



ARTA NEWS

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ARTA and Veolia Transport supports rail safety awareness week

The Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA) and its rail operator Veolia Transport joined forces with key members of the New Zealand rail industry in response to growing industry and public concern over safety around New Zealand's rail network during the first Australasian Rail Safety Week.

Events promoting rail safety awareness took place across Australia and New Zealand with television advertisements, billboards and other activities emphasizing that motorists, pedestrians and cyclists need to take extreme care when entering or crossing the rail network.

In Auckland, Veolia Transport undertook a number of activities to support Rail Safety Week and highlight the message that tracks are for trains. Activities included a localised Police in Cabs scheme, which allowed police officers to travel in the cabs of trains to monitor behaviour on the rail corridor. A school safety awareness programme also took place during Rail Safety Week, with Veolia Transport health and safety advisors and drivers visiting local schools to promote key safety messages for schools and members of the community around the Auckland rail network.

Construction of the new train station at Papakura will be completed in late August. The station will be officially opened by the Minister of Transport, Hon. Annette King on the 24 August 2007. The new station will offer improved facilities and comfort with better lighting, CCTV for more security, customer information, improved access for disabled, and new shelters for better weather protection.



Veolia Transport also distributed Auckland-specific printed safety awareness brochures and displayed posters on trains and at stations. The material was funded by Land Transport New Zealand and is in line with New Zealand-wide campaigns supported by ONTRACK, Toll, NZ Police, Land Transport New Zealand and the Chris Cairns Foundation.

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Change to Link bus route

From Sunday 12 August 2007 the Link service travels via Grafton Road instead of Grafton Bridge.

This route change will be effective until Grafton Bridge is strengthened to meet modern earthquake resistance standards.

When the work is complete, the bridge will be able to withstand a one-in-one-thousand-year earthquake and easily support buses and light rail in the future.

Once the upgrade is complete, Grafton Bridge will reopen as a bus lane from 7am to 7pm each weekday.

The strengthening of Grafton Bridge is part of Auckland City Council's Central Connector initiative. The Central Connector is a bus priority project connecting Britomart with Newmarket via key locations such as Vector Arena, the university Learning Quarter, Auckland City Hospital, The University of Auckland's Medical School and the Auckland Domain.

Auckland City Council are currently accepting tenders for the Central Connector project and construction is expected to start in late 2007.



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Strategic plan for WSBs at low decile schools

Performance of services on the western rail line for the month of June was the best monthly achievement on the line for five years. The commissioning of the 7.5 kilometres of new duplicate track between Henderson and New Lynn during Queens Birthday weekend, allowing trains to run on both tracks, was a major contributor to this result.

Veolia Transport Australia has confirmed that Managing Director, Chris White, will be leaving Veolia Transport Auckland. Chris White has been at the helm of Veolia Transport Auckland for the past four years, responsible for winning the Auckland rail tender in 2004 and overseeing the establishment and transition of the Auckland rail business. A new position of Veolia Transport New Zealand, Country Manager has been established and Arthur Bruce has been appointed to this position. Nick French has been appointed as the General Manager of Veolia Transport Auckland.

NZ Bus Ltd ran a promotion in mid-June for Torbay School and Glamorgan School students and their parents to ride the school bus for free. The two 'free' days proved successful, with a full bus each day. It is proposed to hold a similar promotion once a term to encourage bus use and promote the service.

Resource consent has been received for the Beach Haven ferry terminal. A detailed design contract is to be tendered shortly.

The number of Walking School

Whilst the number of Walking School Buses (WSBs) in Auckland has grown rapidly over the past few years, that growth has been predominantly in high decile schools. A 2006 study by The University of Auckland shows 60% of WSB routes are in schools ranging from decile 8 to decile 10.

The production of a strategic plan, with recommendations to achieve a better distribution of resources and achieve more WSBs in lower decile schools has now been started, and a draft is ready to be sent to the Territorial Authorities for consultation. After receiving and incorporating feedback, a draft report will be sent to the Ministry of Health, which will be funding the project, by 24 August 2007.

To increase the uptake of WSBs in lower decile schools, ARTA will take a closer look at the issues facing lower decile schools and will concentrate activity in these schools over the next two-and-a-half years.

The first step in this process will be to talk to low decile schools (deciles 1 to 4) that have WSBs and to link with other programmes working in the same area.

'Trial Vehicle Scrappage Scheme' a roaring success

The end of June saw the completion of the 'Trial Vehicle Scrappage Scheme' in Auckland. This project, which takes old polluting cars off Auckland roads in exchange for two months supply of public transport passes, has been very successful.

240 two-month discovery passes have been given out in exchange for 240 old, polluting vehicles during the trial. The vehicles will now be stripped down and the materials reused or recycled.

A percentage of these vehicles will also undertake an emissions test, which will consist of a two-speed idle test for petrol vehicles and a snap acceleration test for diesel vehicles. Pollutants tested include carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons. The emissions test will assess the engine's health and give an idea as to how the vehicle was performing while in service.

A full evaluation of the initiative will be carried out by the Ministry of Transport on behalf of their partners and is due to be completed by late September. Information gathered from the trial will also feed into policy development regarding ways to address the ageing 'tail end' of New Zealand's vehicle fleet.

This project was managed by the Ministry of Transport, Broken Car Collection Company, Auckland Regional Council (ARC) and ARTA.

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Bus routes is at 216 (increased from 200 in November 2006), currently transporting on average 3984 children to and from school.

Franklin District Council have established a Park and Ride at the Waiuku town centre to encourage more people to use the new Waiuku bus service.

Six more local-area cycle maps will be rolled out throughout the 07/08 financial year. The maps will be based on the Southern Cycle Map (produced in February this year. ARTA has led the development of a project plan to deliver this project through a range of project partners.

The Southern Cycle Map is available for download on the MAXX website www.maxx.co.nz

Construction work to improve pedestrian access at the Middlemore train station is nearing completion. The work will replace an existing bridge, which is in poor condition and doesn't comply with disabled access standards. A \$1.25 million overhead pedestrian bridge will be operational in two weeks, after the platform around it has been paved.

Upcoming rail engineering works

A revised timetable will be operating for all stations between Papakura and Otahuhu on the Southern Line on Saturday 25 August and Sunday 26 August 2007 to allow for major track maintenance work and improvements.

A bus replacement service will also be in place for all train stations between Otahuhu and Homai. Where buses replace trains, normal train fares will apply for the entire journey.



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