



When Legislation Fails to Educate and Protect Horse Riders Partner Up

The frequency and seriousness of reported road riding incidents involving horse riders, has prompted equestrian advocates to step into the arena of road safety messaging.

PASS WIDE & SLOW - Kia Tupato Kia Ata Haere

NATIONWIDE SUPPORT

The **New Zealand Equestrian Advocacy Network (NZEAN)** with the support of **New Zealand Riding for the Disabled (NZRDA)**, **Equestrian Sports New Zealand (ESNZ)**, **The New Zealand Pony Club Association (NZPCA)** and **Te Hapori Hōiho - National Māori Horse Association Aotearoa Trust**, along with 25 other equestrian organisations, is asking the Government to formally recognise the vulnerability of horse riders in transport legislation.

[Letters of support - Google Drive](#)



NZEAN SURVEY - SOURCING THE FACTS

The **New Zealand Equestrian Advocacy Network (NZEAN)** have recently released a road incidents survey for horse riders to share their experience of riding on the roading network. The data gathering exercise is part of work to understand driver behaviour around approaching and passing a horse and rider on the road and the extent of near miss incidents. https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NZEAN_Horse_related_road_incidents_survey

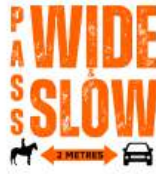
“There are common themes to the numerous stories being shared. They include speed, space, horns, hand signals and respect,” says Julia McLean, spokesperson for NZEAN and the Vulnerable Road User campaign.

Contact for this Vulnerable Road Users Press Release by Julia McLean of NZEAN on 0272765791 or email horseridersvru@gmail.com



OUR VRU STORIES - Beautiful Rosie, killed on our roads - 2020

My daughter said “it’s not slowing down” and was panicking, so I tried to take her pony as well and run both of them into a nearby driveway to get out of the way. But both ponies were panicking by this stage. I got twisted in the ropes as the first truck went past us at 100km and fell over. The ponies bolted. Unfortunately there was a second truck from the same trucking company following close behind and as Rosie tried to bolt home, she crossed the road and got hit by the second truck and flung in the air.

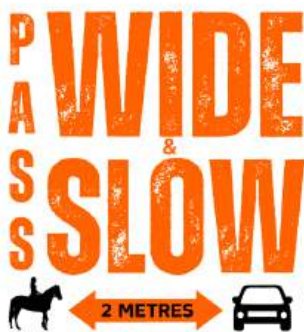


[Connect here](#) to read more stories from our riders across the country.

“There have been three separate incidents in six weeks involving horse riders and truck driver behaviours that have been uncomfortable to hear. The most recent, a fortnight ago, prompted me to reach out to the trucking sector on behalf. The response has been uplifting”, says McLean

MARKETING BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE ONLINE CAMPAIGN

Creation of a strategic interactive marketing campaign led by a marketing strategist who has offered to create and implement the [PASS WIDE & SLOW](#) campaign.



PASS WIDE & SLOW Marketing Campaign will be live online and social channels Sunday 25 August.

The campaign goal is to create awareness and behavioral change to drive **WIDE & SLOW** when passing horse rider on the road.

The campaign has been created to be interactive and have equestrians across Aotearoa involved, from Pony Club members to Olympians is our goal.

A range of marketing collateral will be supplied for anyone who supports the message to download for free along with instructions how to best use the collateral. We will also offer to create bespoke pieces for those who request them.

Daily updates and messaging will be posted on our [Pass Wide and Slow Social pages](#).



Transporting New Zealand, the National Road Carriers Association and the New Zealand Trucking Association have all agreed to share the **PASS WIDE & SLOW** message to their driver network in either their newsletters, monthly magazine or social media platforms.

“We are extremely grateful for the trucking sector's response. Other businesses like Hazlett, a significant livestock transporter, Ryal Bush Transport or *Protranz Earthmoving Ltd* are partnering with us. We are particularly thankful to Gerard Daldry from Protranz for sponsoring our first run of PWAS vis vests. It was heartening to learn the company's Health and Safety Manual has addressed the issue of passing horses safely since 2006 and educates drivers on the issue of speed, wind draft and to consider the noise of their engine whilst passing,” says McLean



PETITION HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE TO RECOGNISE RIDERS AS VRU (Vulnerable Road Users)

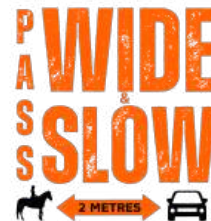
NZEAN, on behalf of equestrians, is leading a Petition to the **House of Representatives** for horse riders to be formally recognised as a *Vulnerable Road User* and included in off road pathways. It has cross party support, including support from the Deputy Prime Minister. The petition closes on October 14th and will be presented October 15th at Parliament.

[Petition of New Zealand Equestrian Advocacy Network: Vulnerable road user status for New Zealand horse riders \(petitions.parliament.nz\)](https://petitions.parliament.nz)

“Horse riders are currently considered an ‘other road user’ and the lack of clarity, detail and meaningful safety initiatives that comes with that label puts horse riders in an extremely vulnerable position, says McLean

“Whilst we participate in the political process for legislative change, we are doing our bit to partner with stakeholders that have the ability to reduce trauma, serious injury or death on our roads. We are speaking to every Local Government Regional Transport Committee across the country and have secured support from the first two - Greater Wellington RTC and Tasman Nelson Joint RTC. We have met and received support from New Zealand Police for our road safety messaging, and have written to the Automotive Association to highlight the shortfall in the licensing and road safety sphere. We have offered to supply the transport authority (NZTA) with targeted road safety material. We can’t sit and wait. Our lives matter too,” says McLean

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PASS WIDE & SLOW PUBLIC AWARENESS RIDES ACROSS AOTEAROA

New Zealand's horse riders are participating in a **Worldwide Pass Wide and Slow** event on September 14 & 15' to raise awareness of our vulnerability on the road and let drivers know what we require of them. There are currently 35 registered rides across the islands.

Our rides are being celebrated on our [NZEAN Facebook group](#).

Riders register a ride by emailing horseridersvru@gmail.com

Link to the live worldwide google map of rides, Aotearoa is punching above its weight yet again just like the Olympics!

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/R9eb47xEWLGBfPYH/?mibextid=K35XfP>



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For more information, please contact Julia McLean on 0272765791

If you require any marketing or media material please contact Eve 0212338838

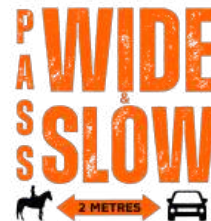


ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OF INTEREST

Note: The European Commission defines a Vulnerable Road User “as any “non-motorist” road user in the role of a pedestrian, a highway worker, a person riding an animal, a stranded motorist, a skateboarder, roller skater, a scooter, or a cyclist, to name a few.”

Background:

- There is currently no definition in the New Zealand Transport Agency literature to define a Vulnerable Road User (VRU). Pedestrians and cyclists are treated as vulnerable road users by Waka Kotahi and local authorities, which deliver the Government’s transport spend and Active Mode work programme.
- May 2024 - The Victorian Legislative Assembly Economy and Infrastructure Committee’s Final Report for the inquiry into the [Impact of Road Safety Behaviours on Vulnerable Road Users](#) recommends horse riders be recognised as a VRU. It also recommends a VRU advisory group be established to inform road safety interventions and awareness campaigns, review the need to specify a lower speed limit to pass a horse, Government to introduce a road user hierarchy system so all road users understand their responsibility, to introduce Pass Wide and Slow messaging on signage and a new method to report dangerous driving. [Inquiry into the impact of road safety behaviours on vulnerable road users \(parliament.vic.gov.au\)](#)
- The UK Highway Code (England, Scotland and Wales) was amended in January 2022. Horse Riders were already treated as a VRU, but a suite of changes to improve safety were introduced. The UK Highway Code now provides clarity and a hierarchy of road users (referenced by Victoria State inquiry). Pedestrians are most vulnerable followed by horse riders and cyclists (equally). It highlights that irrespective of the method of transport, those who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they may pose. Other changes include; vehicles must pass at no more than 10 mph, vehicles must allow at least 2m of space when passing. Dead Slow messaging (driver behaviour) is now incorporated into the Code <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>



- In New Zealand, horse riders are referred to as ‘other road user’ in the Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004. The best example we can find to champion horse rider safety is 7.22(a)ii - a road user must exercise due care towards a person riding an animal on the road. [Land Transport \(Road User\) Rule 2004](#).
- 1. There is no rule around the speed in which you must pass a horse. Minimum speed limits are explicit for passing a school bus, towing a trailer, heavy vehicles and light rail.
- 2. There is no rule around the minimum distance a vehicle should give a horse whilst passing.
- 3. No suggestion or rules around driver behaviour and vehicle use whilst passing a horse
- 4. No suggestion around rider visibility
- 5. Horse riders are not listed as a Shared Path user.
- Funding for alternative shared pathways to get vulnerable road users off the road is managed by Waka Kotahi, and in many cases a co-funding arrangement is made with local authorities to build new infrastructure.
- In New Zealand’s Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004, shared pathway users are listed as pedestrians, cyclists, riders of mobility devices and wheeled recreational devices. Horse riders are not.

[New Zealand Equestrian Advocacy Network](#) – Its vision is that horse riding on public land in New Zealand / Aotearoa is preserved for future generations, and that we retain, regain, and improve equestrian access nationwide. It is a charitable trust and supports equestrian advocacy groups to engage with decision makers around the country.

[Equestrian Sports New Zealand](#) – is the national sports organisation for equestrians in Aotearoa, New Zealand. ESNZ aim to provide safe environments for our members and the wider equestrian community, to enjoy competition and recreational equestrian pursuits at all levels of participation.

[New Zealand Riding for the Disabled](#) - NZRDA was formally introduced to New Zealand in 1962. Today, there are 48 groups affiliated to NZRDA and located in every region throughout the country, from Kaitaia in the north and all the way down to Invercargill in the south. The Core Purpose of NZRDA is to provide interaction with horses to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for people experiencing disability, or who have specific challenges or needs. NZRDA aim to enable and support them to achieve good lives including meaningful participation in, and contribution to, important life activities and roles in their community.



[Te Hapori Hōiho - National Māori Horse Association Aotearoa Trust](#) - brings awareness and further culturally validates Māori horsemen and women. Te Hapori Hōiho aims to consolidate the unique values of Māori culture, and affirms values and connection to the whenua, Reo, whakapapa and whānau through hōiho / horses.

[New Zealand Pony Club Association](#) – The New Zealand Pony Clubs Association (NZPCA) is a not for profit, youth voluntary organisation for young people interested in ponies/horses and riding. The NZPCA is represented nationally by its 90 Clubs, 136 Branches and over 7,500 members. Many of whom ride the roads to and from pony club rallies. NZPCA provides instruction on riding and horse/pony management with a structured certificate system that allows young people to gain qualifications, promoting the highest ideals of behaviour, sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty, to create strength of character and self-discipline.