

Media release: Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU)
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Roads heavily subsidised while rail expected to pay its own way

A major road funding decision being announced today shows the government has one set of rules for road, but entirely different expectations for rail, the Rail and Maritime Transport Union said today.

The Transport Minister is [expected to announce](#) a multimillion dollar funding package later today for strengthening bridges for heavy vehicles.

“No one would realistically expect that road users meet the full cost of the national roading network. It is understood there is a wider social benefit from people and goods being transported in this mode,” RMTU General Secretary Wayne Buston said.

“But it makes no sense to on the one hand heavily subsidise road users, and then to take a totally different approach to rail.”

“Rail, through the KiwiRail Turnaround Plan, is expected to pay its own way – by becoming self sufficient in ten years.”

“In doing so, the government is expecting rail to compete with a road transport industry heavily subsidised by taxpayers. It’s wrong, and it isn’t going to work.”

“A modern transport infrastructure for New Zealand means a commitment to a quality rail network as a key part of the logistics supply chain, not just roads.”

The government was out of step with similar countries overseas such as Australia and South Africa, who were prioritising rail investment, Wayne Butson said.

Ends.

For further comment:

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