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**Visiting  
Drivers  
Project**





# · Visiting Drivers Project Safe & Enjoyable Journeys

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Divider slide

## · Project Background

- The Visiting Drivers Project was established in March 2014 under New Zealand's Signature Programme
- The purpose of the Visiting Drivers Project is  
**“to improve road safety for, and of, visiting drivers, while maintaining New Zealand's reputation as an attractive and safe tourist destination.”**



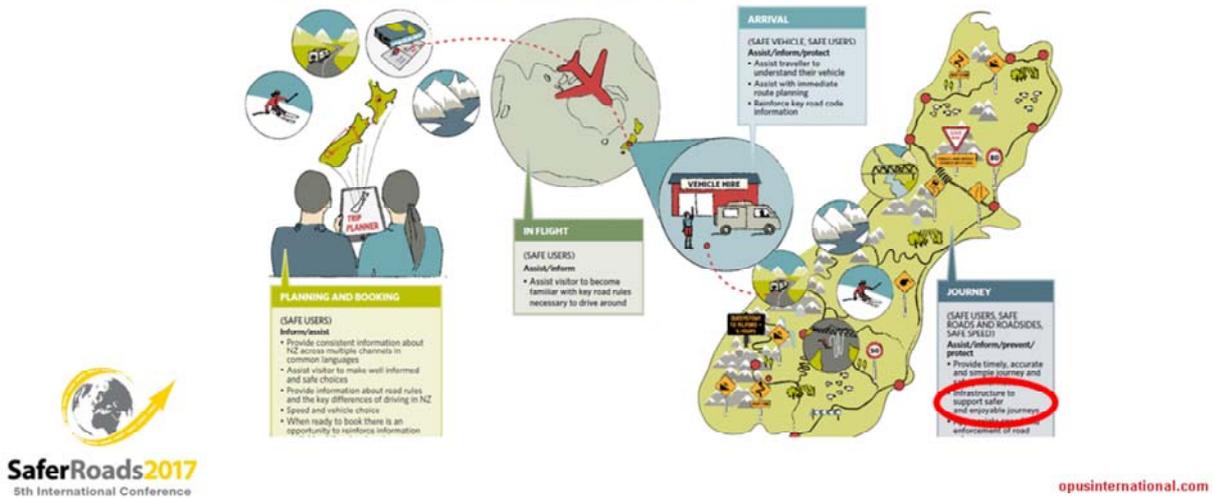
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The Visiting Drivers Project was established in March 2014 in response to a spate of serious crashes involving overseas visiting drivers over the 2013/2014 summer which received high profile media coverage. The Project was created under the Signature Programme which is part of the government's road safety strategy to 2020, Safer Journeys.

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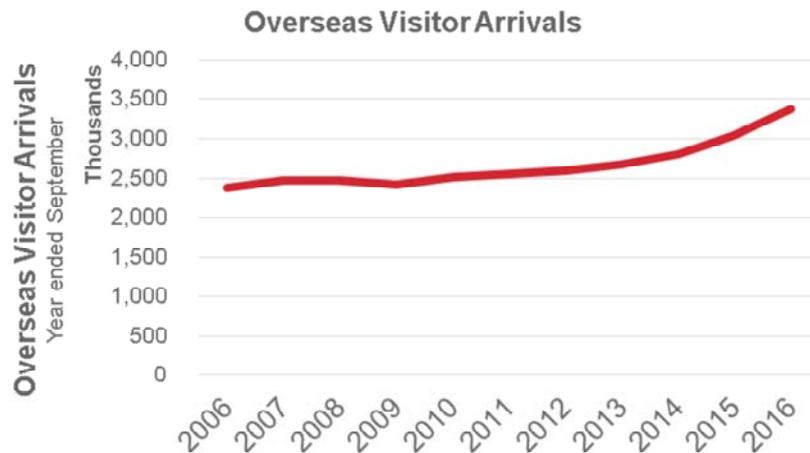
## Project Background

Helping visitors to have a safe and enjoyable experience



- The overarching concept of the Signature project is 'host responsibility'. This captures both the road safety and tourism objectives of the project.
- The project aims to reach visitors, both international and domestic, at all stages of their journey. That is when they are planning and booking, in-flight, on arrival, and when driving on our roads. The interventions identified are founded on the safe system approach, which comprises of safe users; safe vehicles; safe speeds; and safe roads and roadsides.
- [click] The safer roads and roadsides component has a focus on the Otago, Southland and West Coast regions of New Zealand where international visiting drivers make up a significantly large proportion of traffic.

## New Zealand's Tourism Market

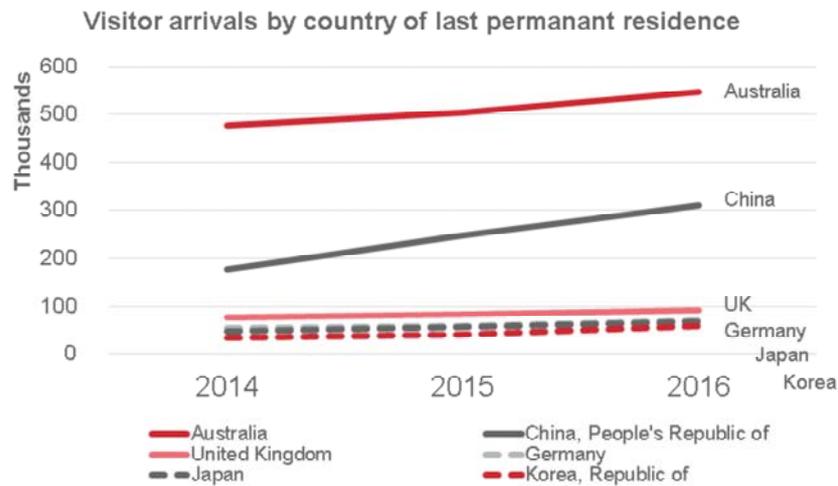


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- The tourism market is significant for New Zealand. For the year ended March 2016, tourism generated a direct contribution of \$12.9 billion to GDP or 5.6% of GDP.
- In terms of arrival numbers, there were 3.4 million overseas visitor arrivals for the 12 month period ended September 2016. This was an 11% increase on the 12 months prior.
- Overseas visitor arrivals have been steadily increasing since 2011 with significant growth since 2014.

## New Zealand's Tourism Market



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- Australia is the most popular country of origin for visitors to New Zealand and growth in this market is still being observed.
- This is followed by China which has demonstrated significant market growth since 2014
- The next most common countries for visitor arrivals include the UK, Germany, Japan and Korea.

## Crash Statistics



New Zealand	6%
Otago	12%
West Coast	23%
Southland	17%

Percentage of Fatal and Serious crashes involving n overseas licensed driver (2010-2014)

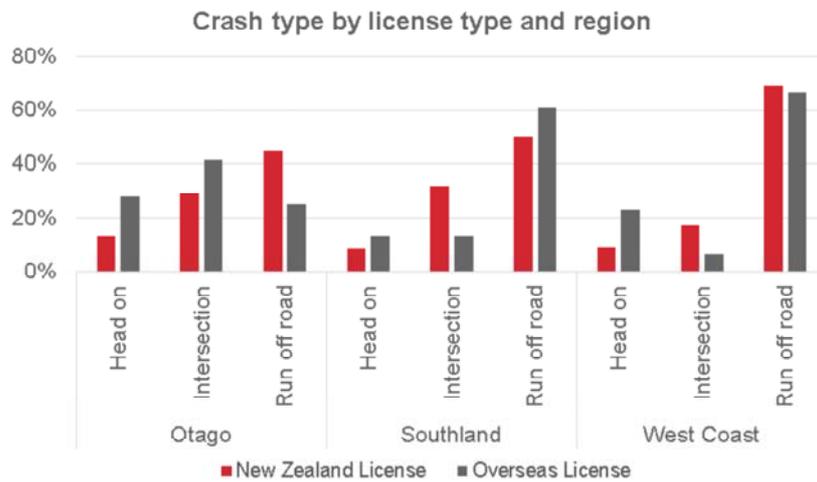


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Nationally overseas licensed drivers were involved in 6% of fatal and serious injury crashes for the five year period 2010 to 2014. At a local level, for the same period, overseas licensed drivers were involved in a much higher proportion of fatal and serious crashes on the State Highway network.

Data on fatal and serious crashes involving overseas licensed drivers is well documented. However; it is not well known the number of visiting drivers on the network at any one time or the distances they are travelling. Without this information it is not possible to determine if overseas licensed drivers are under or over represented in crashes compared to New Zealand licensed drivers.

## Crash Statistics



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When considering crashes visitors are involved in in terms of the key crash types identified in the safer Journeys 2020 Road safety Strategy, the types of crashes visitors are having is very similar to New Zealanders. That this, the significant majority of crashes for both overseas licensed drivers and New Zealand drivers are run-off road type crashes.

## Crash Statistics



When reviewing the locations of fatal and serious crashes involving overseas licensed driver on the State Highway network, some clear routes and corridors emerge. These corridors provide connection to key tourist destination in these regions including the Pancake Rocks at Punakaiki, Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers, Queenstown, Central Otago, and Milford Sound.

Christchurch is an important connection for these regions as the majority of international flights to the South Island arrive there.

## Perception Surveys

Region	Number of Participants	Participant type	Proportion
Otago	87	Overseas visitor	50%
		Non-local New Zealander (domestic visitor)	36%
		Local	14%
Southland	122	Overseas visitor	82%
		Non-local New Zealander (domestic visitor)	11%
		Local	7%
West Coast	125	Overseas visitor	81%
		Non-local New Zealander (domestic visitor)	15%
		Local	4%



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To better understand the proportion of users types and visitor's and local's expectations and satisfaction levels of the State Highway network perception survey were completed in March 2016.

The surveys confirmed the high number of overseas and domestic visitors on the region's roads with 82% of participants at the Southland site and 81% at the West Coast site being overseas visitors.

The findings from these surveys indicated that all respondents felt the roads were safe, they were satisfied with their driving experience on the day, and that the level of safety on the road has positively affected their view of the region as a tourist destination.

## Perception Surveys

Suggested Safety Improvement	Overseas Visitors %	Non-local NZ residents %	Locals %
<b>More overtaking opportunities</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>
More stopping places	6	5	4
<b>Wider road shoulders</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
Review speed limit downwards	3	3	8
Reduce number of corners	1	6	0
More safety barriers	3	0	0
Smoother improved road surface	5	5	4
Reduce number of one lane bridges	4	3	0
<b>More signage</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Road design and maintenance</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Nothing required/no suggestion</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>

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Drivers were also asked open questions for their suggestions to improve road safety. Road users who were more familiar with the road were more likely to be specific with their suggestions.

Overall, the suggestions were commonly related to overtaking opportunities, which relates to inconvenience, but arguably could relate to scenic experience. Overtaking opportunities were less of a priority for overseas visitors relative to New Zealand drivers. Of the overseas visitors that did make a suggestions, the top suggestion was for more passing opportunities, followed by wider road shoulders and more signage.

## · Safer Roads and Roadside Improvements



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Considering the crash types both overseas and New Zealand licensed drivers were having and the feedback from the perception surveys, a suite of low cost safe supporting and journey improvement projects was developed for the key tourist routes for each region.

As the crashes visiting drivers are having are the same as New Zealand drivers the majority of improvement options were sourced from the New Zealand Transport Agency's High Risk Road Guides. These treatments include curve warning signage, centreline ATP, no passing markings, safety barrier, removal of roadside hazards, intersection improvements, and shoulder widening.

## · Safer Roads and Roadside Improvements



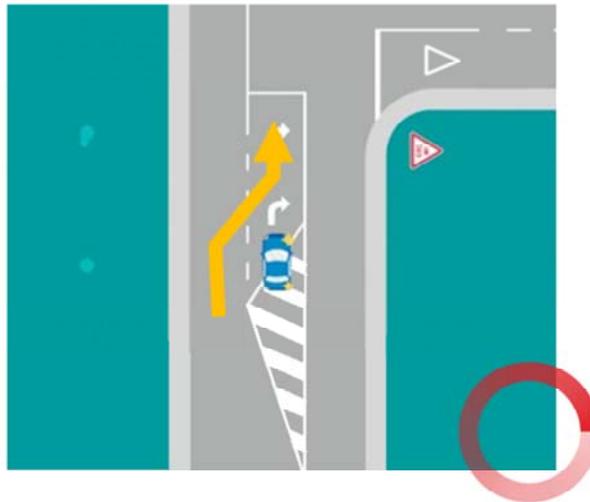
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A number of innovative treatments were developed in response to specific crashes visitors are having and the feedback from the perception survey.

- Installation of 2 and 5 kilometre advance warning signs in addition to the standard 300 or 400 metre advance warning signs for rest areas and lookouts to encourage early decision making and increase use.
- The use of the internationally recognised “camera” and “lookout” symbols on signs identifying lookouts. Also posting advance warning of lookouts at points where drivers may observe views but stopping would be unsafe therefore by encouraging use of safe stopping places.
- Alternative uses of electronic warning signs to highlight additional hazards to those approved for use in the Traffic Control Devices manual including the requirement to give way on single lane bridges.

## · Safer Roads and Roadside Improvements



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In New Zealand right turn bays are marked as shown in the figure and here the flush markings are to be driven on as you decelerate and enter the right turn bay. Visiting drivers, particularly overseas ones, are observed not to drive on flush markings and are therefore entering the stop boxes at sharp angles and high speed which is unsafe. [CLICK] this observed movement is indicated by the orange arrow.

To assist visiting drivers and improve safety at rural intersections with right turn bays we have designed a number of intersections with the right turn bay having an extended length stop box. This is to encourage early entry into the right turn bay and allow more length for safe deceleration.

## Conclusion



- Overseas licensed drivers are having the same crash types as New Zealand drivers and therefore any investment in making the roads and roadsides safer will benefit both visitors and local drivers.
- The New Zealand Transport Agency are currently implementing significant investment in improving the safety of roads and roadside on key tourist routes in the South Island



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Thank You

