale and broader impacts. But all this has led to is the programme stalling badly.

## THE CALL



To get rapid transit back on track the Government needs to go back to the standard model for delivering major transport projects. That means Waka Kotahi-NZTA at the helm, making key project decisions based on value for money, and local government playing its role.

It also means the public being given clear information on project objectives, benefits and costs, and the opportunity to have a say before decisions are made.

# Boost the benefits of buying an electric vehicle



## THE PROBLEM

The numbers of electric vehicles (EVs) on the road in New Zealand is not increasing as quickly as many would like. Currently there are just over 20,000 EVs in the country compared to 3.3m cars with internal combustion engines.

EVs will play a part in our country reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the future but many of the current options come with a high price tag.



## THE CALL

Introduce incentives for businesses and Government fleet operators to purchase electric vehicles by providing meaningful financial benefits. The Government needs to consider options like tax concessions, accelerated depreciation rates or other financial benefits that will work best to encourage organisations to purchase EVs. This will lead on to more used vehicles becoming available for purchase by individual motorists in the future as businesses replace their fleet.



New Zealand currently has  
**3.3 million**  
cars with internal combustion engines

Compared to  
**21,000**  
EV's – less than 1% of the fleet

# No high-risk drunk drivers avoiding an interlock



## THE PROBLEM

While alcohol interlocks are incredibly effective at reducing drink driving and now a mandatory sentence for high-risk offenders, many individuals are still avoiding them in court. The AA Research Foundation found that only 52% of eligible offenders were being sentenced to one in court and less than half of those sentenced were going on to get a device installed. This means that they have more chance of driving drunk again and putting lives at risk. It is also likely to result in a growing cluster of permanently disqualified drivers that may add additional burden to the court system as they are unlikely to stay off the roads.



## THE CALL

Alcohol interlock sentences need to be monitored by the authorities to ensure that all the drivers who receive one actually comply and get a device installed in their vehicle. The range of agencies and organisations involved in interlocks need to have access to a shared database that quickly shows if someone is not complying with their sentence so this can be followed-up.



Only

50%

of people sentenced are currently getting an interlock installed



# Turning the waste of old tyres around



## THE PROBLEM

More than 7 million tyres reach the end of their life in New Zealand each year and too many of them end up being disposed of in environmentally harmful ways like buried in landfill or burnt. The Government recently announced plans to develop a scheme to reduce tyre waste and we need to ensure this succeeds in genuinely turning the waste around. A Member survey in early 2020 found better disposal of tyres was the most popular environmental initiative with 90% support.



## THE CALL

New Zealand needs to introduce a tyre stewardship scheme that delivers significant real-world waste reductions in line with the recommendations of the Tyrewise working group. This would ensure a levy on all tyres when they are imported that is used to fund greener ways of dealing with them at the end of their driving life.



7+ million

Approx. number of tyres  
New Zealand drivers replace  
each year

# Quickly developing appropriate speed camera signage



## THE PROBLEM

The current approach to using fixed speed cameras in New Zealand is perceived by some of the public as being motivated more by revenue gathering than safety. Used well, speed cameras can play an important role at helping ensure safe speeds in high-crash areas. One of the actions in the Government's new Tackling Unsafe Speeds programme is a "no surprises, highly visible" approach to speed cameras which commits to them being well sign-posted. What must now happen is for this approach to be put into action on the roads.



## THE CALL

Warning signs need to be rapidly installed at all fixed speed camera sites, like those used in other countries. Publicly available information reviewing camera sites should be regularly released to show whether they are succeeding in reducing speeds. At sites where, even with the sign and camera a large number of tickets continue to be issued, other measures to slow traffic need to be considered.



# A clear road-map for safer, greener vehicles



1 in 5  
light vehicles in  
New Zealand are  
20+ years old



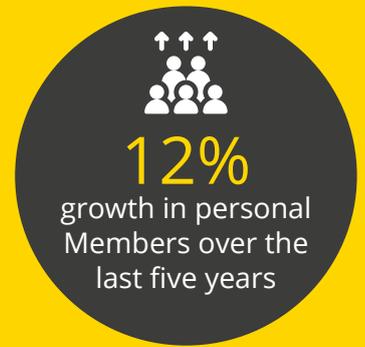
## THE PROBLEM

The aim of improving the quality of New Zealand's vehicle fleet has been talked about for years with little progress or planning of how to achieve it. Nearly 1 in 5 light vehicles in New Zealand are 20+ years old and this has implications for occupant safety and the environment. Just because a car is older does not automatically make it unsafe or worse-polluting, but in general terms newer vehicles will offer more protection from crashes and produce less harmful emissions. Upgrading our fleet is a complex and difficult challenge, needing a coordinated plan between Government and the industry to maximise the potential benefits.



## THE CALL

A realistic and unified action plan for improving New Zealand's vehicle fleet needs to be developed between Government and industry for this decade and beyond. This needs to agree clear timelines and steps for getting more people into safer and less-polluting vehicles. It should set ambitious but deliverable short and long-term targets, looking at all available tools like scrappage systems, import standards and incentive schemes.



# Our Members and how we survey

## KEY MEMBER STATS

**54%** female / **46%** male

**48%** under the age of 55

**34%** consider themselves an environmentalist

**13%** consider themselves a cyclist

**10%** regularly use public transport

**17%** of Members have children in their care

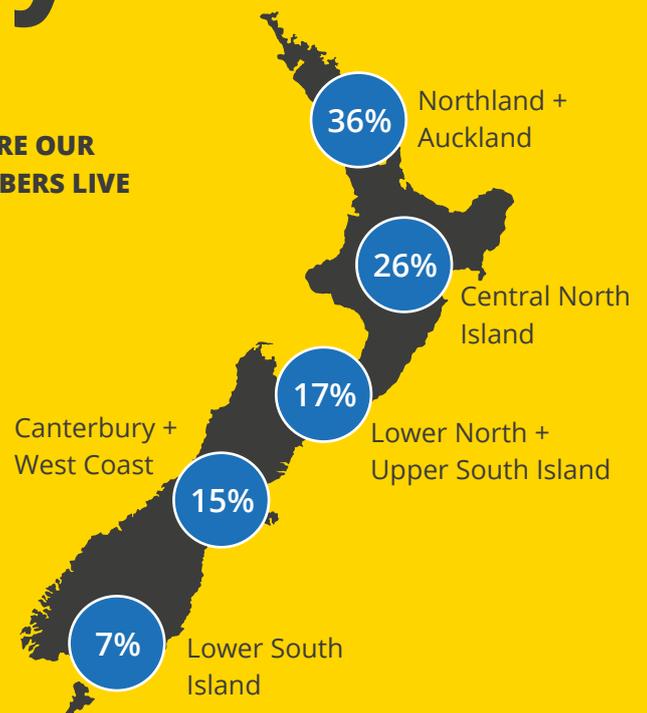
**\$62** per week is their average fuel bill

Our 1 million+ personal Members come from every part of the country and right across New Zealand society – from teenagers learning to drive to Members who have been with the AA for more than 60 years.

Slightly more women than men are Members and we have hundreds of thousands of Members who, as well as being car drivers, also use public transport, bicycles and motorcycles.

Our Members tend to be slightly older and more well off than the general population but because we have such a large number and range of Members our surveys give a good indication of what many New Zealanders think about transport issues. If there is strong support for something among AA Members it will likely be reflected in the wider population as well.

## WHERE OUR MEMBERS LIVE



## HOW WE SURVEY OUR MEMBERS' VIEWS

We generally conduct between 10 to 15 email surveys each year sending invitations to participate to the equivalent of 12% of the personal AA Membership, selected at random. Participation is completely voluntary (as with any survey except the Census) but our sample sizes are in line with those used by professional survey or polling businesses.

Once a survey closes, the data is checked and re-calibrated so that any over-represented groups views are scaled back, and under-represented views scaled up in proportion with our Membership's demographics. Results are sense checked against other surveys and the census. In short, everything possible is done to make sure genuine and accurate views of our Members are captured.



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