

Welcome to the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the NZ Automobile Association Northland Council. It is with pleasure I bring to you my report as Chair for the 2024-25 year.

We had a fantastic start to the year with the Council being presented the District of the Year Award, at the Napier Conference. This reward recognises the advocacy work we have undertaken on behalf of our members and the building of relationships with media and stakeholders.

Our continual focus is on having **safe and efficient transport infrastructure** for Northland. With the announcement of the Northern Corridor in the Roads of National Significance and political support across the spectrum this significant roading project is well underway.

Submissions the council undertook this year included, the four council's long term plans on a regional approach to delivering joined up services for roading and transportation in Northland; submitting on the urgent need to replace the Brynderwyn SH1 route and the importance of community funding for road safety delivery to the Government Policy Statement; and with the Regional Long Term Plan, highlighting the need for well maintained, resilient and safe roading infrastructure. Thank you to Cr Westgate for his work researching and drafting our submissions and the circulation of NZTA information.

Ellie Ball continues her great work in keeping track of our meetings for the minutes. Ursula Reichel, Northland District Manager, is the calm ever efficient council administrator, her contribution to our council discussions is valued, and her work in educating the community on AA services and older driver relicensing is very much appreciated.

Cr Johnston led the amazing Whangarei A&P Road Safety Stand, Trade Stand of the Show, which highlighted the Restraint, Impairment, Distraction, Speed, components of road safety. A collaborative approach with key agencies involved. Cr Court continues to bring opportunities for our council to work with stakeholders with her network and deep knowledge of northland transport infrastructure. Including invites to Government Minister and the Northland Corporate Group forums.

Cr Williamson led the discussion on relicensing of older drivers for our council and with the Transport Policy and Advocacy team. His published fortnightly articles continue to keep the public aware of roading matters. The Northland driver licensing pilot in the Far North continues to result in high pass rates for restricted and full licences, with a total of 3,704 tests passed since June 2022. Safer and confident drivers do lead to a safer driving environment. Cr Waitohi's work with this project is much appreciated.

Cr Keswick was co opted on in April. Cr Keswick brings to the council practical and current knowledge of the civil contracting environment and has been impressive with her enthusiasm and can-do attitude. Thank you, Cr Keswick, it has been a pleasure having you join our council and have you represented Northland at the Young Councillors group. Cr Winger continues his role as NZAA President, we recognise the impact on his capacity to join our meetings and appreciate his ongoing involvement with Northland and responses to emails.

Cr Lambeth brings to the table his Kaipara hat, recent work on the changes on SH14 an example of this community's concerns. Updates from a Whangarei District perspective are welcome from Cr Cocurullo, with the continual commerce commission focus on high fuel prices representative of the impact his advocacy, supported by the council, has for our members.

A thank you to Cr Johnston for her support as vice chair this year; ably arranging our guest speakers and working on the agendas. Congratulations as well for her appointment as a trustee of the AA Research Foundation.

It has been an honour to represent Northland as a National Councillor at NZAA. With such a great group of councillors doing fantastic advocacy work there has been no shortage of opportunities to promote our district. And bring on 2028 when we will be hosting the national conference (fingers crossed).

The council's annual award nomination to NZAA continues to support the many areas we have covered, had success with, and continue to advocate for. New initiatives this year are providing increased opportunities to advocate for our members through invites to NorthChamber forums and Regional Transport Council workshops.

Tracey Risetto

Chair NZAA Northland Council

18th February 2025