

Auckland Transport Media Releases in August 2017 Relevant to Howick Local Board Area

Auckland Transport media release

31 August 2017



Auckland trains smash forecasts: 20 million train trips in 12 months

Auckland's commuter train network has surpassed all its passenger forecasts to record 20 million train trips in one year, a mark that the network wasn't expected to hit for another three years in 2020.

Mayor Phil Goff says, "20 million train trips in one year is a huge achievement. It is the result of strong investment in our public transport system and Auckland commuters finding it more convenient to travel by rail than be caught in congestion.

"Auckland's rail system has gone through huge changes in recent years. We've replaced our diesel fleet with electric trains, reducing carbon emissions by 80% and saving more than 9 million litres of diesel a year.

"The past year has also seen the opening of a new train station in Parnell, a bus-train interchange in Otahuhu, improved links with our bus services and agreement to invest in more electric trains running to Pukekohe and South Auckland.

"Train patronage has risen by nearly 20 percent each year and the number of services has increased by almost 11,000 in the last year. Punctuality is now at 96.7 per cent.

"Aucklanders have embraced rail. They've taken to the HOP card and benefited from more frequent and reliable services and better links with our bus network.

"Every rail passenger is one less car on our roads. Our recent agreement to invest in more electric trains, the opening of new stations, and further investment in the rail network including the CRL and progressing mass transit to the airport will give Auckland commuters choice and help get cars off our roads.

"Growing the reach and frequency of Auckland's public and active transport network is key to solving congestion in our city. We are working closely with the Government to make that happen," Mayor Phil Goff says.

Chief AT Metro Officer Mark Lambert says reaching 20 million trips speaks to Aucklanders desire for a world-class rail system.

"We want to thank Aucklanders for embracing trains. We will continue working to ensure the rail network keeps getting better.

“In the past month electronic gates have begun operating at Henderson Station and Otahuhu Station, improving safety and reducing fare evasion. These types of gates are also being installed at Manurewa, Papatoetoe, Middlemore, Parnell, Papakura, and Glen Innes.”

The introduction of the HOP card has been a huge success. Beginning in 2012, it's now used on 92 percent of public transport journeys. It also allowed for the rollout of Simpler Fares in 2016, which brought in a zone-based system to simplify transfers, with commuters only paying at the end of the journey.

AT is also currently working through the business case to expand the park and ride at Papakura Station.

Auckland Council's Finance and Performance Committee has agreed in principle to the purchase of new trains which are needed for increased capacity to the network. They are expected to arrive in 2019.

Throughout the city new bus networks are being rolled out, beginning in south Auckland last year. These networks provide more services running shorter routes and providing better connection with rail and other rapid transport options.

Auckland Transport media release

29 August 2017



Double decker buses being fixed as a precaution

Some of Auckland's double decker buses have been temporarily taken off the road as a precaution to fix a chassis fault.

The repair, which involves adding reinforcing to the chassis, was picked up as part of a routine inspection and 11 Ritchies buses have been taken off the road and 14 buses that were due for delivery to NZ Bus also contained the fault will not be introduced to service until the fault is rectified.

Group Manager AT Metro Operations Brendon Main says this is a purely precautionary measure.

“We've taken a conservative approach because the safety of passengers, drivers and other motorists is paramount.”

The work will be completed as quickly as possible and the buses will be back on the road next week. It will be fully supervised by NZTA certified independent engineers.

The bus manufacturer will pay for the repairs, they will not cost ratepayers anything.

Bus services throughout the city will not be affected as extra single deck buses have been put on the road.

“I just clicked” – Auckland Transport and Police sending a message about seatbelts

Auckland Transport and the New Zealand Police are working together to reduce the number of lives lost and serious injuries because people are not wearing their seatbelt or buckling their children safely into vehicles.

A new campaign, “I Just Clicked” kicks off today to remind people that seatbelts save lives. AT is using traditional and social media and Police will be stopping drivers and issuing fines for those who break the rules, putting lives at risk.

Auckland Transport’s Manager of Walking, Cycling and Road Safety, Kathryn King says, “It’s a shame that we still need to remind people to do something that most people consider common sense. Ministry of Transport data tells us that regardless of being in the front or the back seat, wearing a seatbelt reduces your chance of serious injury by up to 40 percent if you are involved in a crash.

“It’s even more alarming that there are people who are risking the lives of children they are transporting by not buckling them properly into a car seat, which is designed to save their life. We are doing everything we can to educate people about the importance of buckling up for every single journey. Sadly, statistics show that last year at checkpoints, 62 percent of car seats that were checked had some sort of fault which is far too high.”

Road Policing Manager for Waitemata, Inspector Trevor Beggs says that there have been far too many crashes in recent times that resulted in unnecessary loss of life just because people weren’t properly restrained.

“It’s often men who take the risk not to wear their seatbelts, but these poor choices aren’t being made by just one particular group in our society. This is why we need to get this message out there that wearing seatbelts saves lives. It’s simply a no brainer.

“We know that a large proportion of crashes occur on short trips where drivers may not be wearing their seatbelts. Road users can feel safe on roads they know well, and may become complacent as a result. Just popping out to the diary or doing the school run is still a risk, and we must protect ourselves and our passengers by ensuring seat belts are always worn.

“Every time we travel in a vehicle, our chances of being seriously injured or killed in a crash is greatly reduced if simply put on our seat belt. Police hope that this message will really click for our community as a result of this latest campaign.

“The statistics are alarming for Auckland where between 2012 and 2016 we have had 40 deaths and 130 serious injuries related to people not wearing their seatbelt. The impact on families and the community is massive and we need to see these figures shifting. One of the aims of this campaign, through the creative we are using, is to show people the human side of not doing the right thing.”