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Released by: Kerry Arnold

Operators requested not to use Bertrand Road (New Plymouth District) including limited capacity bridge

New Plymouth District Council's Network Management Lead has written to Transporting New Zealand through Waka Kotahi regarding freight traffic using bridges that have posted limits. The council's biggest concern is the use of Bertrand Road in New Plymouth District.

The nature of the request to industry to not use Bertrand Road (amended extract below) and other posted bridges is self-explanatory.

We have reports of a number of heavy vehicles using Bertrand Road in New Plymouth District. The road has an historic swing bridge on it which has limits which are clearly posted multiple times on the approach. There are signs at the start of Bertrand Rd at either end and reminders on route and at the bridge.

We get regular calls from residents of Bertrand Road raising concerns about trucks trying to use this bridge and concern for the safety of the drivers, residents and damage to the bridge. Some time ago the bridge was closed and the community raised money to restore it and re-open the bridge to light vehicles, walkers and cyclists.

Recently at least two trucks that we know of have made it past the signs and become stuck at the historic swing bridge. Both have still attempting to cross and damaged the vehicles on the bollards which are there to stop large vehicles and prevent damage to the bridge.

We understand that Police were called to assist and the road closed for several hours each time to recover the vehicles and turn them around.

We understand that one of the trucks was from out of the district and attempting to navigate with GPS on a route that would avoid the current Inglewood SH3 road closure.

We have tried multiple times to get Google and others to remove the road from GPS navigation, so far with no success.

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Photos of the signage on Bertrand Road from the east end to the bridge and a picture of one of the stuck trucks are available from the Council.

We are very concerned that trucks are attempting to use this route, and choosing to ignore the signs and attempting to cross the bridge.

If this is happening here, we have approx. 10 other posted bridges in the district and have concerns that these restrictions are also being ignored.

John Eagles, the Council's Network Management Lead – Transportation, has requested industry's assistance to ensure the message gets out and that operators respect the bridge limitation signs and limited access on routes that have posted bridge limits.

They are also exploring options to prevent trucks using Bertrand Road (and other posted bridges).

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