# WAIKATO REGIONAL ROAD SAFETY FORUM – a collaborative space to grow relationships, leadership, education and accountability

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| With a tenth of New Zealand’s population, the Waikato region is over-represented with deaths and serious injuries from road trauma, historically representing over 20 per cent of national casualties each year. This has been a key driver for the Regional Council to facilitate regional collaboration.  The Waikato is a diverse region with a wide variety of communities, landscape and significant variations in growth pressures and declining populations. We have a large road network, with 16 percent of national state highways by length (1,700 km), 10,000km of local roads. We have high traffic and freight volumes, and are a major connection area for export industries, international ports, commercial urban hubs and popular tourist and holiday destinations.  In the transport arena we cover ten councils, three police districts, the NZ Transport Agency, Department of Conservation, Kiwirail, two District Health Board’s, multiple iwi, three regional tourism offices and multiple advocacy and national member groups.  The Waikato Regional Road Safety Forum was convened in 2016 to support the development of a new regional road safety strategy. The 2017 strategy confirmed leadership, collaboration and accountability as a key short term priority and the Forum has continued to champion safety in the region, grow understanding of safety issues and interventions, connect professionals to each other and to high risk groups, develop submissions and collaborate on regional initiatives.  Continued collaboration and strong leadership are seen by the Forum members as critical to improving road safety outcomes across the region and inter-regionally. This presentation will focus on the genesis of this group, the membership, focus areas, activities and achievements to date, what’s required to make it happen, challenges and future opportunities. |