

## Passenger rail networks in the regions

<b>Reason for this briefing</b>	This briefing responds to your request for advice, on options for regional rail, including trialling or encouraging passenger networks in the regions.
<b>Action required</b>	Discuss the Government's objectives for regional rail with officials.  Share this briefing with the Associate Minister of Transport, Hon Shane Jones.
<b>Deadline</b>	N/A
<b>Reason for deadline</b>	N/A

### Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone	First contact
Bryn Gandy	Deputy Chief Executive Strategy and Investment	[REDACTED]	
Erin Wynne	Manager, Rail & Freight	[REDACTED]	
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Withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982

### MINISTER'S COMMENTS:

<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, 8 November 2017	<b>Briefing number:</b>	OC05383
<b>Attention:</b>	Hon Phil Twyford (Minister of Transport)	<b>Security level:</b>	In-Confidence

### Minister of Transport's office actions

- |                                       |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noted        | <input type="checkbox"/> Seen                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change | <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn    | <input type="checkbox"/> Not seen by Minister | <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events |

## **Purpose**

1. This briefing focuses on regional passenger rail, and includes advice from KiwiRail on the routes that could be considered further to trial and encourage regional passenger rail services. We would like to initially explore with you the Government's objectives for regional rail in order to develop an investment assessment framework to inform future decisions.
2. This paper does not cover regional rail freight. This could be the subject of a further briefing, if requested.
3. We draw on projects and policies outlined in coalition agreements and Government commitments and priorities (see Appendix 1).
4. For the purposes of this briefing, we refer to regional passenger rail services as those services that cut across regional boundaries in New Zealand. We have not included information on metropolitan commuter rail services that currently operate within the cities of Auckland and Wellington. We are planning to provide you with a briefing on metropolitan rail at the end of November 2017.
5. We note that the KiwiRail Chairman, Trevor Janes, has provided you with a document outlining the Board's free and frank views on a number of strategic issues and opportunities facing KiwiRail. Many of these issues and opportunities relate to regional rail, and we have drawn on that material to outline initial options for you to consider.

## **Regional passenger rail services in New Zealand**

6. Historically, many of the regional rail passenger services that have previously operated in New Zealand have not been commercially viable. For passengers who wish to travel longer distances, air travel and road transport (including buses and coaches) have largely replaced rail as the favoured, more economical, and faster means of travel in New Zealand.
7. One difference between New Zealand and countries where regional passenger rail is commercially viable is population density. As New Zealand's urban centres tend to be smaller and further apart than those in other countries, the demand required for the commercial viability of inter-regional passenger rail along many routes, has been limited to date.
8. Over the past decade, and outside of KiwiRail's commercial role, councils have initiated investigations into regional passenger rail services. To date, central government has not taken an active role.
9. Regional passenger rail services presently receive no central government subsidy. The previous Government did not subsidise regional passenger rail services on the basis that there are no barriers to the establishment of new inter-regional passenger services on a commercial basis. Where regional passenger rail services are not commercial, other relevant public bodies, such as councils have been encouraged to use their own funding for such services, partly on the basis that the services would benefit those communities.

10. If the Government decided to subsidise regional passenger rail services, there are multiple potential sources of funding that could be utilised. These funding sources include:
- direct Crown funding
  - the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF), by sending signals in the Government Policy Statement on land transport (GPS)
  - the Regional Development (Provincial Growth) Fund.
11. Rail has high fixed costs and it is likely that a subsidy would be required for the introduction of new regional passenger rail services in New Zealand. Existing inter-regional bus and air services currently operate commercially and without subsidy. If a subsidy is provided for the provision of regional passenger rail services, there are potential competition issues to consider.

### **Existing regional passenger rail services in New Zealand**

#### *Regional passenger commuter rail services currently in operation*

12. The Capital Connection is the only inter-regional commuter rail service in New Zealand.
13. The Capital Connection is a weekday return service between Palmerston North and Wellington, and is the only long-distance commuter train that crosses a regional boundary in New Zealand.
14. KiwiRail and its predecessors commercially operated the Capital Connection prior to July 2015. However, declining financial performance and increased maintenance expenditure have required joint funding support from Horizons Regional Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council since that time. The Capital Connection is discussed later in this paper.

#### *Regional tourist passenger rail services currently in operation*

15. Under KiwiRail's commercial mandate, KiwiRail operates long-distance passenger rail services, where they are commercially viable. There are currently three such passenger rail services in New Zealand, operating as the Great Journeys of New Zealand. These services operate along the following three routes:
- 15.1. Picton – Christchurch (Coastal Pacific)<sup>1</sup>
  - 15.2. Christchurch – Greymouth (TranzAlpine)
  - 15.3. Auckland – Wellington (Northern Explorer).
16. To date, long-distance passenger services in New Zealand have been successful when they have concentrated on providing a unique travel experience rather than an alternative to road or air travel. The international tourist market largely drives demand for these services.
17. KiwiRail is actively targeting strategic partnerships with other tourism operators to support and enable the growing demand for its Great Journeys services, and has adopted a connected journey strategy to encourage tourists to explore out-of-the-way destinations.
18. KiwiRail continues to look for new passenger markets where they are commercially viable.

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<sup>1</sup> The Coastal Pacific service is currently suspended due to the Kaikoura earthquake with service expected to recommence in mid-2018.

## Potential benefits of regional passenger rail services

19. In our briefing to you, *Advice on how rail can contribute to the Government's objectives for transport* (OC05382 refers), we noted some characteristics of land transport and its contribution to regional New Zealand.
20. In relation to regional passenger rail, we have identified some specific potential benefits that provide a justification for investment in regional passenger rail services. Some of these benefits are outlined below.
  - 20.1. Tourism generating regional economic benefits – for example, the economic benefits of regional passenger services are felt in smaller towns like Greymouth, where businesses like hotels, restaurants, gift/souvenir shops, and car hire companies rely on the businesses that train passengers bring to the region. West Coast Tourism estimates that the TranzAlpine brings in excess of \$15 million per annum to the region.
  - 20.2. Connectivity and accessibility for residents living along the corridor and at each end of the corridor, particularly those with limited access to private vehicles such as the young and the elderly, by connecting them with employment, educational and other opportunities and services.
  - 20.3. Better transport system capacity, by providing a transport alternative that reduces vehicle numbers and congestion (with associated road travel time reliability and safety benefits).
  - 20.4. Better transport system resilience, by providing a separate route from the road system.
  - 20.5. Expanding the public transport system to support new housing and inter-regional commuting.
  - 20.6. Better productivity, by providing a work-in-travel option.
21. Like with any investment appraisal, the benefits should be weighed against the costs of achieving them. An initiative that is expensive compared with modest benefits may not achieve the outcomes the Government is seeking.

### *Challenges that need to be addressed*

22. While there are potential benefits of regional passenger rail services, there are also significant challenges that need to be worked through. Some of these challenges are outlined below:
  - 22.1. There is no Government funding policy for regional passenger rail services and no subsidy is currently available. Should the Government want to extend funding to inter-regional passenger rail services, a clear policy around eligibility needs to be developed.
  - 22.2. Inter-regional passenger rail services would be operating on the same line as freight services, which operate at a slower speed. This means that either the passenger service would be caught in slow traffic, or KiwiRail would need to develop a solution that would enable trains to pass each other; operate on separate rail lines; or align

freight and passenger locomotive fleet timetables or speeds. There are many complex operational issues to consider.

- 22.3. Work would need to be undertaken on the rail network infrastructure, to get it to a standard to allow passenger trains to operate safely at appropriate speeds.
- 22.4. There are other related infrastructure investments that would need to be made, for example, stations and passenger service infrastructure, road-rail crossings, signalling, and electronic rail safety systems.
- 22.5. There are safety regulatory requirements. To run a passenger rail service requires a rail licence and an agreed rail safety case. The New Zealand Transport Agency is the regulator for rail safety.

### **Progressing Government regional rail priorities**

23. We would like to clarify with you the Government's objectives for regional rail. We could then provide advice on an investment assessment framework. To support these objectives the framework would set out:
  - 23.1. the outcomes and priorities the Government wants to achieve
  - 23.2. the Government's objectives for regional rail
  - 23.3. the assessment and investment criteria for regional passenger routes
  - 23.4. the funding options available
  - 23.5. optimal timing and phasing of key priorities.
24. We will undertake work on funding rail through the GPS over the next few months, as discussed with you.

### **Regional Development (Provincial Growth) Fund**

25. We are also interested in exploring with you funding for regional rail projects in light of the Regional Development (Provincial Growth) Fund.
26. It will be important to ensure that the design of the Regional Development Fund aligns with the Government's priorities for land transport investment, and its objectives for regional rail.
27. We are working with Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to shape the objectives of the fund, possible eligibility and assessment criteria, decision-making rights, process for determining regional support, and the sources of funding. Consideration of the relationship between the GPS strategic direction and other funding mechanisms (e.g. NLTF, Crown funding) will be critical.

### **Options and opportunities for encouraging and trialling passenger networks in the regions**

28. The following sections provide advice on potential options and opportunities for encouraging and trialling passenger networks in the regions.
29. Should you agree with our suggested approach, we would assess the priorities for regional rail in line with the Government's objectives and report back to you on the routes outlined below including funding, timing and other implications. It will be important that business cases, including robust cost benefit analysis, underpin any decisions.

30. We asked KiwiRail to provide advice on the technical issues surrounding the introduction of regional passenger rail services on various routes. We incorporate KiwiRail's advice in the sections below.
31. We did not ask KiwiRail for its opinion on whether there are commercial prospects for the concepts. Its comments are limited to the observation that none of the concepts would offer stand-alone commercial prospects, but some offer greater externality benefits than others.
32. The routes KiwiRail has identified are:
- Auckland – Hamilton
  - Helensville / Kumeu – Auckland<sup>2</sup>
  - Tauranga – Hamilton – Auckland
  - Rotorua – Auckland
  - North of Whangarei – Auckland
  - Palmerston North – Wellington
  - Wairarapa – Wellington<sup>3</sup>
  - Napier – Wellington
  - Christchurch – Dunedin.
33. We have attached a map of the national rail network as Appendix 2. The map outlines the regions that are currently connected by rail. It also gives a sense of the rail freight volumes travelling along different sections of the network.

#### **Route 1: Auckland to Hamilton**

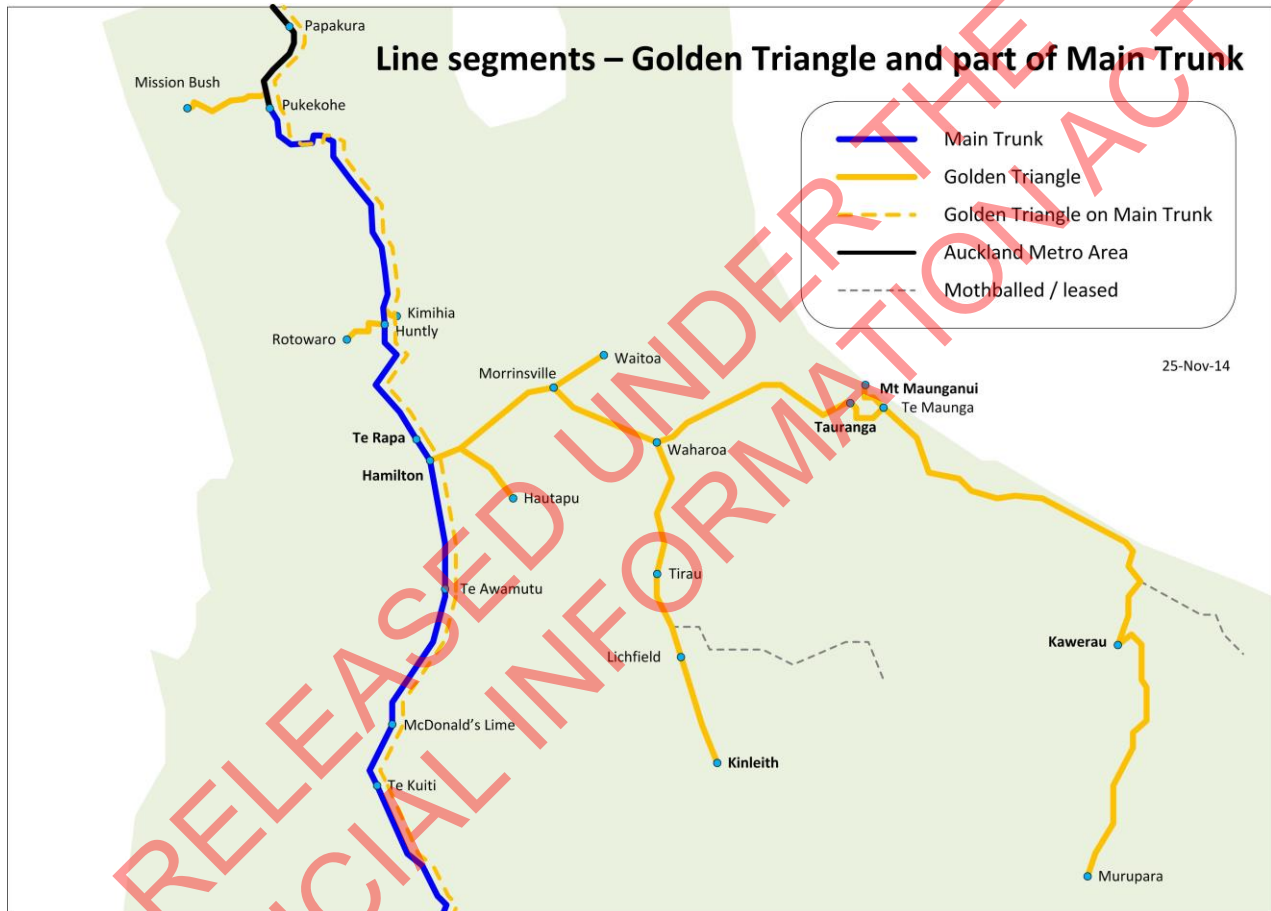
34. The idea of a new commuter rail service between Hamilton and Auckland has been around for some time. An attempt in 2011 to get a service off the ground ultimately was not supported by the partner councils involved. This was due to the likelihood of significant costs for ratepayers to subsidise the service.
35. The idea is receiving increasing attention from local government and advocacy groups in the wider Hamilton area and The Rail Opportunity Network group (TRON) has been active in the media.
36. Auckland Council, Auckland Transport, Waikato Regional Council, Hamilton City Council, Waikato District Council and the New Zealand Transport Agency are looking again at passenger rail service between the two cities.

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<sup>2</sup> This is within Auckland City's regional footprint where metropolitan commuter rail services are operated. It is not a truly regional passenger service in line with how we have defined regional passenger rail earlier in this paper.

<sup>3</sup> This is within Greater Wellington Regional Council's footprint where metropolitan commuter rail services are operated. It is not a truly regional passenger service in line with how we have defined regional passenger rail earlier in this paper.

37. A steering group from the organisations above has been responsible for overseeing the analysis of the previous proposal from 2011 and is looking at current conditions and potential opportunities. The Waikato Regional Council has prepared a new report to the agencies involved.
38. We understand that both Auckland Council and Waikato Regional Council have supported the development of a new strategic business case. KiwiRail is providing input into this piece of work. We understand this work is due for completion in April 2018.
39. The map below outlines the rail lines in the golden triangle between Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga.



*KiwiRail's advice on the quickest and cheapest option to get a service up and running*

40. The quickest and cheapest way to offer a service and test demand would be to introduce a diesel hauled carriage service between Hamilton and Papakura, with commuters at that point switching to the Auckland Transport's metropolitan rail services.
41. The logic for Papakura being the end point is that diesel locomotives cannot go into Britomart because of ventilation and fire prevention issues.
42. KiwiRail has submitted an initial business case to the Ministry of Transport for consideration at Budget 2018, to fund the purchase of additional rolling stock that would be required to support a new commuter service. The Ministry of Transport will be providing you with further advice on Budget 2018 funding bids.

43. There will need to be work done to platforms and Park and Rides. It is clear that Waikato interest groups see a station at the shopping destination "The Base" as being a key part of the service.
44. KiwiRail's view is that it would take around 18 months to bring this option to fruition, with the critical path being:
  - the purchase, then refurbishment of the carriages;
  - (and to the extent it was part of the model), the commercial commitments to fund the operation of such a service.
45. The downsides of this option are that it is an interim model and while the refurbished carriages will provide a comfortable passenger experience, both the carriages and the locomotives are old.

*KiwiRail's advice on the next quickest but more expensive option*

46. The next quickest alternative would be to move to a Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) service which would still have to stop before Britomart but would have the ability to operate more nimbly with the Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) trains in the Auckland Metro Area.
47. KiwiRail has not examined this option in any depth but suggests that if speed of entry was the issue, the procurement process could be either:
  - finding a reasonably comparable narrow gauge example (e.g. Queensland, South Africa) and simply buying new from the same supplier, or
  - limiting procurement to two incumbent suppliers who are the Auckland and Wellington metro rail suppliers respectively.
48. In both scenarios this is likely to be a four year project with the critical path being design process and finding production slots in manufacturers' factories.
49. The unit cost may be high and supplier interest in the project may also be modest, as it is likely to be a small order unless it fits in with another organisation's order, or is part of a New Zealand-wide purchase. The other core downside is that a DMU without an alternative battery or electric supply, cannot enter Britomart unless there is a material upgrade to ventilation and fire prevention works. Significantly, the DMU could under no circumstances traverse the City Rail Link (CRL) tunnel.
50. KiwiRail has not completed any in-depth work on this option, but believes any investigation should look at the capability for short distance battery operations so the fleet could be fully integrated into the Auckland timetable and operate through the CRL.
51. Realistically this is a four to five year timeline.

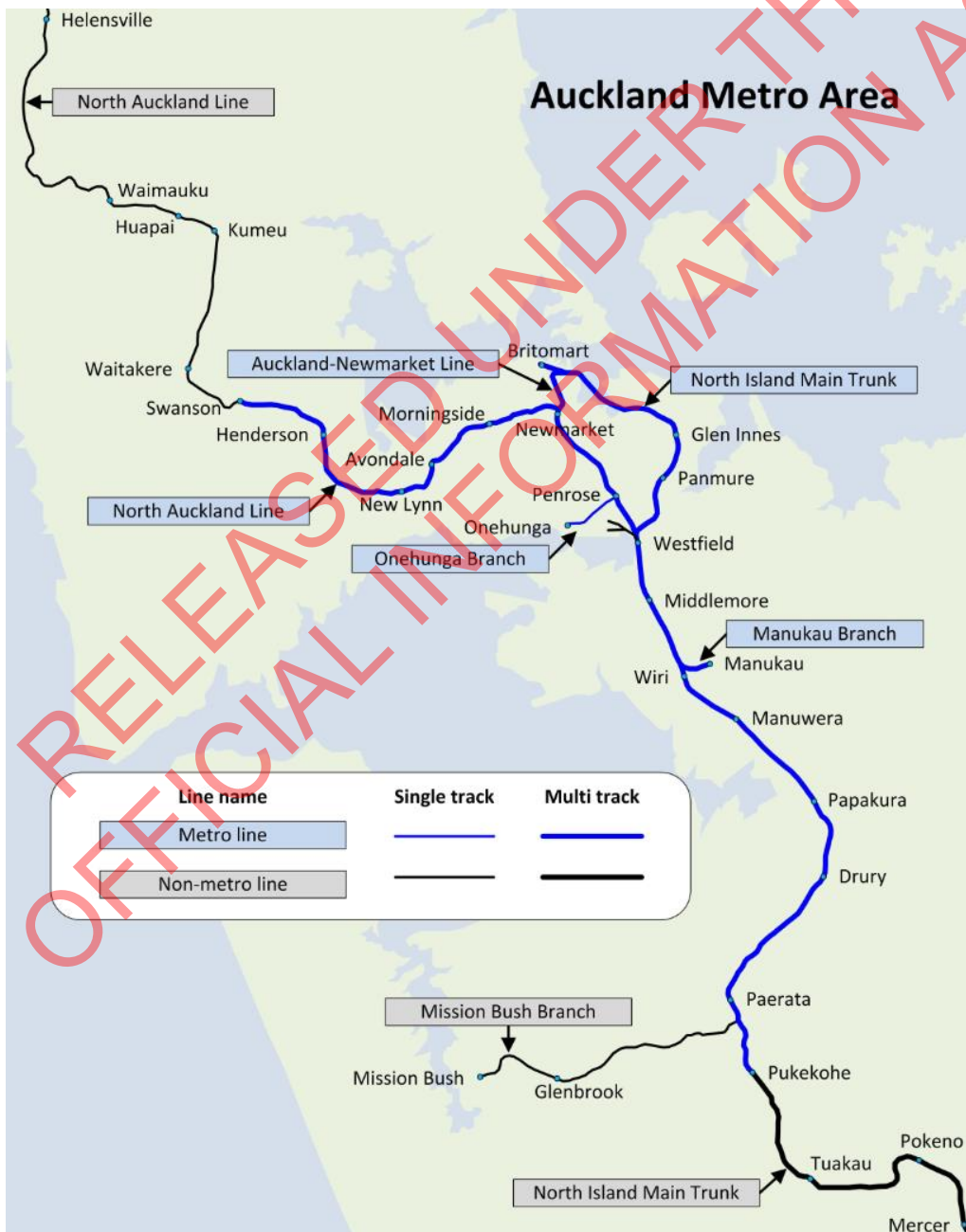
***Alternative approaches south of Auckland***

*Extending Auckland's Metro Network south*

52. KiwiRail has submitted a bid for Budget 2018 to extend the track electrification from Papakura to Pukekohe. The Ministry of Transport will be providing you with further advice on this as part of the Budget 2018 funding bids briefing. The electrification project would be a five-year programme from confirmation of funding (if funding was secured on 1 July 2018), or 4.5 years from that date if \$3-4 million of working capital was available from January 2018 for enabling works.



- 53. Construction of a further extension to Pokeno could overlap with this. KiwiRail has neither costed nor programmed these works but notes that compared to many parts of its network, the terrain is reasonably gentle.
- 54. The advantage of the Pokeno extension is that Pokeno is at the confluence of State highway 1 and State highway 2, meaning both Waikato and Bay of Plenty commuters could move from road to rail at that point. The second advantage is that once on the Auckland Metro trains, commuters can travel to the CBD and ultimately through the CRL.
- 55. The disadvantage of this proposal is timing. If another year is allowed for overlapping these works with Papakura to Pukekohe, there would not be a regional commuter service for six years or more.
- 56. The map below outlines the Auckland Metro Network.



*Further southern extensions*

57. Beyond Pokeno, the journey length would mean commuters would likely expect services such as toilets, potentially some food and beverage, power points and WiFi.
58. It would not be credible to offer the standard Auckland Transport metro commuter train for this service.
59. The question then becomes whether the services are electric or diesel hauled. If the former, the greatest expense would be the extension of the electrified network through to Hamilton and beyond. KiwiRail is happy to provide a separate briefing on this topic.
60. In either event, as both freight and passenger traffic grows there will be a need to double track the remaining 15 kilometre section of the North Island Main Trunk (NIMT).

*KiwiRail's view on quickly implementing a Hamilton to Auckland rail service*

61. The only quick way to provide a Hamilton to Auckland passenger rail service is through a refurbishment of the locomotives and Auckland Transport's carriage stock, and beginning the service with one return trip per day.
62. In parallel with that work there should be an investigation into whether a DMU option either with, or without, battery drive is a practical next step. This is supported because the DMU has New Zealand-wide potential and can offer all the features of an extension of the electrified network to Pokeno to pick up State highway 2 traffic without the associated electrification costs.
63. If DMU is not practical, options are to:
- increase the number of diesel hauled services
  - extend electrification to Pokeno.

**Route 2: Helensville/Kumeu to Auckland**

64. In KiwiRail's view the [REDACTED] options are: Withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Official Information Act 1982
- the progressive extension of the Auckland electrified network from Swanson to further north served by the Auckland Transport EMU fleet
  - service by a DMU for a period until the electrification reaches these points.
65. KiwiRail does not recommend trying to have an interim diesel-hauled service in this section.
66. The issues will be timing of introduction with the critical path being:
- availability of rolling stock to serve a credible timetable
  - timing of physical works.
67. Realistically it would be a five to six year programme for extending electrification. This timeframe would be shorter for the DMU option but this faces all the same issues with the CRL that apply to southern services.

### **Route 3: Tauranga to Hamilton to Auckland**

68. KiwiRail has advised in its Briefing to Incoming Ministers (BIM) that it has deep concerns that the level of service the network can offer would lead to a severely compromised passenger service taking around five hours for the journey. This is due to the limitations of the line including single tracking and the volume of freight traffic in and out of Port of Tauranga.
69. KiwiRail's preferred approach is to look at integration of road and rail with interchange points at either:
- Hamilton stations
  - intermediate points in Hamilton North
  - Pokeno, at the intersection of State highway 1 and State highway 2
70. If the Government proceeded with a regional rail service, then the issues that were discussed in the Auckland to Hamilton service would apply noting that:
- the quickest way to enter the market would be with refurbishment of Auckland Transport carriages and locomotives
  - the better medium-term alternative would be the use of DMUs.

### **Route 4: Rotorua to Auckland**

71. If this was treated as a commuter route then the issues surrounding the Tauranga service apply in some part to Rotorua. It would share a portion of the single tracked East Coast Main Trunk line (ECMT), before going onto the Kinleith line, and then branching to Rotorua.
72. As advised in the KiwiRail BIM, the Rotorua branch line itself is in very poor condition with sections of track missing, deteriorating formation, and bridges needing full replacement. It is also challenging territory in terms of its isolation and gradient, and there is no signalling.
73. KiwiRail considers that a prudent opening assumption is that you would need to rebuild large chunks of the corridor from the foundations up. This has neither been costed, nor programmed, but it is clear that there is no cheap or quick way to start a service.
74. A full investigation of the line would be required to provide Ministers with a credible cost estimate. That estimate would also need to consider what capacity you would need on the line which is single track with long sections between passing loops. If it was to become a busy tourism corridor, then simply rebuilding what was there previously may not meet future demand. KiwiRail would not recommend using a diesel hauled service on this route as the grades and curvature are much better suited to a DMU.

### **Route 5: North of Whangarei to Auckland**

75. Currently there is no prospect for the introduction of passenger services given the poor standard of the network on the North Auckland Line. Even if the network was to be upgraded, there is a very limited prospect for commuter services as the journey time would be around double that of a commute by road.
76. If there was to be some form of tourism service, it would need to extend beyond Whangarei into the far north. The network in this segment is in even worse condition and currently suitable only for slow, 25 kilometre per hour, freight movements.

77. KiwiRail has not investigated the costs of bringing that section of the network to passenger standard.

#### **Route 6: Palmerston North to Wellington**

78. The current funding subsidy arrangement for the Capital Connection is due to expire in June 2018, and the service will not continue if public support ceases at that point.
79. A business case assessing the case for continued public investment in a Palmerston North to Wellington passenger rail service has been prepared. On 2 November 2017, Horizons Regional Council provided the Ministry of Transport with the business case, assessing the case for continued public investment in a Palmerston North to Wellington rail passenger service. This has been provided as a funding bid for consideration at Budget 2018.
80. We understand that Bruce Gordon, Chair of Horizons Regional Council has written to you about the Capital Connection. Horizons Regional Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council are seeking Government funding support at Budget 2018 to allow continued operation of the service.
81. We will be providing you with further advice on Budget 2018 funding bids, including an assessment of the business case for the continued operation of the Capital Connection service.
82. We note that Government support for a continued Capital Connection service was part of election manifesto commitments. Securing Government funding for this at Budget 2018 provides an early opportunity to deliver on this commitment.

#### **Route 7: Wairarapa to Wellington**

83. Technically this is part of the Wellington Metro Network but it is included in this report for completeness. It is currently serviced by regular diesel-hauled carriages designed for the route which offer a good standard of amenity and comfort.
84. Its limitations are around the age and quality of the network in the section from Masterton to Upper Hutt, in particular the Rimutaka tunnel. KiwiRail has submitted a funding proposal for Budget 2018 to complete a five year package of catch-up works for this section. We understand the Mayors of the Wairarapa Councils and Chair of Greater Wellington Regional Council are writing in support of this. The Ministry of Transport will be providing you with further advice on this matter as part of the Budget 2018 funding bids briefing.
85. Over the years there have been various proposals to change the service configuration including:
- extending electrification to Featherston
  - terminating the service at Upper Hutt with passengers transferring to EMUs
  - running the service as DMUs.
86. Ultimately, Greater Wellington Regional Council will be the party driving the needs of the network for its commuter rail service delivery.

### Route 8: Wellington to Napier

87. A weekend service was run during the 1990s but was not commercially viable. There are a few current network limitations on operating this service:
- Depending on when it departed/arrived there are limits on platform availability in Wellington Station.
  - If the route was via the Wairarapa, the section from Masterton to Pahiatua is in poor condition and could only be driven at low speed with network safety inspections on the day. That is a challenging section of the network and there would need to be material investment to get a step change in quality of infrastructure and subsequent service levels able to be offered.
  - If the route was via the North Island Main Trunk (NIMT) to Palmerston North, then onwards through the Manawatu Gorge to Napier, there would be no material network limitations.
88. Both journeys would be considerably slower than by road as the Palmerston North to Napier section is limited to 70 kilometres per hour.
89. The greater restriction will be availability of rolling stock.

### Route 9: Christchurch to Dunedin

90. The Kaikoura Earthquake significantly damaged the Main North Line, resulting in the cancellation of the Coastal Pacific service (between Picton and Christchurch) for the remainder of the 2016/17 summer season. At that time, KiwiRail was asked to consider the reinstatement of the Southerner Service, which ran between Christchurch, Timaru and Dunedin until 2002. The idea was not investigated in any significant depth at the time as the Coastal Pacific's carriages were redeployed to other tourism and chartered passenger services, and no formal proposal was received.
91. KiwiRail notes that the Southerner service was suspended following the results of a 2002 study which concluded that the service was uneconomic. In 2010 a second report, commissioned by KiwiRail, concurred with the findings of the initial report. For KiwiRail to undertake further investigation, a business case will need to provide evidence that reinstatement of the Southerner service would be economically viable, or additional Government funding would be required.
92. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) recently provided the Canterbury Mayoral Forum with \$50,000 in the 2017/18 financial year, towards a feasibility study investigating passenger rail services between Christchurch and Invercargill (through Dunedin). This funding was provided as part of the Regional Growth Programme. The study objective is to assess the costs to establish such a service, determine the associated benefits, and decide whether there is a case for further development of the proposal. The proposal has a high-level alignment with local and regional government objectives to grow tourism as part of the strategic regional growth agenda. We understand the Canterbury Mayoral Forum will engage with KiwiRail on the feasibility study, in due course.
93. We have been in touch with MBIE, and the Canterbury Mayoral Forum, and intend to remain engaged while the feasibility study is undertaken.
94. There may be opportunities to fast track this investigation under the Regional Development (Provincial Growth) Fund, which we can discuss with you.

**Recommendations**

95. The recommendations are that you:

- (a) **agree** to discuss with officials the Government's objectives for regional rail Yes/No
- (b) **agree** to the development of assessment and investment criteria on which inter-regional routes and passenger services could be further investigated Yes/No
- (c) **share** this briefing with the Associate Minister of Transport, Hon Shane Jones. Yes/No

Erin Wynne  
**Manager, Rail and Freight**

**MINISTER'S SIGNATURE:**

**DATE:**

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## Appendix 1

Table outlining rail policies contained in election manifesto and coalition agreements

<b>Labour's rail (and light rail) Transport policy</b>
Build light rail from the CBD to Auckland Airport. This will be part of a new light rail network that will be built over the next decade with routes to the central suburbs, the airport, and West Auckland, and will later be extended to the North Shore.
Invest in more electric trains, electrification to Pukekohe, and building a third main trunk line urgently between Westfield and Papakura.
Building a Light Rail connection down Dominion Rd from the City Centre to Mt Roskill within four years.
Building a North-western Light Rail from the City Centre to Waimauku within ten years.
Extending light rail to the North Shore after completing the first two lines.
Rapid public transport from the Wellington Railway Station to the Airport, including through fast tracking the feasibility investigation of light rail.
Create a passenger rail service linking Auckland, Hamilton, and Tauranga and, if justified by demand, upgrade it in stages to a rapid rail network throughout the Golden Triangle.
Providing on-going funding to ensure that the Capital Connection service continues to provide a commuter service between Wellington and Palmerston North.
Commit an additional \$100m from the National Land Transport Fund in capital investment to Greater Christchurch multi-modal public transport, including commuter rail from Rolleston to the CBD as a first step. We'll work with local authorities and other partners on a 21st century strategic multi-modal transport plan for Greater Christchurch.
Investing \$22 million to double track Trentham to Upper Hutt line.
Upgrading the Wairarapa Rail Line, and investing in new trains for the line.
Undertaking track upgrades and constructing more passing loops on the Wellington Rail Network.
Upgrading railway stations on the network, beginning with the Porirua, Paraparaumu, Waterloo and Johnsonville stations to ensure they are connected to shipping and community facilities.
Wellington - Develop a Congestion Free Network plan and fast-track a feasibility study on rapid transit to the airport, which considers light rail.
Instruct Kiwirail to retain an electrified network between Hamilton and Palmerston North and work on an evidence-based plan to progressively electrify other key parts of the network.
Re-open moth-balled railway lines where community and business support exists, and there is evidence that the service would be sustainable, notably the Napier to Gisborne rail line.
Investigate a rail line to Marsden Point and Northport and upgrading the North Auckland Line to take pressure off the roads in Northland.
Make investments from the National Land Transport Fund on a mode neutral basis, meaning that rail and walk/cycle projects will be eligible for funding where evidence shows clear benefits to the transport system and local communities.
Reform the structure and governance of KiwiRail to ensure it is best placed to deliver on national transport priorities.
Continue upgrading the KiwiRail rail network, including improvements to speed and journey time reliability.
Allow rail projects to be funded from the National Land Transport Fund where there are benefits to

local communities
Retain current electrification of the North Island Main Trunk line, and investigate expansion of electrification to Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga and between Wellington and Palmerston North; and have a long-term goal of electrifying all rail.
Re-open mothballed railway lines where community and business support exists and there is evidence that the service would be sustainable, Notably the Napier to Gisborne rail line.
Investigate a rail line to Marsden Point and Northport and upgrading the North Auckland Line to take pressure of the roads in Northland.
<b>NZ First &amp; Labour coalition agreement – Rail</b>
A \$1 billion per annum Regional Development (Provincial Growth) Fund, including significant investment in regional rail.
<b>Labour &amp; Greens confidence &amp; supply agreement - Rail</b>
Adopt and make progress towards the goal of a Net Zero Emissions economy by 2050, with a particular focus on policy development and initiatives in urban form, energy and primary industries in accordance with milestones to be set by an independent Climate Commission and with a focus on establishing Just Transitions for exposed regions and industries.
Reduce congestion and carbon emissions by substantially increasing investment in safe walking and cycling, frequent and affordable passenger transport, rail, and sea freight.
National Land Transport Fund spending will be reprioritised to increase the investment in rail infrastructure in cities and regions, and cycling and walking.
Work will begin on light rail from the city to the airport in Auckland.
Safe cycling and walking, especially around schools, will be a transport priority.

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Map outlining the national rail network and rail freight flows

### Our Network by Density

