

Cook Islands Land Transport Policy 2025 - 2035

Government of the Cook Islands



Government of the Cook Islands

| Land Transport Authority

Te Mana Tumotu o te Kuki Airani | Ministry of Transport

Government of the Cook Islands | Rarotonga, Cook Islands

Cook Islands Land Transport Policy 2025 - 2035

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We also thank the Island Governments and communities of Aitutaki, Mangaia, Atiu, Mauke, Pukapuka, Manihiki, Rakahanga and Penrhyn for your active participation in the Pa Enua consultations. Your local knowledge and perspectives are vital in shaping national solutions that can be tailored to each island's context.

We give special thanks to the Rarotonga business owners and licensed operators of passenger

transport, rental, taxicab services, and heavy-duty vehicle sector for your time and valued contribution during focused dialogue sessions. These insights helped to shape practical solutions for freight, logistics and commercial transport.

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Finally, we acknowledge and thank the Government of New Zealand, through its Cook Islands Core Sector Support Programme, for funding the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy Project, with project management by MOT.

Each contribution of time and resources has laid the foundation for a safer, more inclusive, and climate ready land transport future for the Cook Islands.

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MESSAGE FROM DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT

HON. ALBERT NICHOLAS

As a country, and as a people, we deserve a future that protects our well-being and supports our access to opportunities, whether it be to enjoy time with our families, to enjoy the work we choose to generate an income and create success, to enjoy the simple things in life like getting to our plantations, to our markets, to our beautiful beaches, to our sports fields our harbour or airport. To enjoy time in nature, to enjoy time with each other. Our transport system is key to connecting us to all we wish to enjoy together as a people, whether we reside in Rarotonga, or in our precious Pa Enua.

As the Minister of Transport, it gives me great honour to present the first Cook Islands Land Transport Policy 2025 - 2035, a future focused whole-of-sector strategy intending to shape a future land transport system we can all enjoy. This policy sets bold measurable targets and four key focus areas:

- 1. Governance and Leadership
- 2. Sustainability and Climate Resilience
- 3. Road Safety, and
- 4. Pa Enua Access and Equity

These pillars respond directly to the ideas, concerns and priorities raised by our communities and businesses.

Our people, our businesses, our government agencies, and our partners should expect better clarity, integration and efficiencies in the roles and responsibilities and systems across the transport sector, particularly those functions managed by the public service.

We should also expect our future transport system to be built on the principles of sustainability and climate resilience. Land transport is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases and must withstand the impacts of climate change. As such we seek a future that is powered by cleaner technologies, one that is well supported across the lifecycle including electric vehicle charging infrastructure and battery disposal, and ensuring the design of our infrastructure is resilient.

We will focus on ensuring roads are safer for all, especially pedestrians, cyclists', and inclusive access for our children, elderly and those with disabilities. We will explore practical approaches to managing vehicle growth, shared modes of transport and better designed public transport experience.

Every Cook Islander and every visitor, across all islands including the Pa Enua, should benefit from a clean, safe, reliable and resilient land transport.

This Policy marks a new chapter. As Minister, I affirm my full support for its vision and objectives, and I will continue to champion the support needed to enable its success. Together, we can deliver a land transport system that supports our people, our environment and our future.

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Hon. Albert Nicholas Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT TO THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT

MR STEPHEN MATAPO

Looking ahead to the next decade of transport development in the Cook Islands, a bold vision must be matched with strong and sustained commitment. The Cook Islands Land Transport Policy 2025–2035 sets out our shared future. One that is safer, more sustainable, and more inclusive for our people. This includes setting ambitious targets and ensuring that investments are matched by tangible outcomes that deliver for communities across our entire nation.

In particular, the Pa Enua must remain at the centre of our planning and implementation efforts. The realities faced by the Pa Enua of distance, limited infrastructure, and irregular transport services can make connectivity challenging. Yet these challenges present opportunities to build more efficient, and more equitable transport

systems that meet the needs of our people, our businesses, and our future generations.

Our commitment must go beyond policy statements. It must be reflected in our budgets, in our workforce planning, and in the partnerships, we build with Island Governments, leaders, and local communities. Delivering on this Policy will require coordination, prioritisation, and a willingness to invest where it matters most.

Together with the Minister of Transport, I am proud to support this Policy as a strategic guide for the decade ahead. But more than that, I see it as a call to action. A call to deliver a land transport system that uplifts our Pa Enua, protects our environment, and enables opportunity for all Cook Islanders, no matter where they live.

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORT

JOHN HOSKING

The Cook Islands Land Transport Policy 2025–2035 represents a unified national commitment to delivering a land transport system that meets the needs of our people, one that is safe, inclusive, sustainable, secure, reliable, and affordable. It reflects the aspirations of our communities and the responsibilities of our public sector agencies to create a more connected, climate-resilient, and future-ready transport system across all our islands.

As Secretary of Transport, I am honoured to lead the Ministry charged with translating this vision into meaningful action. The true measure of this Policy's success will not be in its words, but in the real and lasting improvements experienced by families, businesses, and communities, particularly in our Pa Enua. This means delivering better infrastructure, clearly defined institutional roles, safer travel, and transport services that are reliable, affordable and responsive to the realities of each island.

Importantly, this Policy also sets the strategic direction for both the Transport Licensing Authority and the Land Transport Authority (LTA). These agencies are crucial to strengthening

leadership and governance in the transport sector, two key objectives of this project. Their roles, priorities, and decision-making frameworks will be informed by the commitments and actions set out in this Policy.

The Ministry of Transport is committed to a coordinated, accountable, and results-driven approach to implementation. We will work in close partnership with Island Governments, national agencies, development partners, and sector stakeholders to embed this Policy across planning, investment, and operational delivery. We will also ensure that our actions are well resourced, transparently monitored, and continually strengthened through regular reporting and agile planning.

This Policy sets the strategic direction; it is our collective action that will define its legacy. With strong leadership, clear priorities, and a shared commitment, we will continue to shape a land transport system that connects our people, supports economic opportunity, uplifts our islands, and safeguards the wellbeing of future generations.

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

ARDF Advance Recovery Disposal Fee **BCI** Bank of Cook Islands CCCI Climate Change Cook Islands Cook Islands Economic Development Strategy CIIC Cook Islands Investment Corporation CITTI Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute Central Policy and Planning Office **CPPO** Culture Ministry of Cultural Development EV **Electric Vehicles** ICI Infrastructure Cook Islands Ministry of Internal Affairs INTAFF Ministry of Finance and Economic Management **MFEM** MOT Ministry of Transport MVD **Motor Vehicle Dealers National Environment Service** NES NGO Non-Government Organisation **NIIP 2021** National Infrastructure Investment Plan 2021 **NSDA 2020+** Te Ara Akapapa'anga Nui 2020+ National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+ OPM Office of the Prime Minister, Cook Islands REDD Renewable Energy Development Division **Road Safety Council** RSC SDG Sustainable Development Goal(s)

Transport Licensing Authority

Tarai Vaka Process

Warrant of Fitness

World Health Organisation

Te Marae Ora (Ministry of Health)

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

TMO

TVP

WOF

WHO

UNFCCC

UN SDG



DEFINITION: LAND TRANSPORT

Definition: Land transport refers to the movement of people, goods, and services on land — and the systems that support it.

This includes:

- Vehicles: All land-based transport modes such as cars, motorcycles, buses, bicycles and other private or shared vehicles.
- Infrastructure: The physical network of roads, footpaths, crossings, drainage systems, signage and car parks that support safe and efficient travel.
- Transport Services: Land based freight and passenger services, including those supporting access to and within Pa Enua Communities.
- Regulation and Compliance: Licensing, vehicle inspections, roadworthiness, and enforcement systems.
- Road Safety: Road rules, speed management, safety equipment for road uses, and driver education and awareness.

Land transport is not just about vehicles — it enables people to access work, school, markets, hospitals, nature, and each other. It connects air and sea transport, communities, supports economic prosperity, and as such, must be resilient.

This Policy uses the term "Land Transport" to capture both the physical network and the services and systems that shape how people have access to move safely and fairly across the Cook Islands.

DEFINITION: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Definition: Public Transport refers to shared or passenger transport services that are available for use by the public, typically operating on set routes, schedules, or in response to local demand.

In the Cook Islands, public transport includes buses, minibuses, taxi, community shuttles and other shared or private-for-hire services, including licensed rental vehicles.

OUR VISION

Safe, Sustainable Journeys Across our Nation

By 2035, the Cook Islands will have modernised its land transport laws and embedded climate resilience and inclusion into all new road construction. The shift toward electric, hybrid, and shared transport will be supported by enabling infrastructure and regulation. Walking, cycling, and public transport will be more accessible and widely used. Road safety will be significantly improved through better design, awareness, and enforcement. All Pa Enua will have tailored land transport plans, supporting a safer, low-emission, and inclusive transport system for every island.

OUR POLICY DIRECTION

FOCUS	TARGET			
Legislative Reform	Full legal modernisation.			
Sustainable Transport	Promote an increase in the share of electric, hybrid vehicle use, public and shared transport modes supported by enabling infrastructure and regulation.			
Climate-Resilient Roads	Embed climate resilience and risk-reduction measures into the design and construction of all new roads.			
Active Transport	Increase the use of walking and cycling across all islands, supported by safe, accessible infrastructure			
Road Safety	Aim for zero road incidents /crash-related deaths and a reduction in the number of serious injuries.			
Pa Enua Access and Equity	All of Pa Enua with land transport plans.			

OUR POLICY PILLARS

The Policy is structured around four key policy pillars, each with clear objectives, priority actions, and measurable outcomes.



Leadership and Governance Establish a clear legislative and operational framework for land transport by strengthening public sector agencies roles, formalising leadership, and improving coordination to deliver efficient, accountable, and nationally consistent services.



Road Safety Reduce road crash fatalities and injuries — and their wider social and economic impact — through access to data for evidence-based decision making for safer infrastructure, effective enforcement, and sustained public awareness.



Promote affordable and accessible low-emission transport, reduce private vehicle dependency, and build a climate-resilient land transport system that protects people, infrastructure, and the environment.



Pa Enua Access and Equity Deliver tailored transport solutions and regulations that reflect the needs of the Pa Enua and ensure equitable access across all islands.

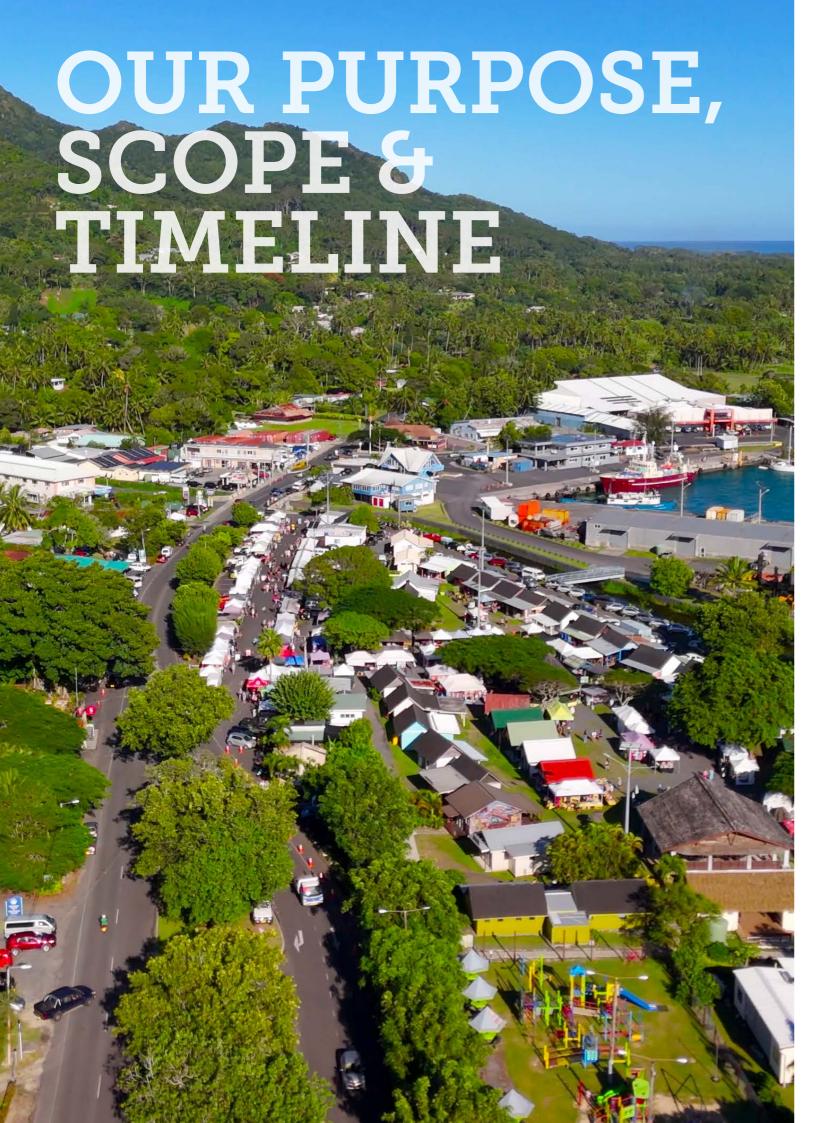
OUR LAND TRANSPORT POLICY DIRECTION

Land transport in the Cook Islands plays a vital role in connecting people, services, and opportunities. It supports wellbeing, enables economic activity, and links communities in Rarotonga and on respective inhabited islands of the Pa Enua.

The sector faces growing challenges — ageing infrastructure, rising vehicle numbers, limited transport options, inconvenient access to public transport services, and increasing climate impacts. Without modernisation, the land

transport system cannot meet future demands or deliver on national resilience and sustainability goals. Our land transport system needs to align to advancing the national vision of "Turanga Memeitaki no te Katoatoa – Wellbeing for All" as outlined in the National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+.

This document presents the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy 2025–2035: our unified national vision and strategic direction for the land transport sector over the next decade.



OUR PURPOSE

The Cook Islands Land Transport Policy 2025–2035 sets out a clear vision for the future of land transport - defining the targets for success, outlining the four key policy pillars, explaining why they matter, and identifying what is needed to achieve them. It also details how progress will be measured and outlines the risks requiring mitigation. This policy clarifies the key roles and responsibilities needed to put the policy into action, and how progress will be monitored and evaluated.

The Policy has been informed by a comprehensive analysis of national legislation, policy documents and international conventions, extensive community and private sector consultations including in the Pa Enua, with reference to international best practice. This Policy is informed by detailed sector analysis, consultation feedback, and best practices.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy Background and Technical Inputs Report (2025), which provides the detail sourced from the policy development phase required to inform the strategic direction and actions outlined within this Policy. This Policy

OUR SCOPE

The Policy applies to all inhabited islands of the Cook Islands, and refers to the movement of people, goods, and services on land – as well as the systems that support it.

It applies to all relevant public sector agencies, including government ministries, Island Councils, and state-owned enterprises or private transport service providers or actors.

This Policy does not cover maritime or aviation transport, which are addressed in separate policy frameworks.

is complimented by Annex 1: Our Implementation Areas & Actions and will be prioritised over the 10-year policy period.

Together, the Policy, its supporting Report, and Implementation actions, provide a coherent framework for future investment, reform, and collaboration across the transport sector. The Policy is intended to guide the work of public sector agencies, development partners, and local stakeholders, and is aligned with the Te Ara Akapapa'anga Nui 2020+ - National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+ (NSDA 2020+), national climate resilience strategies, and relevant international commitments.

National Sustainable Development Agenda 2000+



OUR TIMELINE

This policy covers the period from 2025 to 2035 (10 years). The progress of the policy implementation will be monitored and evaluated on the following basis:



Monitoring and Evaluation:

A dedicated monitoring framework will track progress through annual reporting, a mid-term review (2029), and final evaluation (2034) driven by MOT. The success of this policy will be monitored and evaluated on the basis of the key performance indicators, targets and performance measures outlined in this policy.

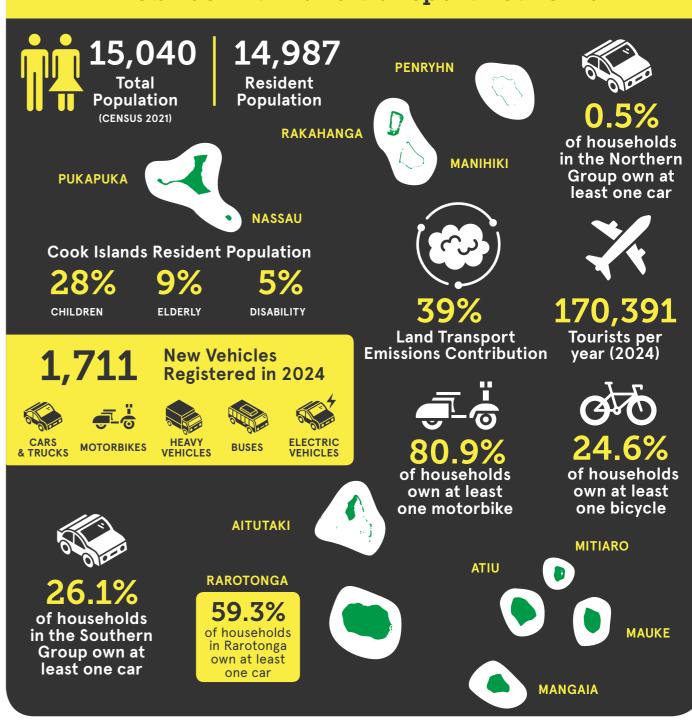
Implementation:

The MOT is the lead agency and takes responsibility for driving implementation of this policy. MOT will work in partnership with government agencies, Island Governments, private operators, and communities.



FEATURES OF THE CURRENT LAND TRANSPORT SETTING

11 Islands with Land transport networks





Road Length

31KM Main Roads

Back Roads 23KM

Links/Cross & **Intake Roads**



Road Safety

95% 101 Crashes Alcohol Related or Reckless Driving



Transport Services

Passenger Service Operators

Rental Service Licence Motor **Operators**

Taxicab **Operators** 14 **Vehicle Dealers**

BACKGROUND & CURRENT SITUATION

The Cook Islands is a self-governing Pacific nation made up of 15 islands spread across approximately 2 million square kilometres of ocean, with a combined land area of just 240 square kilometres. Rarotonga is the main island and home to the majority of the population, while the Pa Enua are remote and geographically diverse, ranging from volcanic islands with steep interiors to low-lying coral atolls. The resident population is approximately 15,000, but this can more than double during peak tourism periods. The economy is primarily driven by tourism, with contributions from fisheries, agriculture, and financial services.

Given the geographic spread and limited landmass, transport plays a unique and critical role. In Rarotonga, movement relies largely on private vehicles using a coastal ring road with limited footpaths and back road, while in the Pa Enua, air and sea transport are essential to connect people, services, and goods. Transport is not just about infrastructure, it's about ensuring access to education, health care, livelihoods, and communities, across all islands.

The Pa Enua, the 11 inhabited outer islands of the Cook Islands, are grouped into the Northern and Southern Groups, each with distinct geographic and transport characteristics.

The Southern Group includes the islands of Aitutaki, Atiu, Mangaia, Mauke, and Mitiaro, which are relatively closer to Rarotonga and generally have more consistent inter-island connectivity, including access to airstrips and shipping. These islands are primarily raised volcanic or makatea (limestone) islands, characterised by small populations and limited but established road networks – mostly tar-sealed, with few or no streetlights and footpaths.

In contrast, the Northern Group consisting of the islands of Manihiki, Penrhyn, Rakahanga, Pukapuka and Nassau, are more remote and made up of low-lying coral atolls spread across vast ocean distances. Transport here is more complex and costly, with longer travel times, fewer flight connections, and limited shipping schedules, often dependent on weather and sea conditions. Unsealed roads with limited or no streetlights add further constraints to movement and safety. These islands rely heavily on sea freight for bulk goods and on small aircraft for passenger movement and time-sensitive cargo transportation, often via unscheduled flights chartered by the Cook Islands Government. In villages like Te Tautau in Penrhyn, Tauhunu in Manihiki and across Pukapuka, transferring passengers and goods from air transport requires integrated use of both land and maritime transport.

Across both groups, transport is a critical enabler of access to education, healthcare, trade, and social connection. Many residents travel to Rarotonga for secondary schooling, health services, business, or government-related activities. For the Pa Enua, transport is not only about mobility, but also

about ensuring communities remain connected, visible, and included in national development. Land transport on the island therefore plays a significant role in supporting communities' access to other transport modes, and in delivering goods and services to where they are needed..

Land transport in the Cook Islands reflects the unique characteristics of a small island nation — with a mix of private vehicles, motorbikes, rental fleets, and limited buses operating across varied island landscapes. Infrastructure conditions vary significantly, with many roads being narrow, vulnerable to erosion, and often lacking walkable paths, clear signage, and accessibility features for the elderly or mobility impaired.

Governance is shared across multiple actors, including the MOT, ICI, the TLA, Police, and Island Governments. This Policy supports NSDA 2020+, NIIP 2021, and aligns with international commitments such as the Paris Agreement, and the UN SDGs.

Modernising the land transport system should be prioritised — to close infrastructure gaps, improve safety, enable low-emission mobility, and build climate-resilient networks that support inclusive development across all islands.

Delivering on these goals will require more than infrastructure investment alone. Many of the agencies with regulatory and enforcement responsibilities such as MOT, Police and Island Governments, lack the consistent resourcing needed to fully carry out their mandates. Operational budgets, staffing and compliance systems are often limited or fragmented, resulting in gaps in enforcement, oversight and service delivery. Strengthening the capacity of resourcing of lead agencies is essential for effective policy implementation and equitable outcomes across all islands.



CHALLENGES

Policy development has been guided by a detailed analysis of current issues, risks, and future trends affecting land transport across the Cook Islands as identified during the 2023-2024 policy development phase.

The following are the core challenges facing the land transport system:

CHALLENGE	SUMMARY
Aging and Inadequate Infrastructure	Many roads, especially in the Pa Enua, are poorly maintained, narrow, and unsafe — increasing risks for all users.
Climate and Environmental Pressures	Land transport is the largest CO2 emitter in the country and is misaligned with internal commitments.
Overdependence on Private Vehicles	Most people rely on private cars or motorbikes which is causing increased congestion on land transport infrastructure and limits mind-sets on mode-sharing alternatives.
Weak Road Safety System	Safety efforts are fragmented. Enforcement is not always consistent, and driver behaviour needs improvement.
Vehicle Management Issues	Many vehicles are aging or unsafe. Inspection and compliance systems are weak or under-resourced.
Licensing and Registration Gaps	Licensing, registration, and enforcement systems are generally paper based. Agencies find it difficult to share data or track compliance.
Limited access to Data and Information	Limited access and reliable data make it hard to plan, regulate, or evaluate transport services and policies.
Public Transport and Access Gaps	Public transport services are limited, often unreliable, and operate only during restricted hours — reducing accessibility for many users.
Heavy Vehicle Road Damages	Overloaded trucks strain roads not built for their weight, increasing maintenance needs and repair costs for said vehicles and roads.
End-of-Life Vehicle Disposal	No reliable system exists to remove or recycle abandoned vehicles, especially in the Pa Enua. This creates health and safety risks.
Funding and Financing Constraints	Current funding models cannot keep up with infrastructure, safety, or service needs. Key international revenue tools are underused.
Climate Resilience Gaps	Many roads lack protection from climate hazards. Escape routes and adaptive infrastructure are limited.
Pa Enua-Specific Challenges	Remote islands face higher costs, fewer resources, political influence and limited capacity to manage local transport systems.

ALIGNING OUR POLICY WITH NATIONAL AND **INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS**

The Policy reflects key considerations that align with national priorities, international obligations, and real-world delivery needs.



National Sustainable Agenda 2020+ Development

The Policy supports the Cook Islands national vision of Turanga Memeitaki no te Katoatoa - Wellbeing for All, as outlined in NSDA 2020+. It advances wellbeing by strengthening leadership and governance, progressing sustainability, promoting road safety, and expanding Pa Enua access. The Policy contributes directly to eight of the fifteen national development goals in the NSDA 2020+.

Other National Policies and Legislative Frameworks

The Policy also aligns with the NIIP 2021, which focuses on investment across 12 sectors, including transport and energy. By enhancing project readiness and prioritising sustainable infrastructure, the Policy reinforces the delivery of NIIP 2021 outcomes.

The Policy complements key national legislation and strategies, including:

- Transport Act 1966 (and amendments)
- Transport Licensing Act 1967 (and amendments)
- Motor Vehicle Dealers Act 1986
- Infrastructure Act 2019
- Climate Change Policy 2018-2028
- Road Safety Strategy 2016-2020
- Public Sector Strategy 2016-2025
- Economic Development Strategy 2023 (EDS)
- National Environment Policy 2022–2032

(See Cook Islands Land Transport Policy Background and Technical Inputs Report (2025) for full policy alignment).

International Commitments and Agreements

The Policy supports the Cook Islands' commitments under international agreements that guide climate action and environmental protection, including:

- **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC)
- Paris Agreement (2015)
- Noumea Convention (1986) for regional environmental protection
- Protocol on Dumping for pollution prevention

These agreements promote climate-resilient infrastructure and lower transport emissions.

(See Cook Islands Land Transport Policy Background and Technical Inputs Report (2025) for full policy alignment).

NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA 2020+ **Linkages to the Land Transport Policy**

NSDA 2020+ GOAL

NSDA FOCUS

LINK TO LAND TRANSPORT POLICY



Goal 1 Wellbeing

Looking after our employed people, our youth, our families, our elderly, our parents and

Create an attractive, safe, healthy and happy land transport environment. Update standards to provide provisions for the elderly, mobility challenged and the very young across land transport infrastructure.



Goal 3 Economy employment trade and enterprise

trade environment.

Support health, education and infrastructure. Promote employment and enterprise. Improve the business and

Improve connectivity to jobs, markets and services. Reduce transport cost for community, business and freight. Support tourism, agriculture and local enterprise growth. Encourage investment through reliable and efficient transport infrastructure



Goal 4 Manage Solid and Hazardous Waste

Increase recycling Manage hazardous waste effectively

Establish circular economy for vehicles



Goal 6 Connecting our Nation through Infrastructure. Transport and ICT Connecting our nation and people Build reliable and

appropriate infrastructure A physically connected

Diversify transport modes and build the necessary infrastructure Reduce congestion and transport emissions



Goal 7 Health and Healthy Lifestyles

Reduce non-communicable disease

Promote healthier lifestyles through exercise and sports* Build infrastructure measures that contribute to increased physical activity

Set standards to reduce air pollution from



Our Inclusiveness Gender, Equity an Social Inclusion

Improve care of the infirm, elderly and disabled*

Fit-for-purpose transport facilities designed to meet the accessibility needs of the infirm, elderly, and disabled, ensuring equitable access



Goal 11 Our Biodiversity and Natural Environment

Support healthy coral reefs Protect areas

Improve water quality **Protect Biodiversity**

Incorporate green engineering into transport infrastructure development

Reduce car-centrism that leads to less need for car infrastructure (car parks)



Goal 12 Climate Change, Resilience. Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

Reduce reliance on fossil fuels

Build infrastructure and establish standards to support the conversion to decarbonize and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from land



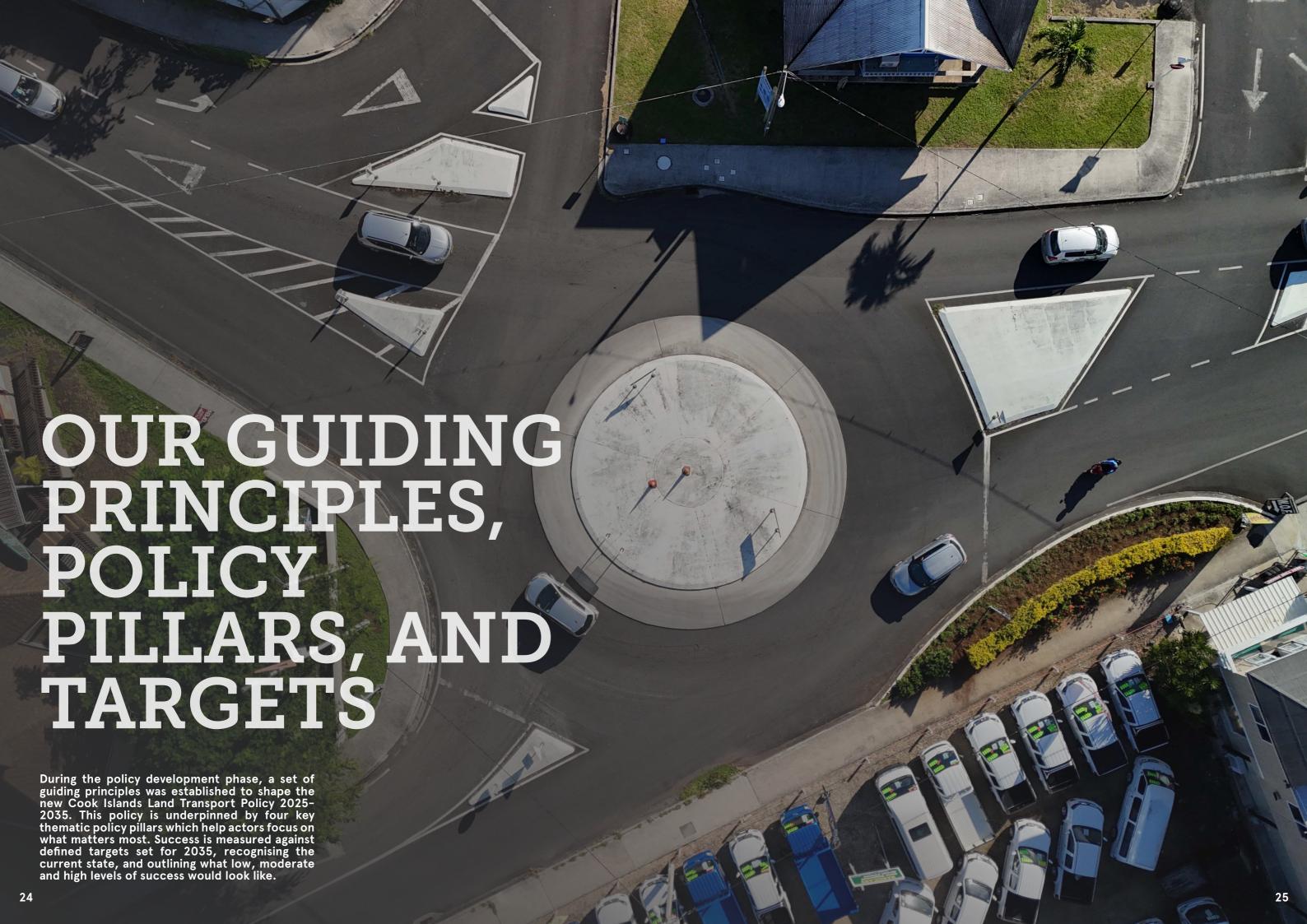
Our Security, a Peaceful and Just Society

Reduce motor vehicle accidents Improve public

performance

Use design and construction to improve road

Use design and construction to prevent serious injury and death from road crashes Improve efficiencies in the transport licensing system



THE POLICY IS GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES, ENSURING **CONSISTENCY WITH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND** INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES



FIT-FOR-PURPOSE

Land Transport will be of an appropriate standard for its intended use over its lifespan, delivering value for money across whole-of-life costs. This includes an adequately funded land transport system and regulations.



SAFETY

System safety will be prioritised through appropriate design and management practices with regard to the safety of cyclists, pedestrians especially those with disabilities, children and the elderly.



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Assets and resources will be managed in an environmentally sound way to protect and enhance natural environments and ecosystems. Land transport will contribute to national climate change and emission reduction



DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Data and evidence-based approaches will be used to underpin and inform decision-making processes for all land transport policies and projects.



EQUITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Transport systems will provide inclusive access for all users, with a focus on those with disabilities, the elderly, and other vulnerable people. Land transport planning will consider the wider community's needs and interests.



HEALTH

The land transport environment will support physical activity and protect human health. Transportation systems should be designed and operated in a way that protects the physical, mental and social well-being of all people and enhances the quality of life in communities.



INTEGRATED AND INNOVATIVE

Land transport will take a wholeof-system approach, connecting infrastructure, services, people, and place. It will support innovative, locally grounded solutions that reflect Cook Islands values - from design and messaging to delivery. The sector will adopt emerging technologies to increase safety, efficiency, and environmental performance. A wellintegrated transport structure will deliver coordinated, inclusive, and future-ready outcomes across all islands.



TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Transparent, evidence-based decisionmaking will guide land transport governance. Licensing, compliance, and unfair practices will be addressed through clear rules and consistent enforcement. Disputes will be managed openly and fairly, with stakeholder engagement ensuring community needs are met.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RESILIENCE

Land transport infrastructure will be designed to withstand climate change

impacts and support emergency

response and critical services. This includes protecting historical and

archaeological sites, reducing noise

pollution, and considering aesthetics in

The transport system will support long-term national development by balancing environmental, economic, social, and cultural goals. It will foster inclusive growth and help connect communities across the Cook Islands, now and for future generations.



MITIGATING AND ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The transport system will align with national and international climate change policies and projects. It will reduce emissions and adapt to climate impacts to protect lives, infrastructure, and ecosystems while supporting sustainable development.



EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Promote ongoing education and awareness relating to responsible and safe land transport practices, contributing to a culture of responsible road use and safety.



PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

Proactive action will be taken to prevent environmental harm, even when scientific certainty is lacking. Consistent with the precautionary principle set out in the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Government will act to avoid or reduce risks to health and the environment without waiting for full scientific proof of harm.



CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION

MOT will promote collaboration across key government agencies and private sector stakeholders to ensure a holistic and coordinated approach to land transport planning.



CONTINUOUS **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation for land transport policies and projects will help to identify successes, challenges and areas for improvement.

OUR POLICY PILLARS

The Policy will be delivered through four key policy pillars that align with national development priorities, climate resilience goals, and international obligations:



Leadership and Governance

Establish a clear legislative and operational framework for land transport by strengthening institutional roles, formalising leadership, and improving coordination to deliver efficient, accountable, and nationally consistent services.



- · Clarify mandates under updated legislation.
- Improve efficiency through collaboration across government agencies.
- Strengthen regulatory functions to align with NSDA 2020+ Goal 15 and build public sector capability.



- · Goal 1: Wellbeing for all.
- Goal 3: Economy, employment trade and enterprise.
- Goal 6: Connect our nation through infrastructure, transport, and ICT.
- Goal 9: Our Inclusiveness Gender, Equity and Social Inclusion.
- Goal 15: Our security, a peaceful and just society.



Sustainability and Climate Resilience

Promote affordable and accessible low-emission transport, reduce private vehicle dependency, and build a climateresilient land transport system that protects people, infrastructure, and the environment.



- Promote low-emission transport and establish support systems.
- Encourage a shift towards walking, cycling, and public transport.
- Feasibility study for subsidised access to public transport on Rarotonga for all residents and visitors.
- Integrate climate adaptation measures into transport infrastructure design and maintenance.



- · Goal 1: Wellbeing for all.
- Goal 4: Manage solid and hazardous waste.
- Goal 6: Connecting our nation through infrastructure, transport and ICT.
- · Goal 7: Health and healthy lifestyles.
- Goal 9: Our Inclusiveness Gender, Equity and Social Inclusion.
- Goal 11: Biodiversity and natural environment.
- Goal 12: Climate change, resilience, renewable energy and energy efficiency.



Road Safety

Reduce road crash fatalities and injuries through safer infrastructure, effective enforcement, and sustained public awareness and evidence-based decision making.

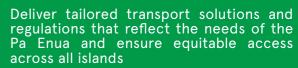


ZERO DEATHS & SERIOUS INJURIES

- Strengthen official statistics bulletins for motor vehicles information.
- Strengthen public education, awareness, and law regulatory and enforcement initiatives.
- Improve infrastructure design standards to enhance road safety.
- Prioritise the safety of vulnerable users, including pedestrians, cyclists, children, and the elderly.



- Goal 6: Connecting our nation through infrastructure, transport and ICT.
- Goal 7: Health and Healthy lifestyles.
- Goal 9: Our Inclusiveness Gender, Equity and Social Inclusion.
- · Goal 12: Climate change, resilience, renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- · Goal 15: Our security, a peaceful and just society.



Pa Enua Access and Equity



ALL OF PA ENUA HAVE TRANSPORT PLANS IN PLACE BY 2028

- Strengthen local capacity for transport licensing and road safety management.
- Implement systems for the management and disposal of end-of-life vehicles.
- Invest in infrastructure that is climateresilient and appropriate to each island's geography and needs.



- Goal 1: Wellbeing for all.
- Goal 6: Connecting our nation through infrastructure, transport and ICT.
- Goal 7: Health and Healthy Lifestyles
- Goal 9: Our Inclusiveness Gender, Equity and Social Inclusion.
- Goal 11: Our biodiversity and natural environment.
- · Goal 12: Climate change resilience, renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- Goal 15: Good Governance and Law Enforcement (local governance and delivery).

Each Policy Pillar is discussed in further detail in the following section.

The Ministry of Transport will drive delivery of the Policy's four pillars' objectives and action areas in partnership with public sector agencies, the private sector and community stakeholders. Delivering

these objectives will require shared leadership, aligned systems, and targeted investment. Strengthening institutional roles, improving resource use, and clarifying responsibilities will be critical to delivering safe, reliable, affordable, inclusive, climate-resilient land transport for all residents and visitors in the Cook Islands.

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POLICY PILLAR 1: LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

POLICY OBJECTIVE

Establish a clear legislative and operational framework for land transport by strengthening institutional roles, formalising leadership, and improving coordination to deliver efficient, accountable, and nationally consistent services.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Effective leadership and coordinated governance are critical to delivering a safe, efficient, reliable, affordable and inclusive transport system. When roles are unclear, legislation is outdated, and enforcement is inconsistent, the system fails to meet public needs and risks eroding community trust.

Land transport governance in the Cook Islands is fragmented and outdated. Three core lawsthe Transport Act 1966, Transport Licensing Act 1966, and Infrastructure Act 2019-assign overlapping responsibilities to multiple agencies, including the MOT, ICI, the Police, the TLA, and Island Governments. However, none of these laws define clear leadership, regulatory authority, or how agencies should work together. The Registrar of Motor Vehicles role, established under the Transport Act 1966, remains unfilled. The Commissioner of Police has taken on these duties, including chairing the TLA and overseeing vehicle and driver registrations. This mix of enforcement and regulation role confusion weakens accountability.

The Infrastructure Act 2019 also refers to roles played by MOT, the Police, and the BCI in collecting road-related funds. However, there is no clear mechanism to align these funds with a national transport strategy or investment plan. Without this alignment, it remains difficult to deliver resilient infrastructure, support climate goals, or ensure inclusive access—particularly in the Pa Enua. There is a need for financial provisions to integrate into a broader system that aligns funding with clear transport governance, planning, and accountability frameworks.

The Transport Act 1966 has undergone nineteen separate amendments since its enactment, many of them reactive measures in response to road crashes involving impaired driving. Until 2024, these changes had not been consolidated, leading to legal uncertainty, inconsistent enforcement, and weakened compliance. While the Land Transport Policy was under development, MOT proactively

began consolidating these amendments within its existing mandate to clarify legal provisions and create a foundation for broader reform.

The Transport Licensing Authority (TLA) is operating under outdated laws that no longer meet the needs of a modern transport system. Its role, structure, and how its members are appointed are unclear. The law focuses mainly on controlling competition and service quality in the commercial transport sector, but doesn't address key priorities of safety, sustainability, and efficiency. There is also role confusion, with responsibilities defined differently under separate laws. Both the MOT and the Police carry out enforcement, but the absence of a clear legal mandate creates uncertainty around accountability. Island Governments, tasked with managing local transport issues, don't have the resources or support to do this effectively.

Across these roles and responsibilities systems are manual, data is collected in silos, and there is significant opportunity for improved collaboration across the sector to enable targeted, evidence-based decision making.

Reforming the legislative and governance landscape is critical. Streamlining legal frameworks, clarifying agency roles, and modernising institutional mandates will ensure transport funding is spent wisely, responsibilities are transparent and accountable, and services are equitable and accessible across all islands.

These reforms also support:

- NSDA 2020+ Goals 3, 6, 12 and 15
- · NIIP 2021
- The Public Sector Strategy 2016–2025
- SDG 16 and multilateral climate and safety obligations

ALIGNMENT WITH GUIDING PRINCIPLES



FIT-FOR-PURPOSE

Modernises outdated systems to meet current transport needs.



Enables shared, evidence-based planning.



Strengthens inter-agency and island coordination.



Defines clear roles and public reporting.

KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Clarify Roles and Responsibilities

- Amend the Licensing Act to establish the Minister of Transport as the controlling Minister consistent with MOT's functions as the transport sector regulatory authority and clarify the role of the Registrar of Motor Vehicles as Chair of the TLA.
- Designate the Ministry of Transport (MOT) as Secretariat to the Transport Licensing Authority (TLA), with responsibility for all licensing data and decisions implementation.
- Define clear Terms of Reference for TLA members clarifying purpose and focus; expand membership (5-7) with appropriate qualifications.
- Review and implement Schedule amendments to the Infrastructure Act related to traffic signage and parking protocols
- Clarify enforcement powers under the Transport Act to support Police in issuing fines for offenses including operating unlicensed taxicab, rental and passenger services.
- Review and clarify the definition of "passenger service" in the Licensing Act to ensure consistent application across all operators, including charitable services.

Strengthen Whole-of-Government Coordination

- Ensure legislative amendments to the Transport and Infrastructure Acts are effectively communicated and implemented across relevant ministries.
- Include the Secretary of Transport in structured coordination with ICI and Police on land transport infrastructure.
- Transfer WOF oversight responsibilities from Police to MOT to streamline accountability.
- Coordinate with Police and Customs on enforcement and awareness around safety helmet import and sales standards.
- Embed Tarai Vaka Process (TVP) into land transport delivery systems.

Build Institutional Capability and Support Local Delivery

- Investment in institutional capacity and staffing at MOT and local government level.
- Ensure legislative amendments to the Transport and Infrastructure Acts are effectively communicated and implemented across relevant ministries.

- Include the Secretary of Transport in structured coordination with ICI and Police on land transport infrastructure.
- Transfer WOF oversight responsibilities from Police to MOT to streamline accountability.
- Coordinate with Police and Customs on enforcement and awareness around safety helmet import and sales standards.

Enable Data Sharing and Digital Systems

- Digitise licensing systems: enable online renewals, stagger expiry dates, and streamline update requirements.
- Create digital registers for emerging modes (e.g. e-scooters, e-bikes, motorcycles with more than three wheels including quads, autorickshaws) and update legislation to include shared vehicle platforms.
- Build systems to track licensing and vehicle data at the island level to support more responsive local planning.
- Collaborate with Customs and Police to monitor helmet imports and raise supplier compliance awareness.
- Link MOT, TLA, BCI, and Police through a national transport data platform.
- Require annual TLA reports on compliance and licensing performance reports from TLA.
- Require annual Motor Vehicle Dealers reports on compliance and licensing performance reports from Motor Vehicle Dealers.

Explore Funding and Reform Licensing Revenues

- Explore options to allow vehicle licensing revenue to be retained at island level for roads, enforcement, and safety activities.
- Explore revised vehicle fee structures to promote affordable and equitable access, including incentives for low-emission and smaller vehicles (e.g. motorcycles).
- Explore broader funding mechanisms such as developer levies, targeted fuel taxes, or tourism surcharges—while ensuring affordability for low-income users.
- Explore policy options for vehicle insurance that balance safety objectives with business and household affordability and the cost of living.
- Work with MFEM to establish a dedicated Motor Vehicle Dealers Fund.

WHAT'S NEEDED TO SUCCEED . . .



LEGISLATION



Pass a consolidated Transport Act and update the Licensing Act

Build and maintain a shared, real-time transport database.



TLA REFORM



Formalise roles, membership, and decisionmaking authority.

RESOURCING

Allocate funds and tools to national and islandlevel teams.



ENFORCEMENT MANDATES



AFFORDABILITY

Establish clearly defined functions for MOT · and Police.

Assess affordability of fees and services for all stakeholders and users.

MEASURING PROGRESS

The following indicators support tracking progress of the policy implementation for this policy pillar:

Indicator	Current State	Low	Moderate	High	
Consolidate land transport legislation	No consolidated Acts in force.	Transport laws remain fragmented.	One or more key laws are updated with clearly assigned roles.	Land transport laws are consolidated and operational.	
Update agency roles in legislation	Agency roles are fragmented across outdated laws. MOT's lead role is not formalised, TLA operates under legacy appointments, and enforcement duties are unclear. Consolidation and mandate updates are underway but not yet legislated.	Fewer than 25% of governance issues from the Technical Background Report are addressed.	Some agency roles are clarified in draft legislation or recent amendments.	Roles and mandates for MOT, ICI. Police, BCI, and TLA are clearly defined in legislation.	
TLA statutory mandate and appointments	The TLA's mandate and structure are outdated and inconsistently defined across legislation. The Chair's role is unclear, and appointments lack standardised criteria.	Role of the Chair and separation of functions between MOT and Police remain unclear and inconsistently referenced across Acts.	Role of the Registrar as Chair is acknowledged but not fully aligned across legislation. Some appointment or mandate improvements underway.	Role of the Chair and agency functions are clearly defined and align across the Transport Licensing Act 1967 and Transport Act 1966, supporting a clear separation of regulatory and enforcement duties.	

Indicator	Current State	Low	Moderate	High
Formal MOT-Police enforcement agreements	None currently exist.	Informal coordination only.	50% of enforcement functions are formalised through inter–agency agreements.	Comprehensive enforcement MoUs in place between MOT, Police, and Island Governments.
Digital licensing system (Rarotonga)	Not in place.	Paper-based systems remain the default.	Pilot digital licensing system operational in Rarotonga.	Digital licensing and compliance system are available in the Pa Enua.
Digital licensing system (Pa Enua)	Not available.	No digital infrastructure.	Planning phase for rollout; pilot underway on one island.	At least 80% of Pa Enua operate a digital licensing and compliance system.
Real-time inter-agency data sharing	Not active.	MOT and TLA lack access to Police or BCI records.	Pilot data-sharing agreements between MOT and Police/BCI in progress.	Integrated real-time platform with shared access across MOT, Police, BCI, and TLA.
TLA decisions and reports published	Select decisions shared via social media. TLA license approvals for Rarotonga and Aitutaki are published via social media.	hared via social nedia. TLA license pprovals for arotonga and itutaki are published specifications and published annually.		TLA decisions, compliance metrics, and enforcement reports are publicly available and updated quarterly.
Island Governments with trained compliance and enforcement staff	Fewer than 20%.	Ad hoc or no formal training.	Annual training programme has been established; and Island Governments are participating.	There is a significant increase in Island Governments who have trained compliance and enforcement staff with digital access.
Island Governments with licensing authority	0%.	Licensing handled centrally.	Delegated authority piloted in select islands.	Licensing authority devolved with accountability frameworks in place.
Licensing revenue ring- fenced for transport	0% earmarked.	Status quo.	Explore the feasibility of earmarking for transport-related improvements.	License revenue is ring-fenced for infrastructure investment and regulatory and enforcement activities.

Risks if Not Addressed

- Governance gaps will continue to undermine enforcement and public safety.
- Outdated laws will continue to cause regulatory confusion and inefficiencies.
- Licensing and compliance will remain paperbased and inaccessible in the Pa Enua.
- Fragmentation will weaken trust between agencies and reduce service quality and public trust.
- Funding will continue to be misallocated or under-utilised due to lack of mandate clarity.

Strong leadership and effective governance are the foundation of a modern transport system. By clarifying roles, consolidating laws, and building institutional capability, the Government can deliver reliable, equitable, and accountable services to all Cook Islanders – from Rarotonga to the most remote Pa Enua.

Please refer to the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy Technical Background Report for detailed analysis of this policy pillar and the associated actions required.



POLICY PILLAR 2: SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE RESILIENCE

POLICY OBJECTIVE

Promote affordable and accessible low-emission transport, reduce private vehicle dependency, and build a climate-resilient land transport system that protects people, infrastructure, and the environment.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The Cook Islands land transport sector is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and is increasingly vulnerable to climate impacts. While the country emits relatively little globally, local emissions from road transport account for approximately 39% of total transport-related emissions. In 2017 the Cook Islands was ranked as the 18th highest in the world for registered vehicles per capita. There is no benchmark for what constitutes an acceptable number of vehicles for the country. Rising vehicle numbers, absent heavy vehicle restrictions, limited public transport, and ageing infrastructure heighten climate risks, air pollution, congestion, road degradation, and vehicle end-of-life challenges.

With its high exposure to sea level rise, extreme weather, and erosion, the Cook Islands must integrate climate resilience into land transport planning. Transitioning to low-emission vehicles, strengthening infrastructure, and shifting to

sustainable mobility are critical to protect communities, reduce future costs, and meet national and global climate goals. Achieving these climate aligned transport outcomes will require stronger enforcement of vehicle standards and emission controls, expanding and incentivising lower impact accessible transport options, supported by sufficient funding and technical capacity within the responsible agencies.

This includes alignment with:

- · NSDA 2020+ Goals 3, 4, 6, 7, 11 and 12
- The Climate Change Policy 2018–2028
- · The Paris Agreement

ALIGNMENT WITH GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Manage emissions and protect ecosystems.



RESILIENCE

Build climate-proof infrastructure.



Act early to reduce environmental harm.



Balance economic, environmental, and social outcomes.

MITIGATING AND ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Reduce emissions and increase infrastructure resilience.



KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Promote Clean and Low-Emission Vehicles

- Encourage uptake of electric and hybrid vehicles through targeted tax reform and incentives.
- · Introduce emissions standards and update the vehicle classification system.
- Work with importers to restrict high-emissions vehicles and implement carbon-based vehicle charges.
- Enable capacity and resourcing of regulatory and enforcement including relevant border management agencies
- Support and raise awareness of the Advance Recovery Disposal Fee (ARDF) Scheme and integrate battery and EV end-of-life management.
- Pilot public sector fleet conversion, then extend to rental and private fleets.

Strengthen Climate-Resilient Infrastructure

- Require climate impact assessments for all new roads and upgrades.
- Prioritise nature-based solutions (e.g. vegetation buffers, raised roads, shade and beautification schemes).
- Ensure all infrastructure includes accessibility for all levels of mobility.
- Update vehicle type, size and weight regulations to reflect road capacity and limit long-term damage.
- Collaborate with ICI, CIIC, and CCCI to align roading standards with the Climate Change Policy.
- Enable capacity and resourcing of regulatory and enforcement agencies.

Enable Mode Shift and Reduce Car Dependence

- Develop and promote reliable and affordable public transport options for Rarotonga and selected Pa Enua.
- Incentivise public transport use for students, retirees, and people with disabilities.
- Update transport license type and vehicle types to reflect load capacity.
- Update driver's license classifications to reflect type of motor vehicle driven.
- Improve accessibility and safety of public transport – including bus and bus stop design,

- service schedules, and infrastructure.
- Invest in walkable, shaded, safe footpaths and cycling infrastructure.
- · Improve connectivity between communities and services without increasing vehicle use.
- Introduce parking meters and pricing schemes in high-demand areas to manage car use.
- Establish and promote e-bike, scooter, and car-sharing platforms in both urban and Pa Enua areas.
- Support workplace travel change programs (e.g., bike fleets, executive leadership by example).
- Promote safe pedestrian crossings and trafficcalming infrastructure near schools and markets.
- Enable capacity and resourcing of regulatory, governance and enforcement agencies.
- Promote international bus stop design standards and guidelines.
- Run awareness campaigns to motivate mode change and address perceptions of public transport.
- Discourage multiple vehicle ownership with tiered licensing fees and promote non-car alternatives.

Improve Public Transport Accessibility and Inclusion

- Invest in accessible bus fleets with low floors, ramps, air-conditioning, and secure seating.
- Extend bus services to the Ara Metua and increase the frequency of both clockwise and anticlockwise services.
- Introduce on-demand shuttle services and explore mobile essential services (e.g. banking, healthcare).
- Provide free Wi-Fi and integrate realtime information systems to enhance rider experience.
- Introduce fare subsidy schemes for vulnerable populations, free fares for children, retirees and people with disabilities.
- Promote the school bus service by providing reduced or free fares for students.
- Promote bus fare subsidy for large scale events to discourage individual vehicle use.
- · Promote best-practice bus stop design, placement, and safety infrastructure.

- Engage villages to co-design innovative and culturally appropriate bus stops.
- Conduct community research to understand local travel needs.

Manage Vehicle Imports and End-of-Life Impacts

- · Regulate import conditions (e.g. age, emissions, engine size, quality).
- Implement and monitor the Advance Recovery Disposal Fee (ARDF) scheme inclusive of recycling and disposing of electric vehicle batteries and restoring baling/export operations.
- Ensure sustainable access to vehicle parts are available for the Pa Enua.
- Monitor and report on de-registered vehicles and end-of-life stockpiles across all islands.
- Reassess levy structures for older and heavyduty vehicles to reflect lifecycle impact.
- Enable capacity and resourcing of regulatory, governance and enforcement agencies.

Monitor and Reduce Pollution Impacts

- Rebuild capacity to monitor land transport emissions, air and noise pollutants.
- Integrate pollution standards into the Transport Act and WOF system.
- Promote low-noise and clean engine standards for new vehicle imports.
- Establish baseline data and track progress towards reduced exposure in high-traffic areas.

Reform Licensing, Fees, and Vehicle Management

- Adjust license fee structure to reflect vehicle emissions, engine size, and road impact.
- Explore equitable cost recovery options for public road and safety infrastructure.
- Ensure micro-mobility devices (e.g. e-scooters) are registered and included in road safety policy.
- Promote equity in vehicle access without penalising lower-income users.

WHAT'S NEEDED TO SUCCEED . . .



POLICY REFORM

Finalise electric vehicle (EV) incentives and update emissions legislation.



INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS

Embed climate resilience into road design and location.



TECHNOLOGY AND SYSTEMS

 Expand EV charging network; support battery recycling; consider technology that enables real time insights and cost recovery and expanded hire and ride share options.



BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

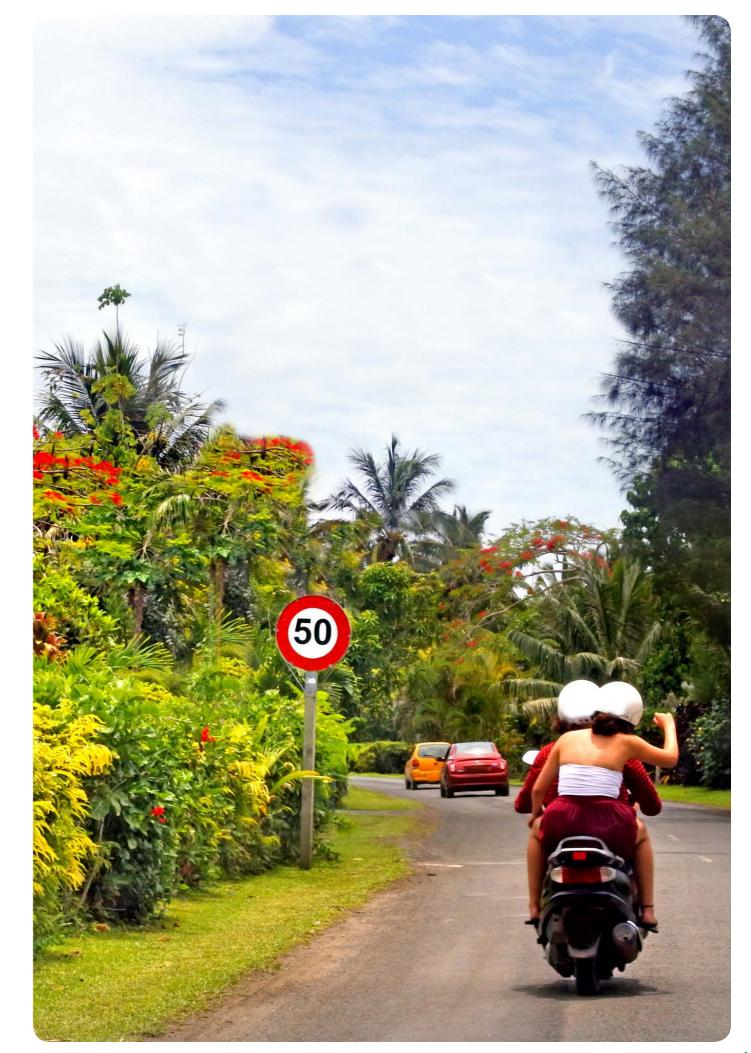
Promote walking, cycling, and use of public transport.



INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

Align MOT, CCCI, NES, and Island Governments on delivery.





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MEASURING PROGRESS

The following indicators support tracking progress of the policy implementation for this policy pillar:

Indicator	Current State	Low	Moderate	High
Low-emissions transport uptake and climate- proofing of infrastructure	Limited climate risks are considered in road planning. Low % EV charging or battery recovery systems in place.	Limited climate change and emergency resilience considered in road design and construction standards of new roads and maintenance repairs.	All new roads are Some new roads are assessed for climate risks. Basic public EV charging infrastructure is available in Rarotonga. ARDF scheme is active and monitored.	Significant increase in new infrastructure meets national climate resilience standards. EV public charging infrastructure is available in Rarotonga, and feasibility assessments have been conducted to explore potential expansion into the Pa Enua. End-of-life vehicle and battery recovery system operates effectively.
% of electric or hybrid vehicle imports	Estimated < 5%	Fewer than 10% of new vehicles are electric or hybrid.	Some growth in electric or hybrid vehicle imports. Official statistics to include EV statistics.	Increase in new low- or zero-emission vehicle imports.
EV incentives in force	Import levy exemption (Import tax discount) only (2018), limited uptake.	No additional policies or public awareness.	New incentives introduced, moderate uptake.	Widespread incentives in place, strong uptake.
Automotive technicians to be trained in EV servicing	Fewer than 5% of Automotive Dealers.	No further growth in automotive dealers with trained EV auto technicians.	Moderate growth of automotive dealers with EV auto technicians.	All automotive dealers with at least one EV auto technician.
Climate resilience in road design	Not systematically assessed or applied.	Few or no roads assessed for climate risk.	All new major roads assessed for climate risk.	All roads designed using national climate resilience standards.
EV charging stations	2 public stations in Rarotonga, rarely used, preference for use of private charging stations.	No expansion, low public use continues.	Basic EV charging infrastructure across the transport network in Rarotonga.	Increased use of EV charging infrastructure across Rarotonga and feasibility assessment made for Pa Enua.
Public sector fleet electrification	Not yet started.	Initial pilot planned.	Fleet conversion initiated in selected ministries.	Majority of small and medium public fleet vehicles converted to EVs.
Active transport infrastructure	Minimal footpaths or bike lanes outside Avarua.	Few improvements, limited use.	New paths and lanes in key areas of Rarotonga.	Network of shaded and accessible paths across Rarotonga and Pa Enua.

Indicator	Current State	Low	Moderate	High
ARDF (battery and vehicle disposal)	Planned for 2024, not yet operational.	Delayed implementation.	Operational in Rarotonga.	Operational across all islands with effective monitoring.
Vehicle import controls	Weak or inconsistently applied.	No controls beyond age or size limits.	Controls to include emissions, engine size, energy efficiency.	Full integration of carbon- based and lifecycle criteria and inclusive service design.
Public transport accessibility	Limited; some buses not wheelchair accessible.	Affordability unchanged, no backroad service and no upgrades to bus stops.	Improved design and schedule coverage.	Fully licensed, affordable, accessible, public transport with inclusive service and design.
Pollution monitoring for transport	Not currently active.	No functional monitoring system.	Pilot monitoring program re- established.	Active nationwide emissions and air quality monitoring system.



Risks if Not Addressed

- Transport emissions increase and delay progress toward net-zero.
- Road failures and losses increase due to storm damage and erosion.
- Low uptake of EVs or shared mobility due to public uncertainty or lack of infrastructure.
- Environmental and health risks from unmanaged end-of-life vehicles.

Sustainability is central to future-ready transport. By investing in cleaner vehicles, resilient infrastructure, and inclusive alternatives to car use, the Government will reduce emissions, improve wellbeing, and ensure the Cook Islands meets its climate and development commitments.

Please refer to the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy Technical Background Report for detailed analysis of this policy pillar and the associated actions required.



POLICY PILLAR 3: ROAD SAFETY

POLICY OBJECTIVE

Reduce road crash fatalities and injuries — and their wider social and economic impact — through safer infrastructure, effective enforcement, and sustained public education.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Road safety is a public health issue. Crashes cause injury, disability, and death with serious impacts on families, productivity, and health services. Data shows men account for 82% of road fatalities in the Cook Islands since 2015. Most fatal crashes occur in Te Au o Tonga on Rarotonga, involving cars and motorbikes.

Risky driving behaviours such as speeding, unsafe overtaking, lack of helmet use, impaired driving, and driving under the influence remain common issues across the Cook Islands. Particularly, driving under the influence has contributed to a number of fatal crashes and is a key factor behind recent proposed amendments to the Transport Act 1966. These amendments aim to strengthen enforcement and reduce harm caused by alcoholrelated incidents on our roads. In addition to unsafe driving behaviours, infrastructure gaps, poor signage and vehicle defects compound the risk faced by road users.

Current road safety systems rely on fragmented leadership and inconsistent enforcement. For example, helmet laws exist, but compliance is low, the Road Safety Council exists, but there is no clear

ownership for implementation of the Road Safety Strategy. Road safety outcomes depend not only on public awareness and infrastructure, but also on the enforcement capacity of Police and MOT. Clear mandates and resourcing these agencies is essential to deliver consistent community level impact.

This Policy supports:

- NSDA 2020+ Goal 6 and Goal 15
- The Cook Islands Road Safety Strategy 2016–2020
- SDG Target 3.6: Halve global road traffic deaths and injuries
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030



ALIGNMENT WITH GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Makes road design and rules safer for all users.



Protects vulnerable users — children, cyclists, pedestrians, and the elderly.



EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Promotes responsible behaviour and informed choices.



Uses data to track outcomes and improve decisions.

KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Strengthen Leadership and Coordination

- Appoint a clearly mandated national lead agency to coordinate road safety strategy, regulation, and public awareness efforts across ministries and stakeholders including the role of the Road Safety Council. Review and revise the Road Safety Strategy (2016– 2020) to address current challenges and clarify leadership responsibilities.
- Embed safety actions across all land transport policies, licensing frameworks, and infrastructure plans.
- Coordinate inter-agency collaboration between MOT, Police, ICI, Te Marae Ora, and local government.

Improve Enforcement and Law Compliance

- Train and resource Police to target high-risk behaviours such as speeding, drink-driving, and reckless driving.
- Strengthen MOT's monitoring and enforcement of licensing conditions (e.g. vehicle upkeep, smoking bans, helmet compliance).
- Clarify enforcement roles and legal responsibilities for e-bikes, e-scooters, and heavy vehicles.
- Reinforce helmet import standards and improve monitoring in partnership with Customs and Police.
- Explore community-based enforcement (e.g. warranting roadside wardens).
- Amend licensing system requirements for high-speed motorcycles to reduce uptake and promote safer vehicles.

Invest in Safer Infrastructure

- Upgrade signage, lane markings, lighting, and pedestrian crossings — especially on Ara Tapu, Ara Metua, and connecting roads.
- Prioritise safety-focused design in all new road and facility upgrades (e.g. traffic-calming, bollards and safe carpark entry/exit).
- Improve accessibility and safety at bus stops, car parks, and school zones.
- Develop and enforce safety protocols for roadside maintenance and community groups.
- Incentivise local government and village-level beautification and landscaping to enhance safety and visibility.
- · Embed international road safety design

standards into legislation and planning rules.

Promote Behaviour Change and Awareness

- Run national road safety campaigns focused driver behaviour, speed, alcohol, helmets, and emerging risks (e.g. e-bikes).
- Integrate road safety education into schools, driver licensing, and public awareness programs.
- Partner with schools, community leaders, and transport operators to promote safe road behaviours.
- Promote awareness of proper roundabout use, emergency vehicle protocols, and pedestrian priority.
- Encourage shared messaging for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists to support mutual safety.

Protect Vulnerable Road Users

- Invest in safe, connected footpaths, pedestrian crossings, and cycleways across urban and rural areas.
- Introduce speed restrictions and road lane use requirements for e-bikes and scooters.
- Ensure public and school transport fleets are inclusive (e.g. ramps, low floors, accessible seating).
- Consider financial or regulatory incentives for vehicle modifications that support mobility and safety.
- Implement the license demerit point system and enable capacity and resourcing for respective agencies.
- Address roadside hazards including stray animals, obstructed shoulders, unsafe roadside cleaning practices, and informal events or fundraisers.



WHAT'S NEEDED TO SUCCEED . . .



LEADERSHIP

CAPACITY

FUNDING

Confirm MOT or Road Safety Council as national lead agency.

· Train Police, MOT, and Island Government personnel.



LEGAL REFORM



Clarify enforcement responsibilities and · Allocate dedicated road safety budget, for Rarotonga and the Pa Enua.



powers.

DATA SYSTEMS

· Improve crash data collection and analysis.



MEASURING PROGRESS

The following indicators support tracking progress of the policy implementation for this policy

Indicator	Current State	Low	Moderate	High
% reduction in annual road fatalities and number of serious injuries from 2024 baseline	Variable fatalities, no consistent decline since 2015.	Fatalities remain at current levels; coordination unclear.	Reduction in fatalities from 2024 baseline.	Zero road incidents/ crash-related deaths (Vision Zero).
Formal designation of national road safety lead agency	Not formally designated.	No agency formally tasked.	MOT or designated agency identified and resourced.	National lead agency coordinates safety policy and reports annually.
Police and MOT enforcement capacity	Under- resourced; training inconsistent.	Limited staff trained; ad hoc activity.	Increase of staff trained in enforcement protocols.	Fully trained and resourced enforcement teams across all islands.
Consistent helmet and safety law enforcement	Enforcement varies across islands.	Helmet enforcement not visible or prioritised.	Routine helmet checks in Rarotonga; ad hoc elsewhere. Helmet safety standards set, advocated for and enforced.	High helmet and safety law compliance.
Road safety education in schools and for new drivers	Ad hoc; not systematised.	No standard curriculum; minimal outreach.	Curriculum developed and introduced in most schools.	Road safety is taught in all schools and driver education programs.
Island Government engagement in road safety	Minimal involvement; requests from Pa Enua noted.	No formal role in road safety planning.	Some Island Governments run awareness campaigns.	Increase in Island Government and local enforcement partnerships engaged in awareness campaigns.
Crash data collection including public transport, analysis, and reporting system	Police-led; limited standardised analysis.	Crash data collected but not analysed or used.	Annual reporting of crash trends inclusive of public transport begins and data recorded on abandoned vehicles.	Crash data including public transport used to inform all planning; public dashboard available.

Risks if Not Addressed

- Continued preventable injuries and deaths
- Higher cost to health services and the economy
- Growing mistrust in transport and enforcement agencies
- Reputational damage affecting tourism and development partnerships

Road safety saves lives. By strengthening leadership, enforcement, education, and infrastructure, the Government can reduce crashes, protect vulnerable users, and build a culture of safety that benefits every island community.

Please refer to the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy Technical Background Report for detailed analysis of this policy pillar and the associated actions required.



POLICY PILLAR 4: PA ENUA ACCESS AND EQUITY

POLICY OBJECTIVE

Deliver tailored transport solutions that reflect the needs of the Pa Enua and ensure equitable access across all islands.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The Pa Enua face unique challenges distinct from Rarotonga. Populations are smaller, roads are less developed, and vehicles are fewer in number. In the Northern Group, communities rely heavily on maritime transport to navigate lagoons and travel between motu and airstrips. Fuel taxed for land use often powers boats, highlighting the strong interconnectedness of the land-sea transport relationship.

Many Pa Enua lack access to licensing, roadworthiness inspections, and enforcement. Delays in vehicle registration, ageing imports, poor road conditions, and limited funding reduce safety and reliability. Unlicensed school buses, informal rental services, and creative solutions—like towing children in trailers behind motorbikes—are common and raise safety and legal concerns.

In the Southern Group, the return of tourism post-COVID has led to private vehicles being rented informally. Operators seek temporary licensing frameworks and fairness across commercial, part-time, and informal providers. A lack of smart mobility solutions and poor internet, hampers safer alternatives like app-based ride services.

In the Northern Group, challenges include vehicle part access, maintaining vehicles across remote islands, and outdated laws that restrict contextappropriate transport innovations. Mechanic services are limited but supported by online assistance from Rarotonga. Awareness is also needed around risks of online vehicle purchasing and deregistration issues.

Customised support is critical to protect lives, enable economic participation, and promote equity across all islands. Local implementation relies on Island Governments being equipped to fulfil regulatory functions and monitor compliance, and tailored support and resources are needed to ensure these roles are delivered at the island level.

This is in alignment with policy:

- · NSDA 2020+ Goals 3, 6, 7, and 15
- · NIIP 2021
- Cook Islands Climate Change Policy 2018–2028
- Cook Islands Economic Development Strategy (EDS)



ALIGNMENT WITH GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Ensures fair access to safe, reliable transport across all islands.



RESILIENCE

Improves road durability and preparedness for climate events.



FIT-FOR-PURPOSE

Recognises the need for context-appropriate infrastructure and services.



TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Clarifies agency roles and responsibilities for Pa Enua delivery.

KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Strengthen Local Capacity and Governance

- Clarify and empower Island Governments to manage local transport planning, licensing and enforcement in collaboration with Police, ICI, and MOT.
- Ring-fence licensing revenue to support Pa Enua land transport infrastructure, including signage, lighting, road marking and upkeep.
- Deliver targeted training programmes for vehicle inspectors, mechanics, and heavy machinery operators (e.g., through CITTI or MOT).
- Establish basic Warrant of Fitness (WOF) and inspection services on each island that are fit for purpose, with provision for mobile and online support.
- Raise community awareness of WOF and registration processes and their link to road safety outcomes.
- Raise awareness of governance roles and responsibilities under the Infrastructure Act 2019 and the consolidated Transport Act.

Improve Vehicle Licensing and Compliance

- Enable on-island or mobile systems for vehicle registration, inspection, de-registration, and WOF processing.
- Introduce fit-for-purpose licensing and compliance standards that reflect local conditions (e.g., low speed environments).
- Strengthen compliance for rental, school transport, and community vehicles, including helmet use and safety checks.
- Review and clarify insurance and licensing for part-time, private, and commercial operators; provide for temporary tourism transport licences and insurance where applicable.

Address End-of-Life Vehicle Impacts

- Support safe and affordable removal of abandoned and expired vehicles, particularly second-hand imports from Rarotonga.
- Implement the Advance Recovery Disposal Fee (ARDF) scheme with Pa Enua with specific collection and transport pathways.
- Promote awareness of vehicle end-of-life responsibilities and disposal options.
- Explore solutions for managing electric vehicle battery and other hazardous vehicle waste from islands.

Invest in Fit-for-Purpose Infrastructure

- Maintain and upgrade roads based on local geography, usage patterns, and climate risk.
- Provide islands with access to road maintenance tools, including aggregate and coral, and sand and glass crushing equipment.
- Apply import standards to minimise damage from heavy machinery (e.g., requiring transporters for delivery).

Ensure Accessible Transport Services

- Support licensed school and community transport services with regular inspection and safety protocols.
- Promote inclusive vehicle design to support mobility for elderly, disabled, and vulnerable users.
- Enable visitor access to safe transport through price incentives, on-demand shuttles, or digital booking platforms.
- Consider subsidised school and visitor transport, including for Pa Enua-based children travelling on licensed school buses.
- Review and amend legislation on trailers and small vehicles to allow safe low-speed alternatives where standard vehicles are not viable.
- Review legislation on trailers and small vehicles to allow safe low-speed alternatives where standard vehicles are not viable.
- Review import restrictions on older vehicles to ensure quality vehicles are being imported.
- Consider subsidised transport options for Pa Enua school children and visitors.

Improve Coordination and Delivery

- Establish formal inter-agency coordination mechanisms for roading, enforcement, licensing, and safety delivery.
- Deliver Pa Enua-specific road safety campaigns in collaboration with Island Governments and Police.
- Ensure adequate resourcing for Police enforcement and community engagement across all islands.
- Explore solutions with motor vehicle dealers, air transport and sea transport operators, and logistics agents for Pa Enua access to vehicle parts.

MEASURING PROGRESS

The following indicators support tracking progress of the policy implementation for this policy pillar:

Indicator	Current State	Low	Moderate	High
Local transport plans	None in place.	At least one southern group island has a transport plan.	50% of Pa Enua islands local transport plans.	All Pa Enua have sustainable transport plans tailored to local needs.
Licensing and WOF availability	Aitutaki has the ability to Licence and WOF. Aitutaki has the ability to Licence and WOF. Only one island has the ability to licence and WOF. Basic or mobile licence operates on at least the Southern Group with WOF and reginate available on at least additional Souther Feasibility study or Northern Group of basic licensing and		Basic or mobile licensing operateson at least half of the Southern Group Islands, with WOF and registration available on at least one additional Southern Island. Feasibility study on Northern Group offering basic licensing and WOF and registration.	Basic or mobile licensing operates on all Southern Islands, with WOF and registration services available on at least two Southern Islands. Pending outcome of the feasibility study for the Northern Group.
Enforcement and inspections	Limited; no certified mechanics and limited Police on most islands.	Limited compliance checks or vehicle inspections conducted. Limited Police enforcement personal available.	Community transport services and rentals subject to occasional checks. At least half of the Southern and two Northern Group Islands have Police and Government enforcement in place.	Routine inspections conducted by trained local staff; Police and South group Island Governments enforcement in place. At least one Northern Group Island with community transport services and at least two Northern Group Islands with Police and Island Government enforcement in place.
Vehicle disposal systems Informal or absent; stockpiles of ageing vehicles growing. Abandoned vehicles accumulate without disposal options.		ARDF supports safe removal of vehicles on at least half the Pa Enua Islands.	Comprehensive ARDF system operational, with collection, transport, and disposal solutions in all Pa Enua.	
Road condition and suitability	Varies; some roads unsuitable for sealing or heavy loads.	Fit-for-purpose upgrades and maintenance occur on key routes.	Fit-for-purpose upgrades and maintenance occur on key routes on at least 20% of the Southern Group Islands.	Roads reflect community needs; supported by access to maintenance tools and aggregate supply.
Public access to transport	Inconsistent; limited services and low and community		Licensed school and visitor transport services operate in at least half of Southern Group Islands.	All islands offer accessible, safe, and licensed transport for schools, communities, and visitors.

Risks if Not Addressed

- · Road safety and compliance will deteriorate further
- Tourism, education, and health services will face transport constraints
- Abandoned vehicles and poor road conditions will have negative environmental impact
- · Island Governments will remain under-resourced to deliver on their responsibilities

Equity in transport access means delivering solutions that work for every island. By investing in local capacity, tailored infrastructure, and effective licensing systems, the Government can strengthen resilience and inclusion across the Pa Enua — ensuring no community is left behind.

Please refer to the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy Technical Background Report for detailed analysis of this policy pillar and the associated actions required.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The development of a successful land transport system cannot succeed without strong partnerships. Effective stakeholder engagement enables better policy design, increases transparency, and ensures transport solutions are responsive to community needs and national priorities.

The transport sector both influences and depends on a wide range of stakeholders - from public agencies and private operators to

island communities and international partners. Each group contributes unique knowledge, responsibilities, and perspectives that are vital to developing a functional, equitable system.

Stakeholders vary in influence and interest. Some set national direction, while others implement services or experience transport outcomes directly. The table below summarises stakeholder groupings and their strategic relevance:

Stakeholder Group	Influence	Interest	Role in Policy Success
Government ministries (MOT, MFEM, OPM, ICI, CIIC)	High	High	Policy development, leadership, financing, coordination, infrastructure delivery
Island Governments	Medium-High	High	Local implementation, licensing, and engagement
Police and enforcement agencies	High	Medium	Enforcement of transport law and safety standards
Transport Licensing Authority (TLA), Land Transport Authority and MOT.	Medium-High	High	Licensing oversight, compliance monitoring
State-owned enterprises	Medium	Medium	Service provision, innovation, energy supply and conversion
Private operators and dealers	Medium	High	Service provision, vehicle supply, and innovation
Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) and community organisations	Low-Medium	High	Advocacy for equity, safety, and environmental responsibility
Youth, women's groups, and vulnerable populations	Low-Medium	High	Voices of end users and lived experience
Road safety and climate advocates	Medium	High	Subject matter expertise, education, and policy accountability
Development and technical partners	High	Medium-High	Funding, technical assistance, global best practice alignment



IMPORTANCE OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Throughout 2023, MOT facilitated a series of targeted consultations across Rarotonga and the Pa Enua. These workshops, meetings, and written inputs shaped the Policy's direction, highlighting priorities such as:

- · Clearer governance roles
- Road safety enforcement
- Licensing reform
- Emissions reduction
- Public and active transport
- Data gaps and systems reform
- Pa Enua-specific constraints (e.g. vehicle disposal, WOF access)

This engagement revealed not only systemic issues but also deep community knowledge and

innovation potential. Many stakeholders proposed constructive solutions — from licensing revenue reform to trialling local training and shared transport platforms.

Moving forward, stakeholder collaboration will be vital to:

- Maintain transparency and public trust
- Support behaviour change and service uptake
- Enable adaptation and feedback throughout implementation
- Ensure inclusive access across all islands and groups

Stakeholders will also expect progress. The impetus is now on the Ministry of Transport and all supporting partners to bring everyone together on the journey over the next decade.



KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND ROLES

The following stakeholders have critical roles in policy implementation. Continued coordination will support national goals and ensure long-term success.

The Ministry of Transport will lead stakeholder engagement throughout implementation.

It will:

- Promote open dialogue to reflect real community needs
- Coordinate shared planning to align delivery across agencies and islands
- Provide public reporting to build trust and support accountability

Ongoing engagement will keep the policy responsive, inclusive and effective – so all Cook Islanders benefit from safer, more resilient transport.



MOT

Lead agency: policy delivery, inter-agency coordination, and monitoring.

ICI

Road design, delivery, and maintenance across the islands.

MFEM

Budget planning, infrastructure financing, and economic analysis.

ОРМ

Strategic oversight and cross-government alignment.

Island Governments Localised licensing, compliance, road oversight, and community engagement.

Police

Enforcement of road safety laws and support for compliance systems.

TL

Licensing approval, operator monitoring, and policy enforcement.

BCI

Management of registration data and annual licence payments.

Private Sector Operators & Dealers Transport service delivery, fleet safety, vehicle imports, and business innovation.

NGOs

Advocacy for gender equity, safety, environment, and vulnerable communities.

Community & Youth Groups Voices of transport users, including for access, affordability, and safety.

CCCI

Integration of transport systems into climate adaptation planning and emissions strategy.

Road Safety Council & Advocates Public education, inter-agency support, and community-level initiatives.

International Partners and Donors Technical guidance, capacity building, financing, and global reporting alignment.



POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The coordination of implementation efforts to the MOT, in consultation with supporting agencies, achieve the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy to assess each action for its feasibility, relevance 2025-2035 will be led by the MOT and supported by and alignment with current priorities. Inclusion key stakeholders. To support coordination, a brief matrix of the key focus areas for implementation commitment to delivery, but rather acknowledges and the associated actions against each of the four pillars is included in Annex 1. This matrix also on potential contribute to towards the Policy's includes mapping to the detailed actions outlined objectives. Prioritisation will be based on impact, in the Technical Background Report.

Implementation of areas and actions should be Where further detail is required, actions are adaptive and performance-driven, designed to respond to changing needs and ensure delivery remains aligned with the Policy's goals. MOT will facilitate regular check-ins over the policy timeframe to prioritise actions with key stakeholders and garner support for programmes where scaling up is needed.

The actions presented in the implementation and tracking progress over time. matrix represent a set of possible pathways to delivery the Policy. It will be the responsibility of

and alignment with current priorities. Inclusion of an action in this Policy does not imply a fixed its strategic merit and ability to shift the dial readiness and alignment with Policy targets.

mapped to the Technical Background Report, which provides the evidence base, institutional context, and rational behind each recommendation.

Policy coordination should be structured around the key focus areas, rather than individual actions. These focus areas offer the most effective basis for designing programmes aligning agency efforts

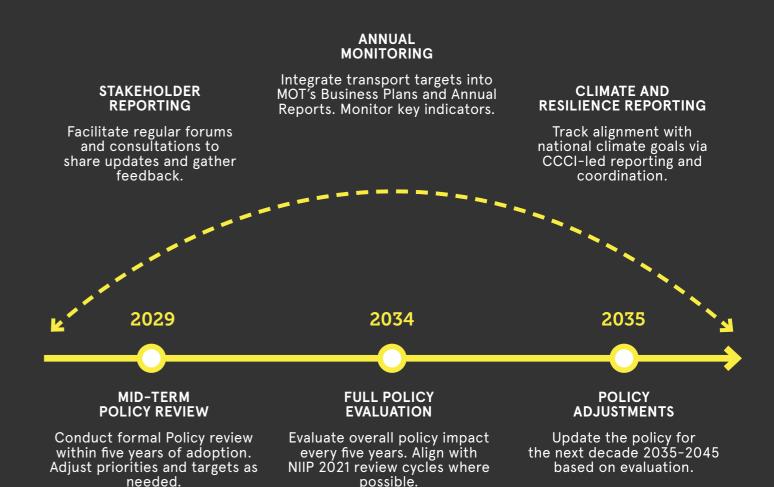


Tracking progress ensures land transport investments deliver real and measurable results. Monitoring helps identify gaps early, adapt to new challenges, and maintain transparency. Regular reporting builds public confidence and ensures policy implementation stays aligned with national and community priorities.

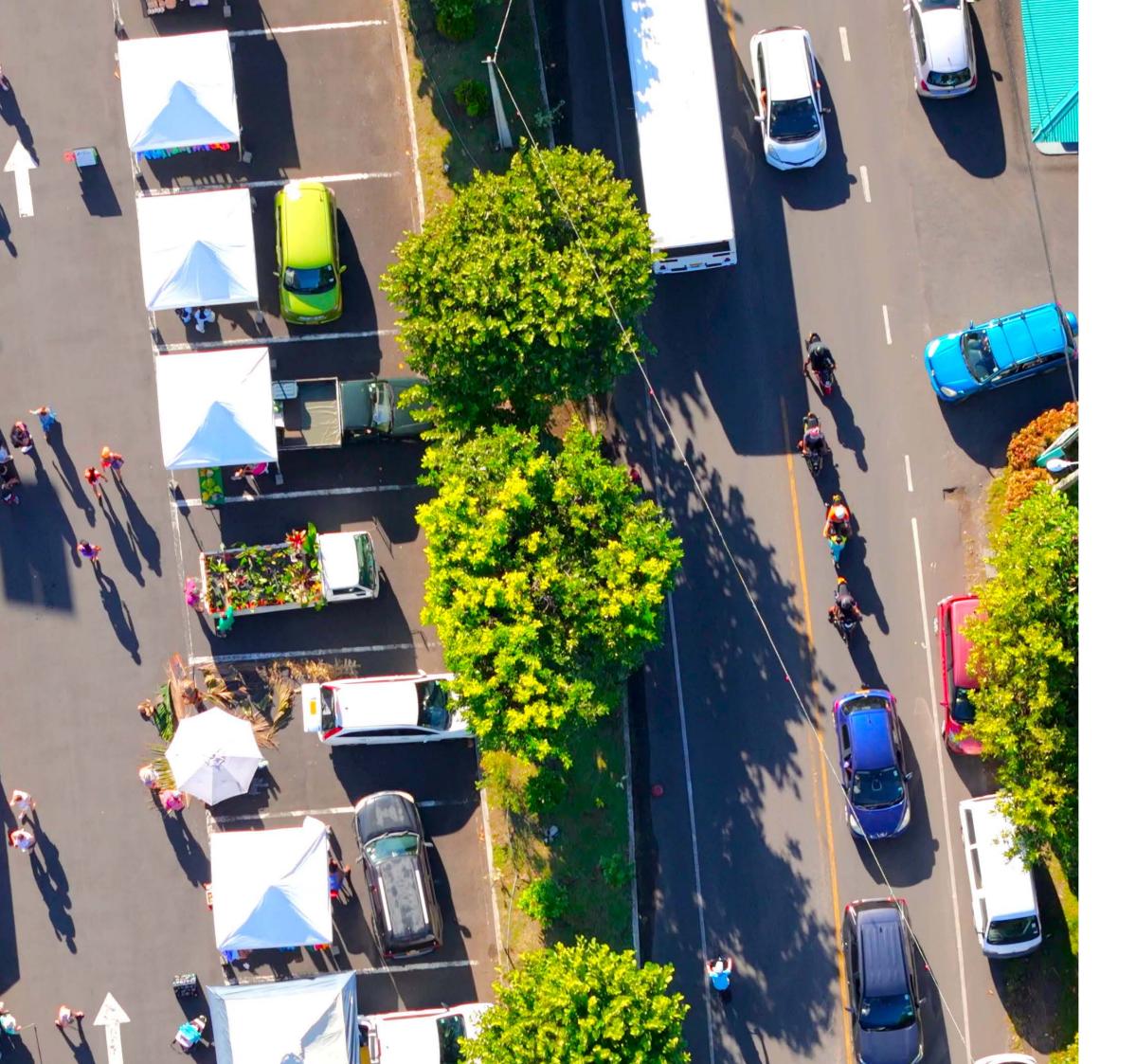
MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Monitoring will be guided by a structured actions, and key stakeholders required to support framework linked to the four Policy Pillars key each of the policy pillars. This will be embedded focus areas for implementation, indicators, and ultimately the overall targets set out in this policy. Annex 1 provides the key focus areas, associated

and streamlined through the MOT's annual business planning and performance reports.



This approach ensures that land transport progress remains transparent, evidence-based, and responsive to change. Key implementation risks have been assessed to support adaptive management and resilience. A full Risk and Mitigation Framework is included in the Cook Islands Land Transport Policy Technical Background Report.



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

мот

Lead agency: monitoring, evaluation, coordination, and reporting.

ICI

Provide infrastructure condition data and project updates.

MFEM

Use monitoring outputs to inform national budgeting and planning.

CCCI

Monitor climate and emissions alignment.

Island Governments Contribute local insights, particularly from Pa Enua, and support data collection.

Stakeholders Participate in consultations, provide feedback, and promote accountability.

MONITORING RISKS & TRANSPARENCY

MOT acknowledges that monitoring may be affected by limited data availability, resourcing, and institutional capacity. To mitigate these risks:

- Capacity-building and training programmes will be delivered to key agencies
- Data systems will be upgraded to enable realtime tracking and inter-agency coordination
- Partnerships with technical agencies and donors will be used to improve tools and analysis

Evaluation results will be made publicly available through MOT Annual Reports and accessible summary publications. This reinforces transparency, promotes learning, and ensures Cook Islanders can track progress toward a safer, more sustainable transport system.

ANNEX 1: OUR IMPLEMENTATION AREAS & ACTIONS

PURPOSE OF THIS ANNEX

This Annex lists all implementation actions referenced in the policy. It maps each action to the Technical Background Report, identifies the lead stakeholders, and notes whether delivery requires legislative change or operational action. Key stakeholders will work together to prioritise these actions for implementation led by MOT.



POLICY PILLAR 1: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

No.	Action Point	Reference	Legislative / Operational	Stake- holders
1.1	Clarify Roles and Responsibilities			
1.1.1	Amend the Licensing Act to establish the Minister of Transport as the controlling Minister consistent with MOT's functions as the transport sector regulatory authority and clarify the role of the Registrar of Motor Vehicles as Chair of the TLA.	5.1.1.1, 5.1.1.2	Legislative	МОТ
1.1.2	Designate the Ministry of Transport (MOT) as Secretariat to the Transport Licensing Authority (TLA), with responsibility for all licensing data and decisions implementation.	5.1.1.3	Legislative	MOT
1.1.3	Define clear Terms of Reference for TLA members clarifying purpose and focus; expand membership (5–7) with appropriate qualifications.	5.1.1.5, 5.1.1.6	Legislative	МОТ
1.1.4	Review and implement Schedule amendments to the Infrastructure Act related to traffic signage and parking protocols.	5.1.1.7, 5.1.1.8	Legislative	ICI, MOT
1.1.5	Clarify enforcement powers under the Transport Act to support Police in issuing fines for offenses including operating unlicensed taxicabs, rental and passenger services.	5.1.4.8	Legislative	MOT
1.1.6	Review and clarify the definition of 'passenger service' in the Licensing Act to ensure consistent application across all operators, including charitable services.	5.1.3.1	Legislative	МОТ
1.2	Strengthen Whole-of-Government Coordination	on		
1.2.1	Ensure legislative amendments to the Transport and Infrastructure Acts are effectively communicated and implemented across relevant ministries.	5.1.1.7	Legislative	ICI, MOT
1.2.2	Include the Secretary of Transport in structured coordination with ICI and Police on land transport infrastructure.	5.1.1.8	Legislative	ICI, MOT
1.2.3	Transfer WOF oversight responsibilities from Police to MOT to streamline accountability.	5.1.4.3	Legislative	МОТ
1.2.4	Coordinate with Police and Customs on enforcement and awareness around safety helmet import and sales standards.	5.1.4.1, 5.1.4.2	Operational	Customs, Police MOT
1.2.5	Embed Tarai Vaka Process (TVP) into land transport delivery systems.		Operational	МОТ

1.3	Build Institutional Capability and Support Loca	al Delivery		
1.3.1	Strengthen the TLA's mandate and internal capacity to deliver a sustainable, safe, and collaborative transport system.	5.1.1.4	Operational	МОТ
1.3.2	Establish and maintain public registers of accredited WOF garages and transport mechanics.	5.1.4.4, 5.1.4.5	Operational	MOT
1.3.3	Ensure all new land transport infrastructure designs are accessible for users with varied mobility levels.	5.1.4.7	Operational	MOT
1.3.4	Align WOF renewal timing for Pa Enua-based vehicles to reflect operational context.	5.1.4.6	Legislative	MOT
1.4	Enable Data Sharing and Digital Systems			
1.4.1	Digitise licensing systems: enable online renewals, stagger expiry dates, and streamline update requirements.	5.1.3.2, 5.1.3.3	Operational	МОТ
1.4.2	Create digital registers for emerging modes (e.g. e-scooters, e-bikes) and update legislation to include shared vehicle platforms.	5.1.3.4, 5.1.3.5	Legislative	МОТ
1.4.3	Build systems to track licensing and vehicle data at the island level to support more responsive local planning.	5.1.2.2, 5.1.2.3	Operational	MOT
1.4.4	Collaborate with Customs and Police to monitor helmet imports and raise supplier compliance awareness.	5.1.4.1, 5.1.4.2	Operational	Customs, MOT
1.4.5	Link MOT, TLA, BCI, and Police through a national transport data platform.	5.1.1.3	Operational	MOT, TLA, BCI, Police
1.4.6	Require annual TLA reports on compliance and licensing performance reports from TLA.	5.1.1.3, 5.1.1.5, 5.1.1.6	Operational	MOT, TLA
1.4.7	Require annual Motor Vehicle Dealers reports on compliance and licensing performance reports from Motor Vehicle Dealers.		Operational	MOT, MVD
1.5	Explore Funding and Reform of Licensing Revo	enues		
1.5.1	Explore options to allow vehicle licensing revenue to be retained at island level for roads, enforcement, and safety activities.	5.1.2.1, 5.1.2.3	Legislative / Operational	МОТ
1.5.2	Explore revised vehicle fee structures to promote affordable and equitable access, including incentives for low-emission and smaller vehicles (e.g. motorcycles).	5.1.3.7	Operational	MOT, INTAFF
1.5.3	Explore broader funding mechanisms such as developer levies, targeted fuel taxes, or tourism surcharges—while ensuring affordability for lowincome users.	5.1.2.4	Operational	MOT, MFEM
1.5.4	Explore policy options for vehicle insurance that balance safety objectives with household affordability and the cost of living.	5.1.4.9	Operational	МОТ
1.5.5	Work with MFEM to consider establishing a dedicated Motor Vehicle Dealers Fund.	5.1.2.1,	Operational	МОТ



POLICY PILLAR 2: SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE RESILIENCE

No.	Action Point	Refer- ence	Legislative / Operational	Stake- holders
2.1	Dromoto Cloop and Low Emission Vohioles			
Z.1	Promote Clean and Low-Emission Vehicles			MOT
2.1.1	Encourage uptake of electric and hybrid vehicles through targeted tax reform and incentives.	5.2.1.1	Operational	MOT, REDD, CCCI
2.1.2	Introduce emissions standards and update the vehicle classification system.	5.2.6.1	Legislative	MOT, REDD, CCCI
2.1.3	Work with importers to restrict high-emissions vehicles and implement carbon-based vehicle charges.	5.2.6.3, 5.2.6.6	Legislative	MOT, CCCI
2.1.4	Enable capacity and resourcing of regulatory and enforcement including relevant border management agencies.	5.2.6.4	Operational	MOT, Police
2.1.5	Raise awareness of Advance Recovery Disposal Fee (ARDF) and integrate battery and EV end-of-life management.	5.2.6.5	Operational	ICI, MFEM
2.1.6	Pilot public sector fleet conversion, then extend to rental and private fleets.	5.2.3.12, 5.2.3.14	Operational	REDD, MOT
2.2	Strengthen Climate-Resilient Infrastructure			
2.2.1	Require climate impact assessments for all new roads and upgrades.	5.2.4.1	Legislative / Operational	ICI, CCCI, CIIC, MOT
2.2.2	Prioritise nature-based solutions (e.g. vegetation buffers, raised roads, shade and, beautification schemes).	5.2.2.12	Operational	ICI, CIIC, MOT
2.2.3	Ensure all infrastructure includes accessibility for all levels of mobility.	5.2.2.8, 5.2.3.11	Operational	CIIC, ICI, INTAFF, MOT
2.2.4	Update vehicle type, size and weight regulations to reflect road capacity and limit long-term damage.	5.2.6.2	Legislative	MOT, ICI
2.2.5	Collaborate with ICI, CIIC, and CCCI to align roading standards with the Climate Change Policy.	5.2.4.1	Legislative / Operational	CCCI, CIIC, ICI, MOT
2.2.6	Enable capacity and resourcing of regulatory and enforcement agencies.	5.2.6.4	Operational	МОТ

2.3	Enable Mode Shift and Reduce Car Dependen	ce				
2.3.1	Develop and promote reliable and affordable public transport options for Rarotonga and selected Pa Enua.	5.2.3.1	Operational	МОТ		
2.3.2	Incentivise public transport use with insentives for students, retirees, and people with disabilities.	5.2.3.8, 5.2.3.9	Operational	MFEM, MOE		
2.3.3	Update transport license type and vehicle types to reflect load capacity.	5.2.6.2	Legislative	МОТ		
2.3.4	Update driver's license classifications to reflect type of motor vehicle driven.	5.2.6.2	Legislative	МОТ		
2.3.5	Improve accessibility and safety of public transport — including bus and bus stop design, service schedules, and infrastructure.	5.2.3.5, 5.2.3.13	Operational	ICI, MOT		
2.3.6	Invest in walkable, shaded, and safe footpaths and cycling infrastructure.	5.2.2.8, 5.2.2.11, 5.2.2.12	Operational	CIIC, ICI		
2.3.7	Improve connectivity between communities and services without increasing vehicle use.	5.2.3.4	Operational	ТВС		
2.3.8	Introduce parking meters and pricing schemes in high-demand areas to manage car use.	5.2.2.13	Operational	CIIC, ICI		
2.3.9	Establish and promote e-bike, scooter, and car- sharing platforms in both urban and Pa Enua areas.	5.2.2.3, 5.2.2.4	Operational	CIIC, ICI, MOT		
2.3.10	Support workplace travel change programs (e.g., bike fleets, executive leadership by example).	5.2.3.16, 5.2.3.17	Operational	МОТ		
2.3.11	Promote safe pedestrian crossings and traffic- calming infrastructure near schools and markets.	5.2.2.9, 5.2.2.10	Operational	CIIC, ICI		
2.3.12	Enable capacity and resourcing of regulatory, governance and enforcement agencies.	5.2.6.4	Operational	МОТ		
2.3.13	Promote international bus stop design standards and guidelines.	5.2.2.7	Operational	ICI, MOT		
2.3.14	Run awareness campaigns to motivate mode change and address perceptions of public transport.	5.2.2.5, 5.2.2.6	Operational	MOT, Road Safety Council		
2.3.15	Discourage multiple vehicle ownership with tiered licensing fees and promote non-car alternatives.	5.2.2.1	Operational	МОТ		
2.3.16	Support investments in accessible bus fleets with low floors, ramps, air-conditioning, and secure seating.	5.2.3.12, 5.2.3.13	Operational	МОТ		
2.4	2.4 Improve Public Transport Accessibility and Inclusion					
2.4.1	Extend bus services to the Ara Metua and expand increase the frequency of both clockwise and anticlockwise services.	5.2.3.6	Operational	MOT, Private Sector		
2.4.2	Introduce on-demand shuttle services and explore mobile essential services (e.g. banking, healthcare).	5.2.3.7, 5.2.3.4	Operational	MOT, Private Sector		
2.4.3	Provide free Wi-Fi and integrate real-time information systems to enhance rider experience.	5.2.3.15	Operational	МОТ		
2.4.4	Introduce fare subsidy schemes for vulnerable populations, free fares for children, retirees and people with disabilities.	5.2.3.8, 5.2.3.9	Operational	MOT, MFEM, INTAFF, MOE		

		1	1	
2.4.5	Promote the school bus service by considering reduced or free fares for students.	5.2.3.9	Operational	MOT, MOE, MFEM
2.4.6	Promote bus fare subsidy for large scale events to discourage individual vehicle use.	5.2.3.10	Operational	MOT, Culture, Private Sector
2.4.7	Promote best-practice bus stop design, placement, and safety infrastructure.	5.2.3.5	Operational	ICI, MOT
2.4.8	Engage villages to co-design innovative and culturally appropriate bus stops.	5.2.3.2	Operational	ICI, MOT
2.4.9	Conduct community research to understand local travel needs.	5.2.3.3	Operational	MOT
2.5	Manage Vehicle Imports and End-of-Life Imp	acts		
2.5.1	Regulate import conditions (e.g. age, emissions, engine size, quality)	5.2.6.1,	Legislative	МОТ
2.5.2	Implement and monitor the Advance Recovery Disposal Fee (ARDF) scheme inclusive of recycling and disposing of electric vehicle batteries and restoring baling/export operations	5.2.6.5,	Operational	MFEM; ICI
2.5.3	Ensure sustainable access to vehicle parts are available for the Pa Enua	5.4.19	Operational	MOT
2.5.4	Monitor and report on de-registered vehicles and end-of-life stockpiles across all islands	11.2.5	Operational	MOT
2.5.5	Reassess levy structures for older and heavy-duty vehicles to reflect lifecycle impact	5.2.6.2	Legislative	MOT; MFEM
2.5.6	Enable capacity and resourcing of regulatory, governance and enforcement agencies	5.2.6.4	Operational	MOT
2.6	Monitor and Reduce Pollution Impacts			
2.6.1	Rebuild capacity to monitor land transport emissions, air and noise pollutants	5.2.6.4	Operational	MOT; NES
2.6.2	Integrate pollution standards into the Transport Act and WOF system	5.2.6.1	Legislative	МОТ
2.6.3	Promote low-noise and clean engine standards for new vehicle imports	5.2.6.1	Legislative	MOT; CCCI
2.6.4	Establish baseline data and track progress towards reduced exposure in high-traffic areas	5.2.2.2	Operational	MOT
2.7 Reform Licensing, Fees, and Vehicle Management				
2.7.1	Adjust license fee structure to reflect vehicle emissions, engine size, and road impact	5.2.6.2	Legislative	MOT; MFEM
2.7.2	Explore equitable cost recovery options for public road and safety infrastructure	5.2.6.2	Operational	MOT; MFEM
2.7.3	Ensure micro-mobility devices (e.g. e-scooters) are registered and included in road safety policy	5.2.6.2	Legislative	MOT
2.7.4	Promote equity in vehicle access without penalising lower-income users	5.2.1.1	Operational	MOT; MFEM
2.4.9	Conduct community research to understand local travel needs.	5.2.3.3	Operational	MOT



POLICY PILLAR 3: ROAD SAFETY

No.	Action Point	Reference	Legislative / Operational	Stake- holders
3.1	Strengthen Leadership and Coordination			
3.1.1	Appoint a clearly mandated national lead agency to coordinate road safety strategy, regulation, and public awareness efforts across ministries and stakeholders including the role of the Road Safety Council. Define a national lead agency for road safety.	5.3.1	Operational	MOT, RSC, TMO, Police
3.1.2	Review and revise the Road Safety Strategy (2016–2020) to address current challenges and clarify leadership responsibilities.	5.3.2	Operational	MOT, RSC, TMO
3.1.3	Update the mandate, reporting lines, and funding mechanisms for the Road Safety Council.	5.3.1	Operational	MOT, RSC, Police, TMO
3.1.4	Embed safety actions across all land transport policies, licensing frameworks, and infrastructure plans.	5.3.1	Operational	ICI, MOT, RSC, CIIC
3.1.5	Coordinate inter-agency collaboration between MOT, Police, ICI, Te Marae Ora, and local government.	5.3.1	Operational	ICI, MOT, Police, TMO
3.2	Improve Enforcement and Law Compliance			
3.2.1	Train and resource Police to target high-risk behaviours such as speeding, drink-driving, and careless reckless driving.	5.3.1	Operational	MOT, RSC, Police, TMO
3.2.2	Strengthen MOT's monitoring and enforcement of licensing conditions (e.g. vehicle upkeep, smoking bans, helmet compliance).	5.3.1	Operational	MOT, RSC, TMO
3.2.3	Clarify enforcement roles and legal responsibilities for e-bikes, e-scooters, and heavy vehicles.	5.3.6	Legislative	MOT, Police
3.2.4	Reinforce helmet import standards and improve monitoring in partnership with Customs and Police.	5.3.1	Operational	MOT, RSC, Police TMO
3.2.5	Explore community-based enforcement (e.g. warranting roadside wardens).	5.3.10	Operational	Police
3.2.6	Amend licensing requirements for high-speed motorcycles to reduce uptake and promote safer vehicles.	5.3.5	Legislative	MOT

3.3	Invest in Safer Infrastructure				
3.3.1	Upgrade signage, lane markings, lighting, and pedestrian crossings — especially on Ara Tapu, Ara Metua, and connecting roads.	5.3.3	Operational	ICI, Police, MOT	
3.3.2	Prioritise safety-focused design in all new road and facility upgrades (e.g. traffic-calming, bollards, safe car park entry/exit).	5.3.4	Legislative	ICI, MOT	
3.3.3	Improve accessibility and safety at bus stops, car parks, and school zones.	5.3.12, 5.3.4	Legislative / Operational	ICI, MOT, CIIC	
3.3.4	Develop and enforce safety protocols for roadside maintenance and community groups.	5.3.11	Operational	INTAFF, ICI	
3.3.5	Incentivise local government and village-level beautification and landscaping to enhance safety and visibility.	5.3.12, 5.3.4	Legislative / Operational	мот, ісі	
3.3.6	Embed international road safety design standards into legislation and planning rules.	5.3.4	Legislative	ICI, MOT	
3.4	Promote Behaviour Change and Awareness				
3.4.1	Run national road safety campaigns focused on speed, alcohol, helmets, and emerging risks (e.g. e-bikes).	5.3.1, 5.3.3	Operational	MOT, RSC, TMO	
3.4.2	Integrate road safety education into schools, driver licensing, and public awareness programs.	5.3.1	Operational	MOT, RSC, TMO	
3.4.3	Partner with schools, community leaders, and transport operators to promote safe road behaviours.	5.3.1	Operational	MOT, RSC, TMO	
3.4.4	Promote awareness of proper roundabout use, emergency vehicle protocols, and pedestrian priority.	5.3.1, 5.3.4	Legislative / Operational	MOT, RSC, TMO	
3.4.5	Encourage shared messaging for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists to support mutual safety.	5.3.8, 5.3.4	Legislative / Operational	ICI, RSC, Police	
3.5	Protect Vulnerable Road Users				
3.5.1	Invest in safe, connected footpaths, pedestrian crossings, and cycleways across urban and rural areas.	5.3.8, 5.3.3	Operational	ICI, CIIC, MOT	
3.5.2	Introduce speed restrictions and designated use zones/road lane use requirements for e-bikes and scooters.	5.3.6	Legislative	MOT, Police, ICI, CIIC	
3.5.3	Ensure public and school transport fleets are inclusive (e.g. ramps, low floors, accessible seating).	5.3.12, 5.3.4	Legislative / Operational	MOT, Private Sector, INTAFF	
3.5.4	Consider financial or regulatory incentives for vehicle modifications that support mobility and safety.	5.3.12, 5.3.4	Legislative / Operational	MOT, INTAFF, MFEM	
3.5.5	Implement the license demerit point system and enable capacity and resourcing for respective agencies.	5.3.7	Operational	MOT, Police	
3.5.6	Address roadside hazards including stray animals, obstructed shoulders, unsafe roadside cleaning practices, and informal events or fundraisers.	5.3.9	Operational	MOT, Police, INTAFF	



POLICY PILLAR 4: PA ENUA ACCESS & EQUITY

No.	Action Point	Refer- ence	Legislative / Operational	Stake- holders		
4.1	Strengthen Local Capacity and Governance					
4.1.1	Clarify and empower Island Governments to manage local transport planning, licensing and enforcement in collaboration with Police, ICI, and MOT.	5.4.2	Operational	Island Governments, MOT, Police, ICI		
4.1.2	Consider ring-fencing licensing revenue to support Pa Enua land transport infrastructure, including signage, lighting, and road marking and upkeep.	5.4.1	Operational	ICI, MFEM, MOT		
4.1.3	Deliver targeted training programmes for vehicle inspectors, mechanics, and heavy machinery operators (e.g., through CITTI or MOT support).	5.4.5	Operational	CITTI, MOT		
4.1.4	Establish basic Warrant of Fitness (WOF) and inspection services on each island that is fit for purpose, with provision for mobile and online support.	5.4.3	Operational	Island Governments, MOT, Police		
4.1.5	Raise community awareness of WOF and registration processes and their link to road safety outcomes.	5.4.2	Operational	Island Governments, MOT, Police		
4.1.6	Raise awareness of governance roles and responsibilities under the Infrastructure Act 2019.	5.4.4	Operational	ICI, Island Governments		
4.2	Improve Vehicle Licensing and Compliance					
4.2.1	Enable on-island or mobile systems for vehicle registration, inspection, de-registration, and WOF processing.	5.4.2, 5.4.3	Operational	Island Governments, MOT, Police		
4.2.2	Introduce fit-for-purpose licensing and compliance standards that reflect local conditions (e.g., low speed environments).	5.4.3	Both	Island Governments, MOT, Police		
4.2.3	Strengthen compliance for rental, school transport, and community vehicles, including helmet use and safety checks.	5.4.7, 5.4.15	Operational	MOT, Police		
4.2.4	Review and clarify insurance and licensing for part- time, private, and commercial operators; provide for temporary tourism transport licences and insurance where applicable.	5.4.14	Both	МОТ		

4.3	Address End-of-Life Vehicle Impacts			
4.3.1	Support safe and affordable removal of abandoned and expired vehicles, particularly second-hand imports from Rarotonga.	5.4.9, 5.4.18	Operational	ICI, MOT, NES
4.3.2	Implement the Advance Recovery Disposal Fee (ARDF) scheme with Pa Enua-specific collection and transport pathways.	5.4.9	Both	ICI, MOT, NES
4.3.3	Promote awareness of vehicle end-of-life responsibilities and disposal options.	5.4.9	Operational	ICI, MOT, NES
4.3.4	Explore solutions for managing electric vehicle battery and other hazardous vehicle waste from islands.	5.4.18	Operational	MOT, ICI, NES
4.4	Invest in Fit-for-Purpose Infrastructure			
4.4.1	Maintain and upgrade roads based on local geography, usage patterns, and climate risk.	5.4.10	Operational	ICI, Island Governments
4.4.2	Provide islands with access to road maintenance tools, including aggregate and coral, and sand and glass crushing equipment.	5.4.10	Operational	ICI, MFEM
4.4.3	Apply import standards to minimise damage from heavy machinery (e.g., requiring transporters for delivery).	5.4.12	Operational	Island Governments, ICI
4.5	Ensure Accessible Transport Services			
4.5.1	Support licensed school and community transport services with regular inspection and safety protocols.	5.4.15	Operational	МОТ
4.5.2	Promote inclusive vehicle design to support mobility for elderly, disabled, and vulnerable users.			
4.5.3	Enable visitor access to safe transport through prince incentives, on-demand shuttles, or digital booking platforms.	5.4.21	Operational	MOT, Private Sector, Island Governments, MFEM
4.5.4	Consider subsidised school transport for Pa Enua-based children travelling on licensed school buses.	5.4.21	Operational	MOE, MOT, MFEM
4.5.5	Review and amend legislation on trailers and small vehicles to allow safe low-speed alternatives where standard vehicles are not viable.	5.4.20	Legislative	МОТ
4.5.6	Review import restrictions on older vehicles to ensure quality vehicles are being imported.	5.4.17	Legislative	MOT, NES
4.6	Improve Coordination and Delivery			
4.6.1	Establish formal inter-agency coordination mechanisms for roading, enforcement, licensing, and safety delivery.	5.4.13	Both	ICI, Island Governments, MOT, Police, NES
4.6.2	Deliver Pa Enua-specific road safety campaigns in collaboration with Island Governments and Police.	5.4.6	Operational	Island Governments, MOT, Police
4.6.3	Ensure adequate resourcing for Police enforcement and community engagement across all islands.	5.4.16	Operational	Police, Island Governments
4.6.4	Explore solutions with motor vehicle dealers, air transport and sea transport operators, and logistics agents for Pa Enua access to vehicle parts.	5.4.19	Operational	MOT, Island Governments



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