



# Petition 2011/80 of Jan Mossman and 15,000 others

Report of the Transport and Industrial  
Relations Committee

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## Petition 2011/80 of Jan Mossman and 15,000 others

### Recommendation

The Transport and Industrial Relations Committee has considered Petition 2011/80 of Jan Mossman and 15,000 others and recommends that the House take note of its report.

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### Introduction

The Transport and Industrial Relations Committee has considered Petition 2011/80 of Jan Mossman and 15,000 others, requesting

that the House recognise horses as an alternative mode of travel in New Zealand, compel the New Zealand Transport Agency to include ridden and driven horses in their planning and facilitation process, and that The Royal Agricultural Society of New Zealand be included in all discussions regarding walking, cycling and combined access recreational trails.

### Background

The petitioners represent horse riders. They are worried that busier traffic on rural roads is making roadsides more dangerous for horse riders. They are asking for

- transport planners to consider horses when designing or modifying roads
- access to trails suitable for riding, including walking and cycling paths and unformed public roads
- legislation to make suitable roads safer for horse-riding
- better warning signs, better enforcement, and better driver education
- a government-organised and facilitated conference of stakeholders to formulate a “plan of action” to address their concerns.

Horse-riders prefer to ride on the grass beside roads. Grass is a good all-weather surface for horses, and riding there avoids traffic. We note that most roads suitable for horses are local roads, not state highways.

Although statistics are not available, we heard from the petitioner that every year, there are serious injuries to horse riders. There were about 6,800 ACC claims for horse-riding injuries in 2012; however, ACC does not collect data on how many of them were related to motor vehicles.

The petitioners said there are over 120,000 horses in New Zealand and that the horse industry contributes over \$1.5 billion a year to the economy.

### Transport planning

Horse-riding interest groups can make submissions in two main areas of transport planning. First, there is the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS) which goes out in draft form for consultation every three years. This is how the Government

communicates what it wants to achieve in land transport, and how it expects to see funding allocated between priorities such as road policing, state highways, local roads, and walking and cycling. The most recent GPS was consulted on and published in 2014.

The petitioners could also contribute to land transport policy direction when regional transport committees (or in the case of Auckland, Auckland Transport) prepare their regional land transport plans. Consultation is required for these plans, which are used by the New Zealand Transport Agency in determining each region's nationally-funded land transport activities (this is the National Land Transport Programme).

Ms Mossman told us that the current petition was initiated after an attempt by horse riders to make an oral submission on a local plan was received poorly by a council, and their views were not reflected in the final plan. We understand it can be frustrating to be ignored, and we encourage planners to hear all submissions with an open mind.

### **Access to cycle and walking tracks**

We heard that horses are prohibited on some walkways and cycleways. The Walking Access Commission suggested that there could be better consultation and exchange of information between horse riders and land managers, such as the Department of Conservation and local authorities. It also suggested testing horses on cycle tracks on a trial basis. The feasibility of doing so could be examined.

### **Safety requirements**

Under sections 11.14 to 11.16 of the Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004, drivers must exercise due care towards people who are riding or moving animals on the road, and towards the animals themselves. Advice and requirements for both drivers and horse riders are set out in the Official New Zealand Road Code. However, the petitioners say these requirements have not been updated since the 1960s. They believe rules regarding horses should be more detailed, specifying, for example, what speed to slow down to, and how wide a berth to give when passing horses.

### **Conclusion**

We are encouraged by the way issues have been addressed, and we encourage parties to continue to try to allay the concerns of horse riders. Horse-riding groups might meet with agencies such as the Transport Agency and the Ministry of Transport, to air specific concerns about safety, planning, and access to tracks, and strategies for dealing with issues.

The Walking Access Commission has been helping horse riders in the short term. Among other things, it has offered to help produce factual resources on horse riding and access, to arrange a meeting with Auckland Transport, and to write to Local Government New Zealand about concerns raised by horse-riding groups, particularly regarding places and space for horse riding, and carriage driving and safety. We welcome the commission's support for the petitioners.

We suggest horse interest groups continue making submissions on regional land transport plans, make a submission on the next GPS, and approach the Department of Conservation about planning and access to its tracks. We encourage planners to give appropriate consideration to all submissions relating to horses.

## **Appendix**

### **Committee procedure**

The petition was presented to the House of Representatives on 25 September 2013 and was referred to the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee of the 50th Parliament. On 15 May 2014, that committee received and heard evidence from two of the petitioners and from the New Zealand Walking Access Commission. Written evidence was received from the New Zealand Transport Agency. On 20 May 2014, the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee of the 50th Parliament invited a submission from the Ministry of Transport.

After the commencement of the 51st Parliament, we received the submission from the Ministry of Transport. On 30 October 2014, we invited evidence from the Royal Agricultural Society of New Zealand, but received none.

### **Committee members**

Jonathan Young (Chair)  
Andrew Bayly  
Sarah Dowie  
Iain Lees-Galloway  
Clayton Mitchell  
Sue Moroney  
Dr Parmjeet Parmar  
Denise Roche  
Alastair Scott  
Phil Twyford  
Hon Maurice Williamson