

Mary Chartres

18 February 2018

Thank you for giving me the chance to speak to my concerns that I made in my submission on 18 January 2018.

Figures of 'traffic count' on the Milford Road, has increased, but I will leave those figures to Stephen Canny to update you with.

I have also had an update from our local 'Fiordland Volunteer Fire Brigade', and updated 'call out' figures to accidents since my original submission, are listed below:

- * **December 2017 - 3 call outs and all car accidents**
- * **January 2018 - 9 call outs, with 6 of them vehicle accidents**
- * **February (1-17 Feb) - 5 call outs, with 4 being vehicle accidents (last 3 being 15, 16, & 17th February and all on the Milford Road)** *There has been 9 accidents on the Milford road over the last week, but only 4 required were serious and required the Fire Brigade.*

Our fire brigade volunteers are very dedicated, and as I pointed out in my main submission, they rely heavily on local support. Some young firemen are still paid by their employer for the time they are involved with call outs. A road accident near Milford Sound, can call them away for 5-6 hours plus.

The figures on road accidents above are only the more serious ones that require the fire brigade to attend. You must also note that our local fire brigade also cover Te Anau, Mossburn, and Manapouri call outs. You will note from the highlighted figures above, that the accidents far out way the actual fires in our area.

I will highlight below some key concerns that I have:

1. **Passing lanes on the Mossburn Te Anau Highway (HW 94).** The 3 passing lanes that I mentioned would be great, but even one passing lane going each way would help towards alleviating traffic build up.
2. **Round-about in the Te Anau township (HW 94).** This would help slow traffic down before entering into the centre of the township, and also slow traffic down when passing the Primary School. Fast traffic past the Primary School was pointed out to me, by a young man working in a garage next to the School. There is a crossing monitored for 30 minutes before School starts and about 15 min after school finishes, but any children crossing outside that time would not be prepared for a speeding car rounding the corner.

3. **Yellow Lines** – Personally I think yellow lines are great, as they really stand out on the road, and lets me know when not to pass. BUT!! Unfortunately overseas tourists don't know what they mean, and sometimes they think it is pointing out a place to pass. We either put up signs at the side of the road explaining yellow lines – DON'T PASS, or we need to consider being 'uniform' with the rest of the world, with continuous white line or broken white line.
4. **Road Arrows** – It has been pointed out to me by many people, that we need to have more arrows on the road to show direction of traffic. I have been travelling a lot lately, and I must say that I totally agree. This would be an immediate fix for overseas travellers, until better safety plans can be put in place.
5. **Signage directing slow traffic to pull off road:** There is currently the occasional sign saying "Traffic Behind You – Let it Pass". It doesn't say anything about a slow traffic 'pull off bay' ahead, which is probably why the slow traffic just keep chugging along at about 60-80km on the open road, not realising that they may have 10 plus vehicles behind them.
6. **No Cell Phone coverage on the Milford Road:** This should be pointed out to people driving on the Milford Road, and also other areas around NZ that don't have mobile coverage. For anyone having an accident or a breakdown, they are totally reliant on another car coming along the same road, to go and get help.
7. ***555:** I used to see signs showing this number to call to contact Police, but I haven't noticed any signage lately. Do tourists know about this emergency number to call?
8. **Driving Frankton Airport to Te Anau Friday (16th Feb) between 2-6pm:** First day of Chinese New Year, and so much traffic on the road. I was surprised not to see any traffic officer's present on the road all the way to Te Anau. There was long queue's of traffic most of the way, and some really slow vehicles which are just as dangerous as fast vehicles.
9. **Traffic Officer on Milford Road:** There used to be a traffic officer assigned to the Milford Road during the busy months, and it does seem stupid that with the increase of traffic on the road, there is not one appointed. Our 2 local traffic officer's do a great job, but they can't be everywhere at once.

We do have a responsibility to ensure, that Tourists coming to our area will be safe and have a wonderful experience travelling our beautiful country. Who is controlling the amount of planes bringing tourists in to Queenstown? We just can't keep bringing in more and more flights, without have the capability to handle the tourists with our infrastructure. I have just spent 2 days in Queenstown last week, and the traffic is absolutely crazy, with bumper to bumper traffic everywhere.

I would also like to reiterate from my original submission, that locals are fearful of a really bad accident involving multiple vehicles. We don't want to have a repeat of the accident last year where 2 young men lost their lives because they were on the wrong side of the road, and a bus coming the other way ended up on top of the car while trying to avoid them. The car went on fire before anyone could get the boys out, but luckily they got the passengers off the bus before it went on fire. The tourists on the bus cut their holiday short and went back to Korea. So many people were affected by this accident.

I fully support a plan that was talked about around 2015, which would mean tourists take a bus from Te Anau to Milford Sound. The buses stop at all the tourist stops, they give a great commentary on the area, the buses are elevated and tourists get a much better view of the magnificent scenery, and lastly the tourists get to catch their boat that takes them for a ride on Milford Sound, on time. Currently some tourists who don't allow enough time to get to Milford Sound, miss their boat trip.

This structure would also take the pressure off certain peak times of the day, when many buses get there at the same time. Feedback from tourists that we have heard lately, is that the experience in Milford is not what they thought it would be like. They did not expect to get there and find such a crowd of people. This would mainly be the lunch time trips. I have also spoken to people that were really pleased that they had taken the early trip, as there was less traffic and the boat trip was more personalised.

Thanks for your time.

Kind regards

Mary Chartres