



## Introduction

### **Research supporting the Whirinaki work shows that news media has the second highest impact on people's view of AT, topped only by personal experience.**

Research commissioned by Auckland Transport looking media coverage about transport across New Zealand shows that the conversation has little maturity and coverage tends to focus on individual projects from relevant agencies rather than the transport. (See attachment in appendices). A significant proportion of coverage is simply informational rather than analytical with little nuanced or in-depth discussion of the links between the cause and effects of poor transport. This means for the public it is very hard to piece together a comprehensive picture on transport, its challenges, considerations and key issues. Modes are rarely included in the same coverage, so the trade-offs aren't captured. The concept of a multi-modal network is not well understood by Aucklanders. This is particularly important when we consider cycling, public transport and special vehicle lanes.

Another key finding is that few journalists have a deep knowledge of transport. This is, in part due, the changes in the media landscape. Journalists are time poor and coverage is often driven by popularity (clicks) and ratings. Transport is a complex issue with many agencies involved. There is no, one journalist who is covering transport issues nationally.

However, there are opportunities. We have seen from our work around road safety it is possible, with our partners, to lead a conversation and start to elevate the coverage away from single, point-in-time projects to more in-depth coverage that looks at wider issues. The new structure in the communications team lends itself to building relationships with local journalists. The completion of infrastructure projects does continue to result in positive media coverage. In the past six months Auckland was discussed in 31% of all coverage across the country, equal to all the other big regions combined. (Waikato, Wellington, Canterbury and Otago). This means there is a good opportunity for AT to lead the narrative nationally.

There is also an opportunity to develop the climate change conversation further. The message that climate change represents an opportunity for transport reform is only found in a small amount of reporting, instead the emphasis has been around the urgency of reducing emissions.

This strategy pertains to media and is a subset of the communications and engagement strategy is also informed by an audit of our own media management and practises. It builds on the successful elements of the previous strategy. Namely the themes of 'people come first' and 'there is a plan' which were central tenets.

## The strategy

### Is to elevate the conversation in the media to be about transport, the planning, policy and delivery of a transport network.

By doing this it will create greater understanding with the public about the reasons, rationale and decisions taken by AT and other agencies. The second level of narrative is about highlighting the benefits to communities of our work, especially in the infrastructure space.

Positioning stories to be more focused on community benefits will not only create easier stories for journalists but also show Aucklanders that ultimately, we are planning and running the transport network for them. In short we will make it easier for journalists to report on transport.

This strategy fits into the wider strategic narrative that focusses on people, safety, future thinking, infrastructure and climate/ environmental action. All media stories fit into these five categories. These in turn reflect AT’s strategic spotlights and business objectives.

#### AT Plan on a page

**Our purpose**

Why we exist

**Easy Journeys**

Connecting people and communities

**Customer value proposition & brand**

Promise to our customers

**Let’s go there** - enabling Aucklanders to move freely with confidence

- Safe & Liveable
- Enabling & Efficient
- Protects & Restores

**Our strategic spotlights**

How we’ll transform Tāmaki Makaurau

**Whirinaki**

Building trust, confidence and mana

**Safety & Wellbeing**

In life, work and travel

**Climate Change**

Reducing emissions to protect our environment

**AT business objectives**

What we have committed to deliver

1. Make Auckland’s transport system safe
2. Provide excellent customer experiences
3. Provide better travel choices
4. Connect people, places, goods and services
5. Support Auckland’s growth
6. Improve the resilience and sustainability of the transport system and reduce emissions
7. Support Maori wellbeing outcomes, expectations and aspirations
8. Collaborate with funders, partners, stakeholders and communities
9. Ensure our operating model is adaptive, financially sustainable and delivers value
10. Enhance our culture and capability

**Our values & leadership tohu**

Who we are

**Auahatanga**

Better, bolder, together  
I am an innovator, strategic thinker, champion of excellence

**Tiakitanga**

Safe with us  
I am a culture builder, guardian, influencer

**Manaakitanga**

We care...Full stop.  
I am a trusted partner, collaborator, connector

**Whanaungatanga**

We connect  
I am an enabler, developer, part of the community

## Objectives

1. The primary objective is to elevate the strategic media conversation from being about Auckland Transport to being about transport. A more analytic and nuanced media conversation will help Aucklanders understand the trade-offs needed in developing a transport network that is fit for Auckland's future.
2. To increase the number of informed journalists covering transport. The turnover of journalists is high and news rooms are pressured. Helping journalists understand transport better will result in better quality coverage.
3. Thirdly aim for editorial quality over quantity. This will be achieved by targeting our stories to key media outlets and using sponsored content.
4. Fourthly to capitalise on the community benefits of our projects. By targeting journalists making the most of our hub communications model and putting community benefit ahead of AT publicity in our stories we can make it easier for journalists to create stories that are meaningful for their audiences.

## Key themes

- Switching the dominant view from 'roads for cars' to 'transport network for all users'.
- All Aucklanders have a role in reducing carbon emissions through their travel choices and climate change is a chance for transport reform.
- Transport planning and delivery is about trade-offs and working partnership.
- Road safety is a societal issue.
- There is no quick fix for congestion.
- Infrastructure creates benefits for communities.
- People come first.
- There is a plan, AT is a future focussed organisation preparing for Auckland's future.

The principles of any media interaction will be:

- Open, honest, friendly and timely engagement, including in the event of major incidents or "negative" coverage
- Tonality and channels will reflect organisation vision and brand values
- Early engagement with key internal stakeholders
- "No surprises" approach with key stakeholders (e.g. Board, ELT, Council, other CCOs etc)

<b>Key strategies</b>	<b>Approach</b>
Write about community benefits	Press releases etc should be written about the benefits to readers so journalists can understand easily what this will mean to their readers. This is particularly important when talking about infrastructure.
Reflect our work with partners and show our transport environment	Where possible illustrate how we are working with other agencies and partners. Co-branded releases and quotes from others.
Greater use of advocates and partners.	Transport is often about a balance and ensuring a network for all users. Again, showing the whole environment
Hub communications team to own relationships with local journalists.	Using their specialised local knowledge to build relationships.
Educate more journalists	Produce a 101 guide to AT for journalists including key AT staff and their remit as spokespeople. Target journalists according to their specialisms. E.g. Climate.
Use the correct terminology	Consistency of terminology across all communications. Part of the 101 guide.
Be upfront about the challenges	Don't sugar coat how difficult transport planning and delivery is. Be upfront with Aucklanders about what they can expect in the future.
Make better use of sponsored content	To achieve the goal of quality use sponsored content.
Target and pitch stories to specialist journalists	Linked to the mapping above.
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Approach</b>
Produce a 101 guide for journalists	Covering what AT does, a list of key spokespeople and their specialisms, a terminology guide
Stakeholder map journalists	Heat map on which journalists write on which subjects
Workshop media management with hubs	Training sessions for hub teams
Produce message bank on key themes	Congestion, climate, road safety, cycling, infrastructure.
Work with Isentia to change monitoring and evaluation themes to reflect objectives	
Year media plan of quality stories based on themes.	Use of sponsored content and opinion pieces. Aim of one per month.
Start to build relationships with ethnic media.	We are a multi-ethnic communications team in a multi-ethnic organisation in a multi-ethnic city so this needs to be reflected in our media coverage

## Evaluation

**Above and beyond the monthly reporting on media coverage that tracks volume, sentiment, leading spokesperson, and the themes of road safety, cycling and covid we will repeat the Isentia transport benchmark research in one year's time.**

This measures origin of source, tone and sentiment, leading spokesperson and share of voice.

Track the number of journalists who are covering transport as a topic.

Establish and measure a benchmark for coverage in ethnic press.

### Plan on a page

#### Current state

- No wider transport narrative
- Only three main journalists reporting on transport
- Dis-jointed stories that don't connect
- Difficult for public to see the wider story
- Stories on single projects not transport
- Little analysis in reporting

#### Plan

##### Initiatives

- Focus some stories on less well informed journalists
- Focus on what the story means for the reader/listener/viewer
- Lead the conversation on key topics like transports role in climate, cycling, public transport
- Co-brand some releases with partners

##### Assumptions

- Research shows poor narrative of complex transport issues across the country
- Stories run in isolation of each other
- Journalists are not well informed
- Agencies run stories separately
- Stories are about individual projects, not transport

##### In a nutshell

- AT leading the conversation on transport moving away from single focus stories

#### Future state

- Reporting by a greater number of journalists
- Stories that reflect our partnership status
- Stories that show the public the benefits
- Coverage that explains the trade-offs.





# Transport Sector Benchmark

November 2020 – April 2021

[isentia.com](https://www.isentia.com)

insight  impact

*Cover image: SH5 Mohaka Bridge (Stuff, 13 April 2021). Photo credit: John Cowpland.*





## INTRODUCTION

Isentia analysed a random sample of 1,785 online media reports, across a very broad range of transport topics, that were published in New Zealand between November 2020 and April 2021.

Tone was assigned on the basis that improving transport freedom in accordance with AT’s “movement over mode” guiding principle was a positive virtue. This included not only the existence of transport options, but also that those options are of a high standard, safe and convenient, and cost-effective enough to be viable choices for the communities they serve.

- **Positive** coverage generally advocated for improvements to transport freedom; praised the standard, accessibility, safety, or viability of transport options; or focused on efficiency, emissions reductions, positive community outcomes or other benefits in the given context.
- **Negative** coverage emphasised criticism of these elements, either in principle or, more often, in terms of the suitability or quality of a given project or policy under discussion. Coverage

that focused on bad transport outcomes – such as poor road safety, service cancellations, project delays or cost overruns – was also generally negative.

Coverage was grouped according to four main themes.

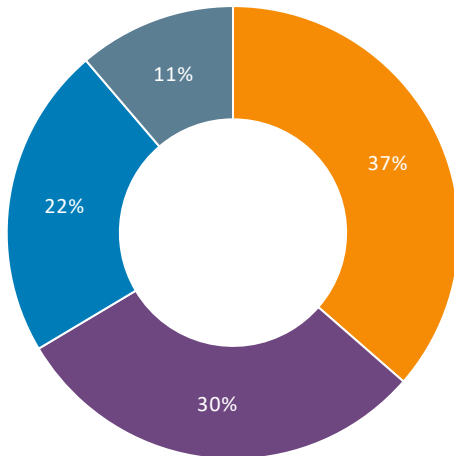
- Reports that mainly focused on **safety & experience** aspects were the most common, comprising just over a third of coverage, with a strong emphasis on road and path safety, and social distancing and masking on public transport. This included a fair amount of negative coverage about seasonal road deaths, and neutral reporting that discussed safety themes such as mask usage or road tolls only briefly.
- **Infrastructure development** coverage made up just under a third of the total, focusing mainly on transport projects recently completed, under active development, or in the planning stages. This included the highest proportion of positive reporting, especially originating from project funders such as NZTA and local councils emphasising the realised or anticipated benefits of their projects, but also included

significant criticism of developments reported as unsuitable, delayed, or over budget.

- Reports about **service & accessibility** were focused on the quality of services (including routes, paths, and similar) and peoples’ ability to use them. This made up almost a quarter of coverage, including high levels of both positive and negative discussion of non-infrastructure changes, such as public transport routes, fares, or rolling stock quality.
- Coverage focused mainly on **climate change or transport emissions** was the least common, making up 11% of analysed reporting, but was also the most positive, more strongly emphasising opportunities for transport reform resulting from climate change, which was a leading message in coverage overall (see page 10).

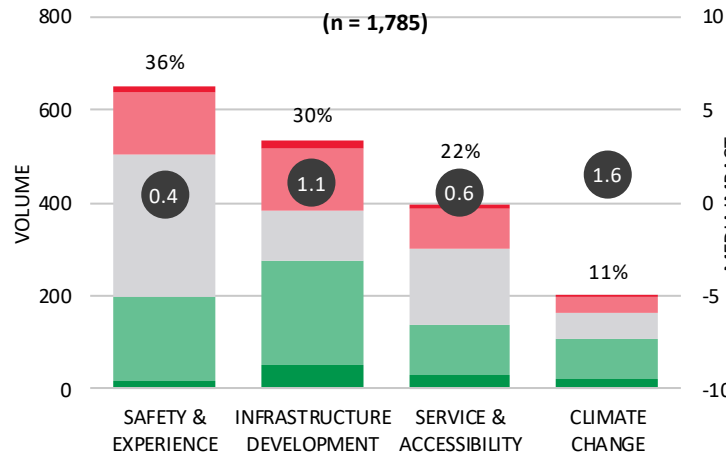
We also tracked four broad transport types: private vehicle, public transport, active transport, and commercial and freight vehicles, and 12 separate transport modes within these types (see page 6).

### STORY FOCUS SHARE OF VOICE



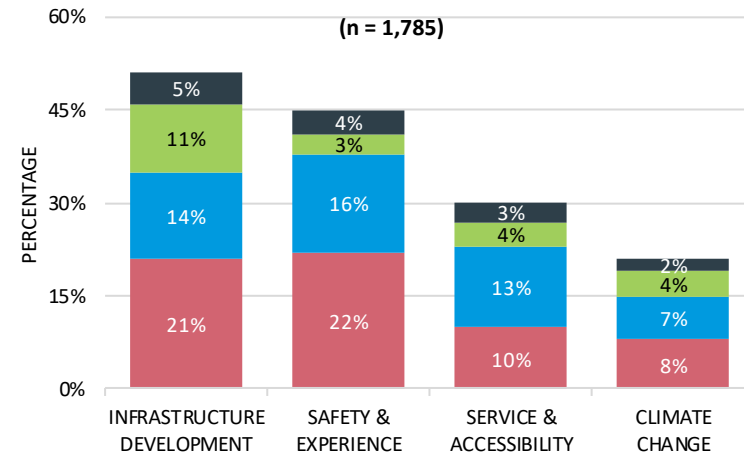
- service & accessibility
- safety & experience
- infrastructure development
- climate change

### STORY FOCUS BY TONE



- very positive
- positive
- neutral
- negative
- very negative
- media impact score

### STORY FOCUS BY TRANSPORT TYPE



- active transport
- commercial/freight
- passenger vehicles
- public transport



# TRANSPORT INDUSTRY BENCHMARK

NOVEMBER 2020 – APRIL 2021



## OVERALL VOLUME

1,785



## MEDIA IMPACT SCORE

0.8



## LEADING MESSAGE

CLIMATE CHANGE REQUIRES/  
PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
TRANSPORT REFORM;  
DECISIONS ARE MADE BY  
CONSENT/CONSULTATION  
(6% OF COVERAGE  
EACH)



## LEADING SOURCE

MICHAEL WOOD,  
TRANSPORT MINISTER  
(5% OF COVERAGE)



## LEADING OUTLET

STUFF.CO.NZ  
(19% OF COVERAGE)

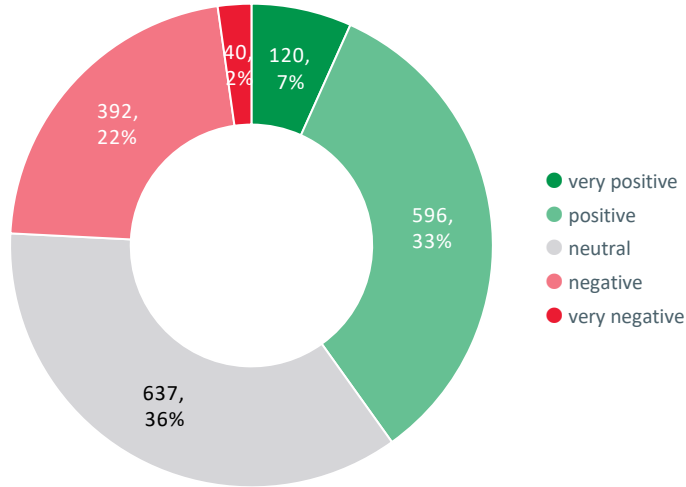


## LEADING BYLINE

JOEL MACMANUS  
(2% OF COVERAGE)



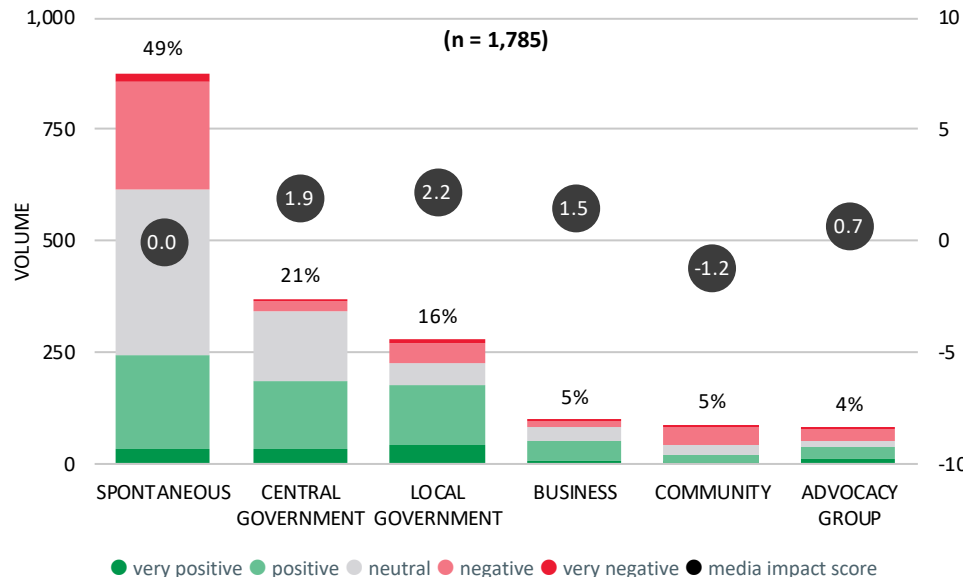
## TONE OVERVIEW



Reporting analysed for this project was unusually diverse and specific, focusing mainly on individual transport projects or events rather than big-picture themes of policy, development, or investment.

- The most positive reports were those that originated from central government (including agencies such as NZTA) or local government (including agencies such as AT). Central and especially local government voices tended to be optimistic, forward-looking and positive, and these reports often focused on anticipated benefits from future development or policy decisions, rather than benefits already realised. In addition, these sources tended to emphasise the quality of the consultation undertaken for transport projects, or how well the projects balanced the competing needs of different transport users. In contrast, non-official sources more often expressed ambivalent views, praising some aspects of transport projects (such as vision or intended outcomes) while expressing reservations about others (such as funding, timing, project scope, or suitability in practice).
- Very positive coverage rarely included alternative views from critics or sceptics, whereas the most critical reports originating from community, business, or advocacy groups, or from the public at large often did include official voices providing context and balance. The result, especially in infrastructure development reporting, was coverage that was tilted towards optimistic official voices and away from the more sceptical views of groups most directly affected by transport decisions.

## ORIGIN OF COVERAGE



- The most negative coverage – where criticism was not moderated by positive official voices – tended to convey harsh and sometimes cynical views about the impacts of transport decisions on a given sector, community, or group, or reflected clearly negative transport outcomes such as safety concerns, major service failures, cost overruns, or delays.
- The large proportion of neutral coverage tended to discuss transport themes only incidentally or in passing, such as in coverage of public transport masking or minor roads disruptions.



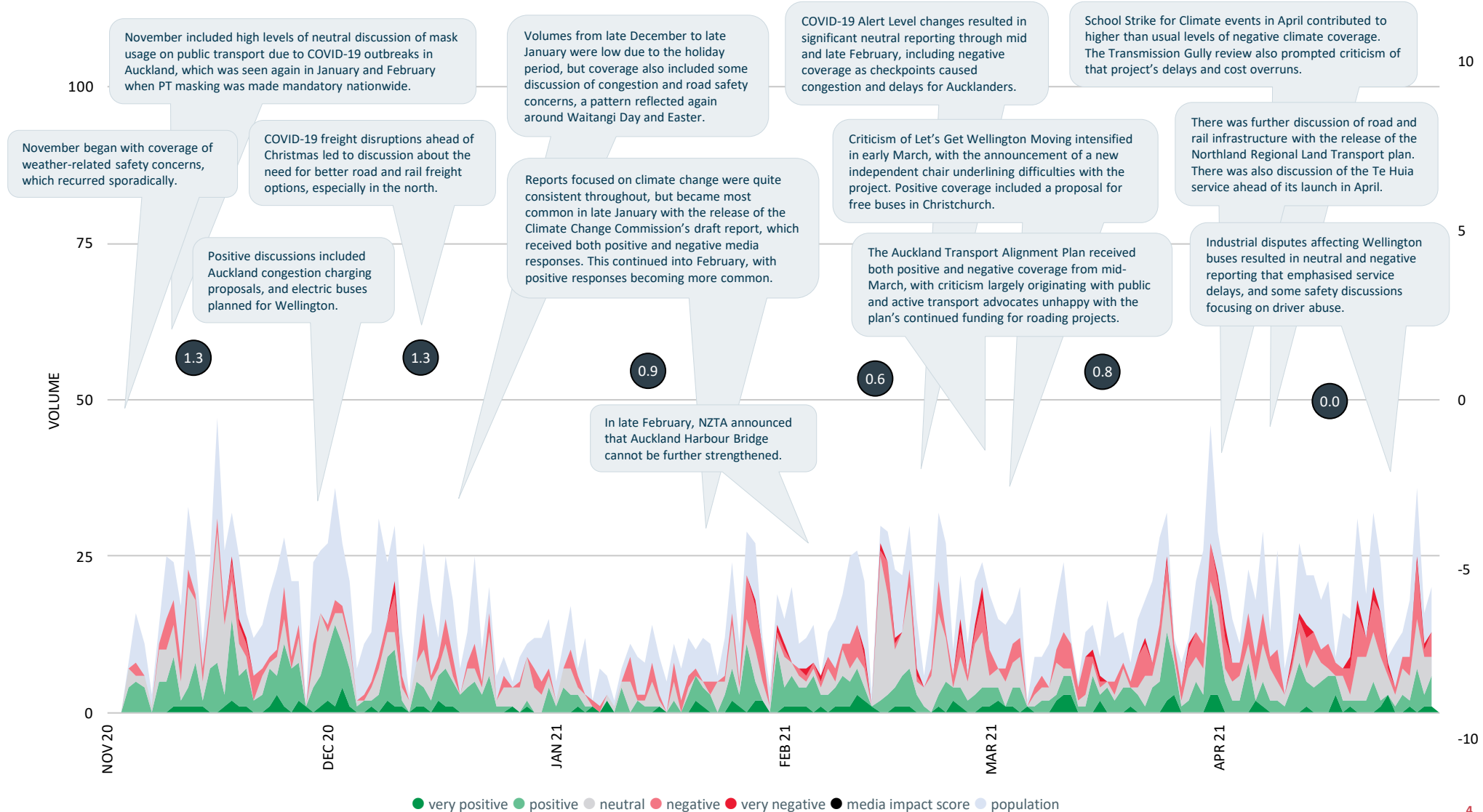
# TRANSPORT INDUSTRY BENCHMARK

NOVEMBER 2020 – APRIL 2021



## TREND BY TONE

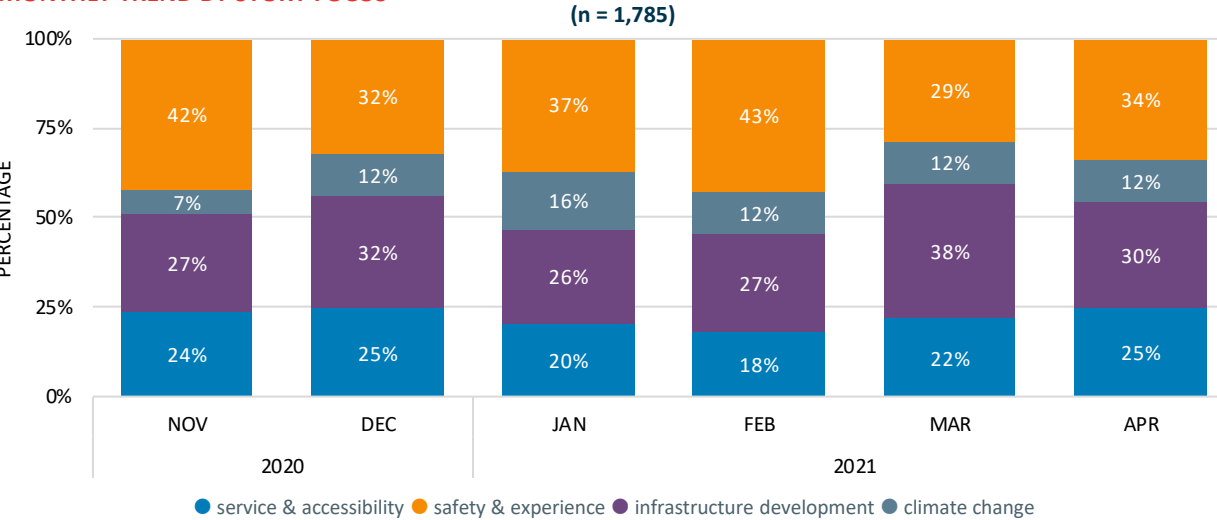
This chart shows daily coverage through the analysis period. The highest pale-blue peaks show the overall population of coverage before sampling, while those below show sampled and analysed coverage by tone.



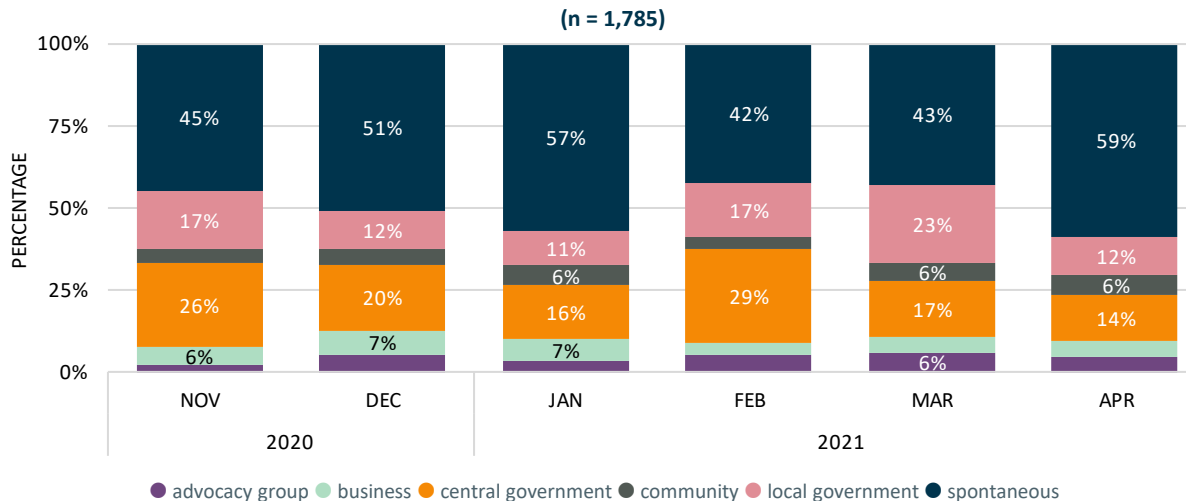


### MONTHLY TREND BY STORY FOCUS

#### MONTHLY TREND BY STORY FOCUS



#### MONTHLY TREND BY ORIGIN

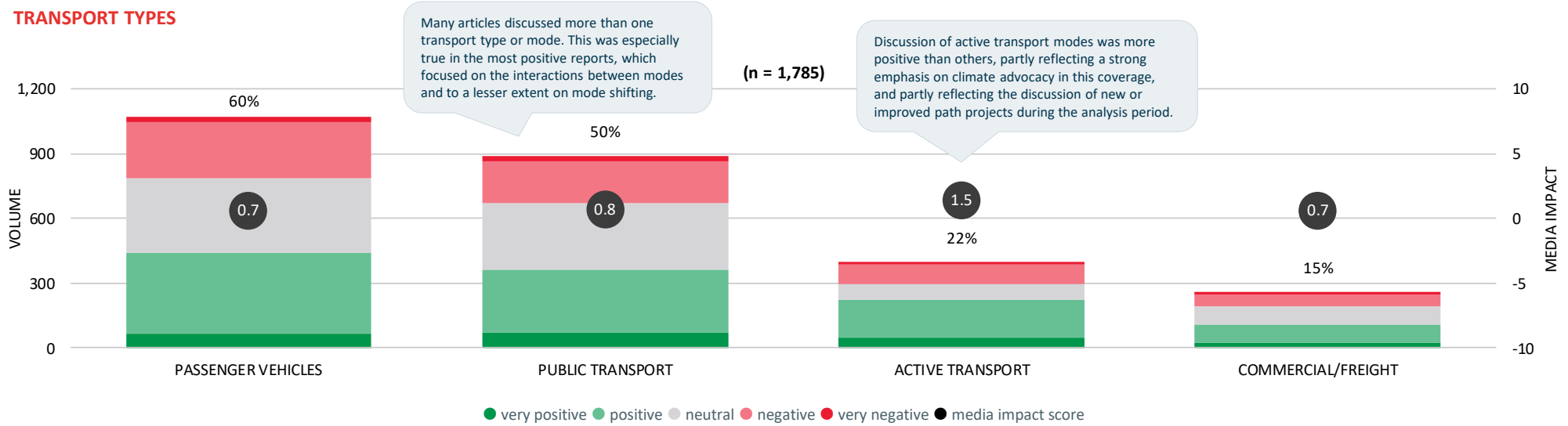


- Despite the broad range of topics covered, the main themes of coverage were fairly consistent through the period. Variations were due mainly to seasonal transport patterns and events. For example, safety and experience coverage was most common in November and February, due to COVID-19 outbreaks and discussion about public transport masking, and the impacts of checkpoints around Auckland. Slightly higher volumes were also present in January and April due to coverage of holiday traffic and severe weather. Improvements to road safety were also frequently discussed in infrastructure coverage, as a key benefit of developments either planned or demanded by road users.
- Similarly, discussions about services and access often overlapped with safety or infrastructure themes, depending on what aspects of a project were given the greatest prominence in reporting. This was especially true in coverage about mode shifting, which was split almost evenly across coverage mainly focused on climate change, infrastructure, and safety themes, with only a few reports that discussed mode shifting focused on service & accessibility. For more detailed discussion of mode shifting, see pages 19-20.
- Such a degree of overlap was less true for climate change, which was rarely discussed in detail unless it was the main focus of coverage. Just over 20% of analysed reports mentioned climate change, but half of these referred to it only in passing, often among a range of other factors under consideration. When mentioned in passing, climate change was often presented as being of secondary importance to other themes such as safety, cost, or efficiency. Climate change coverage was most common and most positive in late January and early February following the release of the Climate Change Commission’s draft report.
- The origin of reporting was also quite consistent. Spontaneous coverage – reports that originated more or less organically from media inquiries or events – dominated especially during months when external events such as weather and holiday traffic resulted in high coverage volumes. Coverage originating from central government was again most common in relation to COVID-19 outbreaks in November and February – although it remained in fairly high volumes throughout, including reporting on road safety and infrastructure funding announcements by NZTA. Local government, despite an outsized share of voice in source discussions (see page 13), was only a modest source of coverage overall.

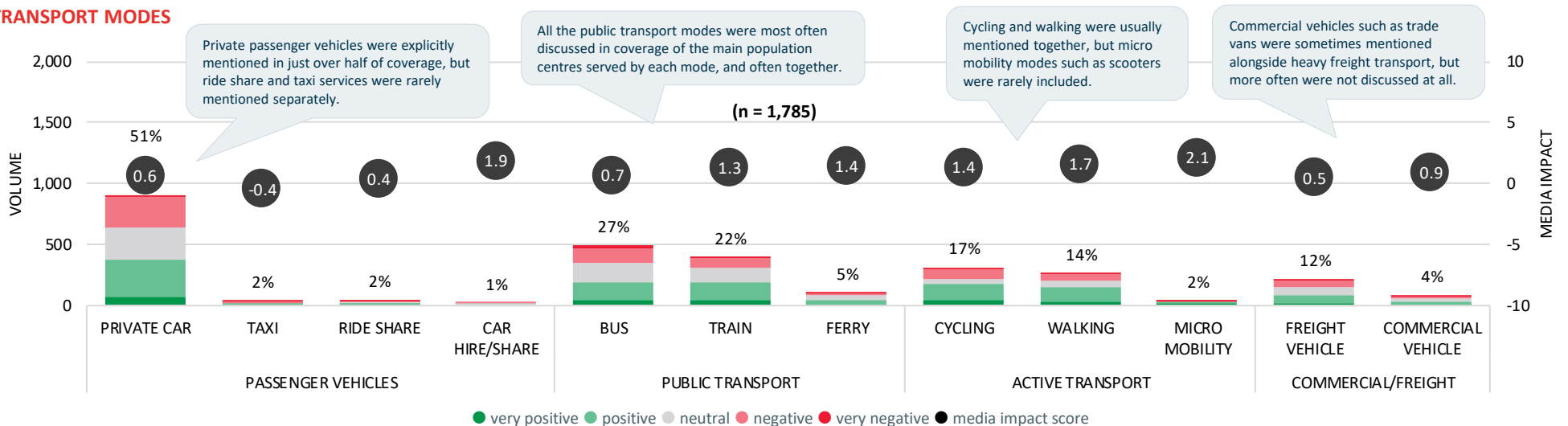
## TRANSPORT TYPES & MODES

These charts show the leading transport types and modes discussed in coverage. Broad types were counted if they were mentioned or strongly implied, while the more specific modes were counted only if they were mentioned explicitly, or depicted in photos or similar.

### TRANSPORT TYPES



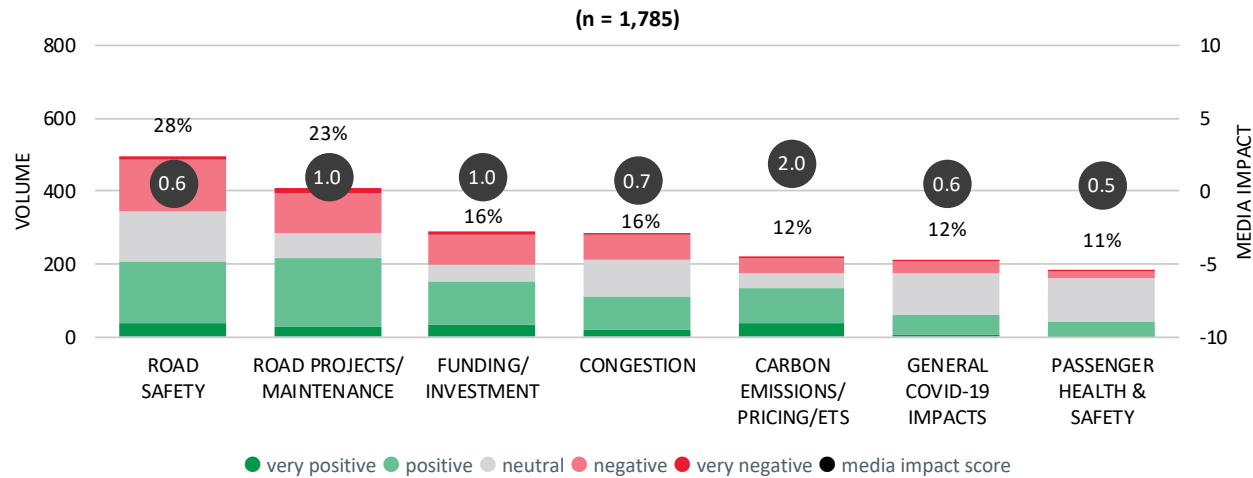
### TRANSPORT MODES



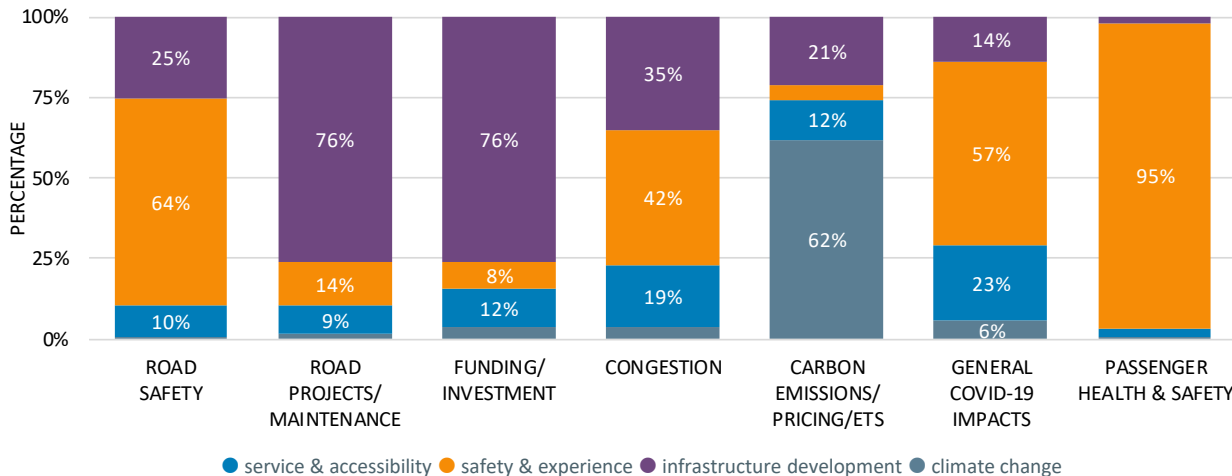


## LEADING TOPICS

### LEADING TOPICS BY STORY FOCUS



### LEADING TOPICS BY TONE

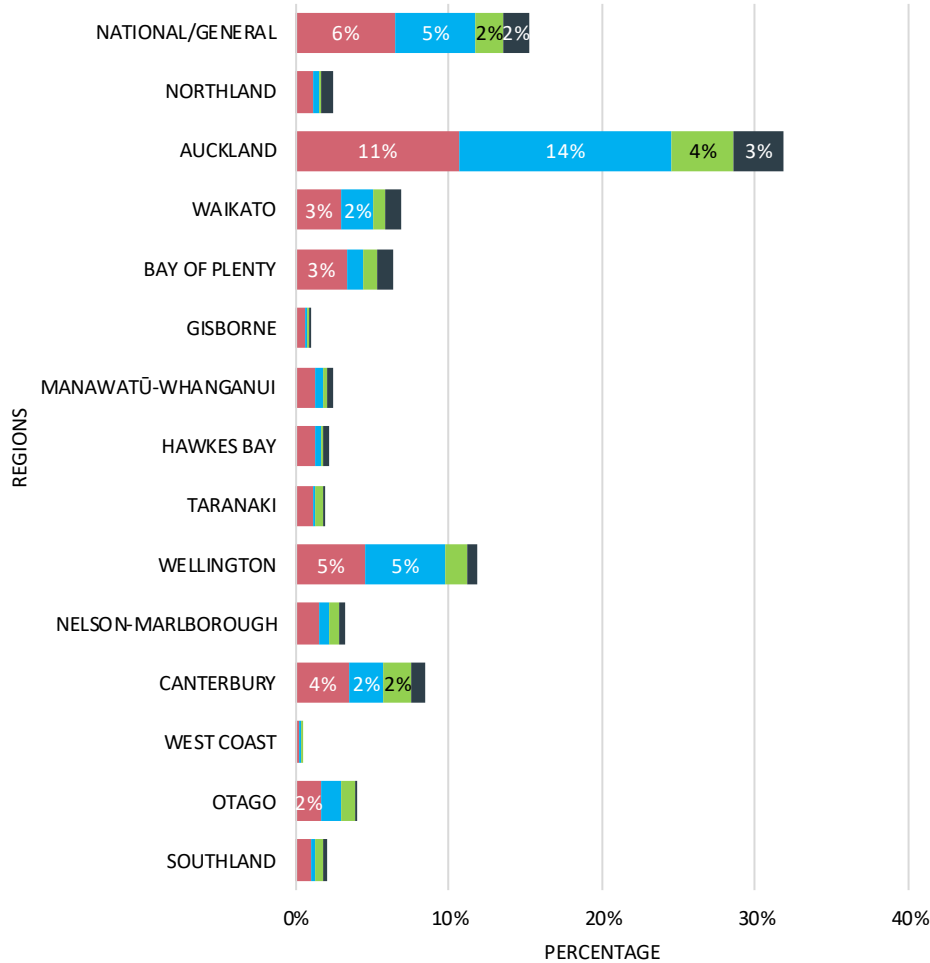


- Road transport themes predominated – road safety, roading infrastructure projects, congestion, and carbon emissions. These topics were often discussed together. Individual passenger vehicles were the most common mode discussed, but cars were often mentioned in coverage of public and active transport or freight themes, and leading car topics such as road safety and congestion were recognised as also having significance for public and active transport modes, and freight.
- However, discussion of the causes and effects of these topics in coverage was often simplistic. For example, congestion was most often discussed in coverage of safety, especially in reports about travel disruptions due to accidents. In this coverage, congestion was framed mainly as an unavoidable negative consequence of poor road safety, rather than as a contributing cause. Similarly, infrastructure development coverage often advocated for investment in roading to ease congestion, such as between Northport and Auckland before Christmas. But these reports rarely noted other potential impacts of road development, such as the impact of induced private vehicle demand on congestion (mentioned in 1% of coverage overall).
- Explicit discussion of other technical transport policy themes was also rare. Mode shifting was among the most common such topic, appearing in just under 10% of coverage. Traffic calming and reliance on private vehicles were each discussed in just over 2% of analysed reports. Tolls or congestion charges and grade separation were each discussed in just under 2% of reports. Discussion of traffic signal priority was under 1%. While cost overruns and the value represented by infrastructure investments were commonly discussed in general terms, explicit discussion of cost-benefit analysis processes or BCRs was also very rare, appearing in well under 1% of analysed reporting.
- The lack of nuanced or in-depth discussion of the links between the causes and effects of poor transport outcomes was largely due to the fact that general media wrote mainly for the general commuting public. A significant proportion of this coverage was simply informational rather than analytical. The major exception to this was discussion of climate change, which was generally more technical, in-depth, and concerned with the complexity of transport systems rather than their primary characteristics.

## REGION BREAKDOWN

### REGION BY TRANSPORT TYPE

(n = 1,785)



● active transport ● commercial/freight ● passenger vehicles ● public transport

### REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

More than three quarters of reports about Northland were road-focused, emphasising private vehicles and freight transport. This was largely due to coverage of the COVID-19 freight crisis, which prompted calls for improved road and occasionally rail freight access between Whangārei and Auckland.

Auckland was discussed in 31% of coverage, equal to all the other regions with major population centres (Waikato, Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago) combined. Other regions were each discussed in less than 4%.

- 0%
- < 1%
- 1–10%
- 11–20%
- 21–30%
- 31–40%

Waikato coverage included discussion of positive safety developments and the launch of the Te Huia commuter train, but also frustration about congestion and road safety, especially south of Auckland following COVID-19 Alert Level changes and holiday periods.

Predominantly rural regions such as Northland, Southland, Taranaki, Hawkes Bay, and Gisborne had low levels of coverage about public and active transport, with half or more of these reports discussing passenger vehicles or freight traffic.

Wellington was one of two regions (also Nelson-Marlborough) where coverage was negative overall, though only mildly so. In both cases, residents' frustration with local urban transport policy was the main theme of criticism. Most other regions were in the mildly positive range (0.5–1.5).

Coverage in Canterbury and Otago was more positive than other main centres, largely due to significant coverage of investments such as Christchurch's Northern Corridor, and the return of Dunedin's regional tourist rail services. Both regions were also significantly affected by weather-related disruptions at New Year.

## MESSAGES

### LEADING MESSAGES



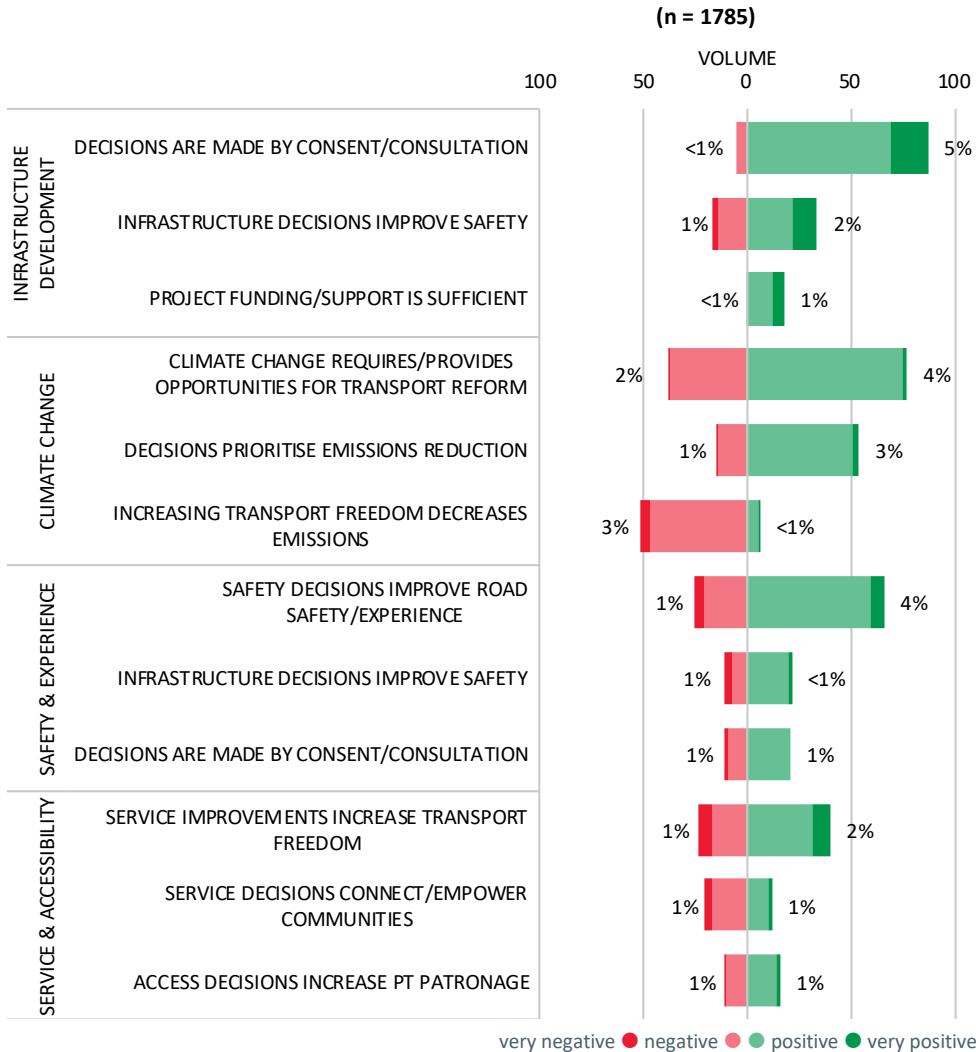
very negative ● negative ● positive ● very positive

- The strongest concentrations of positive messaging generally appeared in proactive reports from central and local governments announcing or promoting transport decisions. These statements, and reports based on them, tended to accentuate the positive aspects of the decisions, especially anticipated future benefits from development, funding, or policy changes, but often did not canvass the potential costs or downsides, or give voice to local or institutional opposition to the projects.
- This was especially common in proactive infrastructure coverage, which tended to emphasise safety improvements, decreased congestion and travel times, and opportunities for the use of non-car modes, conveying several positive messages at once. One example was the Christchurch Northern Corridor, which was the subject of very positive coverage noting safety improvements and reduced congestion for walkers and cyclists (from paths), motorists (from roading), and public transport users (from park and ride facilities and new bus routes).
- Transport Minister Michael Wood told Stuff, “By giving people real transport choices, we’re helping more people leave their car at home, which reduces congestion and emissions” (17 December). This report also included comments from and photos of locals riding the route with children to illustrate the project’s safety and convenience. But not all praise came from predictable sources. Newstalk ZB’s Mike Yardley wrote: “What I love about the CNC is that it disperses traffic across a variety of purpose-built routes ... Commuters now have a sexy new route option. And as much as I am car-centric, the corridor is flanked by a massive shared walking and cycling path” (17 December).
- Reports originating from government sector project backers also noted the extent and quality of consultation undertaken in support of the projects. Often, this celebrated mutually-beneficial outcomes that had resulted from consultation but, in some cases, the need for better consultation was used to contextualise project delays, such as on the Auckland Light Rail, when Wood said, “I know some would have liked me to announce a shovel-ready project today, but I also want to be absolutely certain that the plan we move forward with is the right one” (*Newshub*, 31 March).
- Negative mentions of this consultation message, while less common, formed the second-largest theme of criticism overall, and covered a wide range of objections and poor outcomes – including overt failures of process, such as when Marlborough District Council put a crossing proposal on hold after it reportedly forgot to undertake consultation and received a petition calling for a halt. But criticism also applied in some cases where consultation had been undertaken or was underway, but its outcomes were found wanting. For example, Queen St building owner Andrew Krukziener called consultation on the street’s pedestrianisation trial as a “charade”, despite having participated in the co-design meetings run by Auckland Council through 2020 (*NZ Herald*, 3 April).



## MESSAGES

### LEADING MESSAGES BY STORY FOCUS

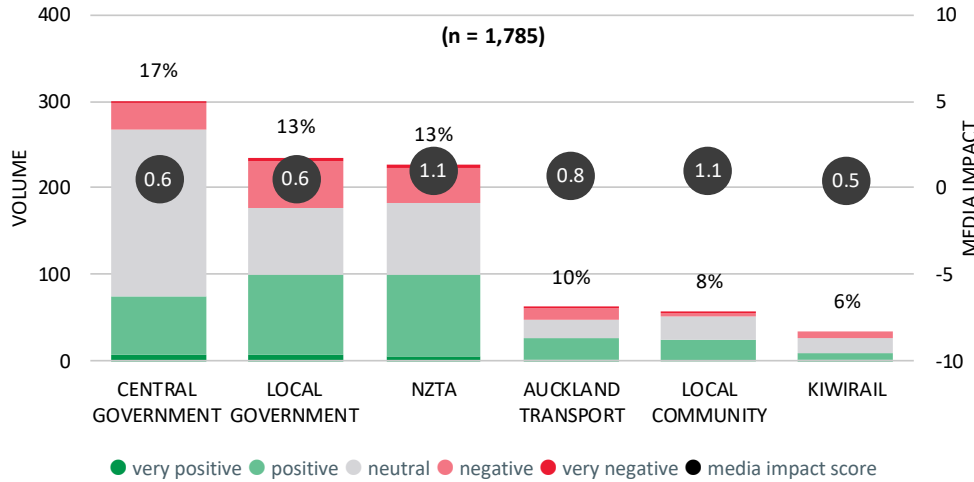


- Both positive and negative messages about consultation were predominantly conveyed in infrastructure-focused reporting, with a few focused on safety topics. But the most common negative infrastructure message was that *project funding/support is insufficient*, mentioned more than five times as often as the positive variant. Although the volume was lower, a similar balance appeared in mentions of the message *decisions are financially wasteful/low quality spending*, which was much more common than the positive variant.
- Much of this criticism was conveyed together in reporting on major infrastructure development projects such as Transmission Gully, where inadequate funding had caused delays and quality problems, which had further increased costs, lowering the quality of spend or perceived value of the project. But again, positive reflections tended to focus on outcomes rather than costs. Major projects reported to have come together well, such as the Christchurch Northern Corridor, rarely attracted explicit praise about their funding.
- Like other climate change-focused themes, the message that *climate change requires or provides opportunities for transport reform* was strongly concentrated in a small subset of reporting. This message was conveyed in just under half of the 11% of reports focused on climate change, but in only about 2% of other coverage. Reports about climate change often emphasised the urgency of emissions reduction, and this concentration of positive messaging contributed strongly to the generally positive tone of this coverage overall. The need to decarbonise was not often disputed directly in coverage – the message *climate change is used to force transport reform* was mentioned only a handful of times in total. Opposition to emission reductions was more often framed in terms of the need to balance these measures against other priorities, but even so, the message *decisions overprioritise climate change* was rare, mentioned explicitly in only 1% of coverage, half as often as the positive variant. More typically, climate change was simply de-emphasised, and attention was focused on other priorities. Negative messages that argued carbon emissions were not sufficiently prioritised were also rare (1%), and often originated from members of advocacy groups such as Greater Auckland or School Strike 4 Climate rather than from members of the general public.
- The ratio of positive to negative messages was lowest in service & accessibility coverage. Much of this was due to the gap between project expectations and project outcomes in practice, especially around public transport, which was mentioned in almost half of these reports. Examples included the cancellation of Wellington’s Airport Flyer bus service, and reports noting delays in reinstating it due to the need for a tender process and the need for the replacement service be environmentally sustainable. In other cases, attempts at service improvement were reportedly hampered by poor consultation, such as the decision to standardise Christchurch bus livery in teal, rather than using different-coloured buses for different routes – a decision which resulted in criticism from Blind Low Vision NZ and others who relied on bus colours to navigate the system. More positive themes again tended to focus on future anticipated benefits to transport freedom or communities, rather than benefits already realised.



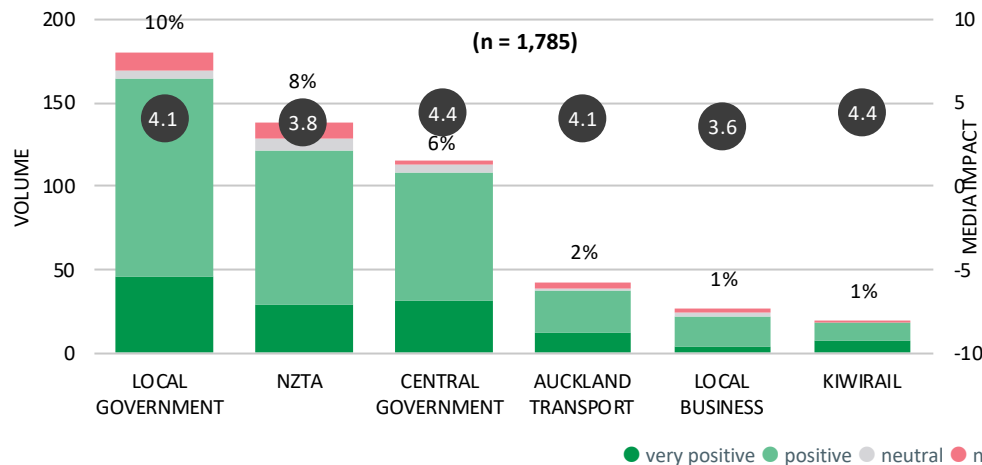
## RESPONSIBILITY

### RESPONSIBILITY BY TONE – NEITHER APPROVED NOR DISAPPROVED

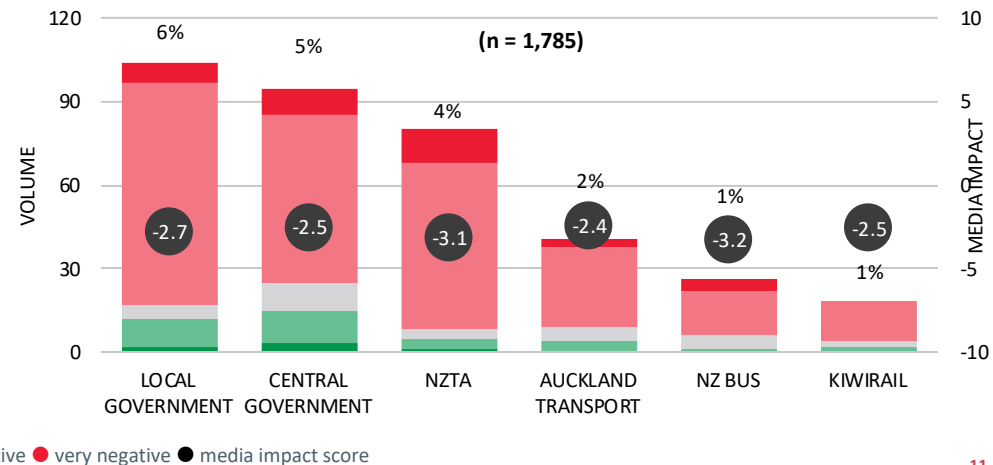


- Coverage often attributed responsibility to projects, policies, or outcomes. Most often the agency or group reported to be responsible was the project’s main backer or funder, and this was clearly stated in headlines, images or other content, and this often formed the basis for the narrative conveyed in the report. Isentia also tracked whether these responsibility attributions generally approved or disapproved of the agency or group’s role.
- The largest share of responsibility attributions were essentially neutral or balanced – for example, NZTA was reported as being responsible for road repairs following floods at New Year, but was not held responsible for the damage that had occurred. This sort of attribution closely matched the general picture of the analysed reporting – mostly neutral and positive coverage, with a significant minority of negative reporting.
- Attributions of responsibility with approval often originated from the responsible agency itself, and often included other contributors. For example, government ministers including Grant Robertson and Jacinda Ardern claimed credit for establishing the Te Huia service, also praising KiwiRail and local government representatives for their roles in the project. In other cases, attributions of this sort came from members of the community, businesses, or were simply implicit in the text of reports.
- In disapproving coverage, blame or criticism was similarly apportioned between various agencies. This also often revealed political motivations, such as when Transport Minister Michael Wood criticised the previous National Government for the cost overruns and delays affecting Transmission Gully, or when the Opposition blamed the government for what it characterised as a lack of progress on Auckland Light Rail.

### RESPONSIBILITY BY TONE – APPROVED

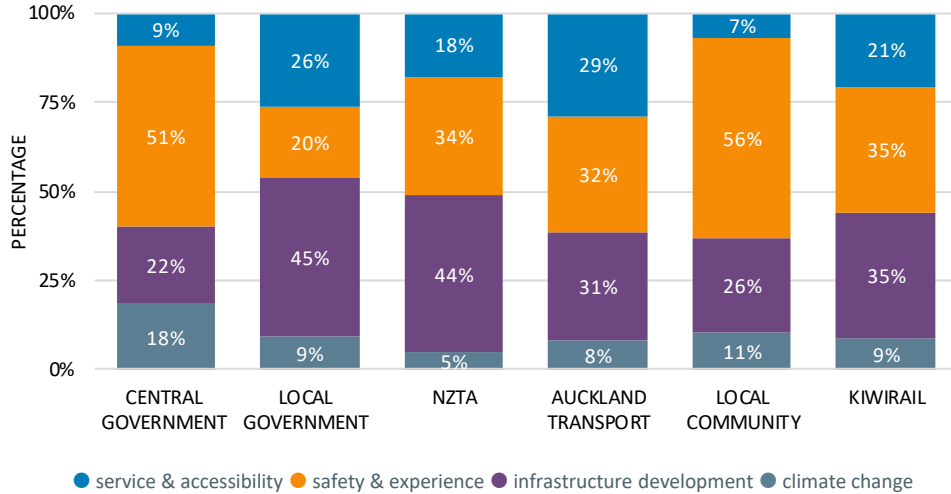


### RESPONSIBILITY BY TONE – DISAPPROVED

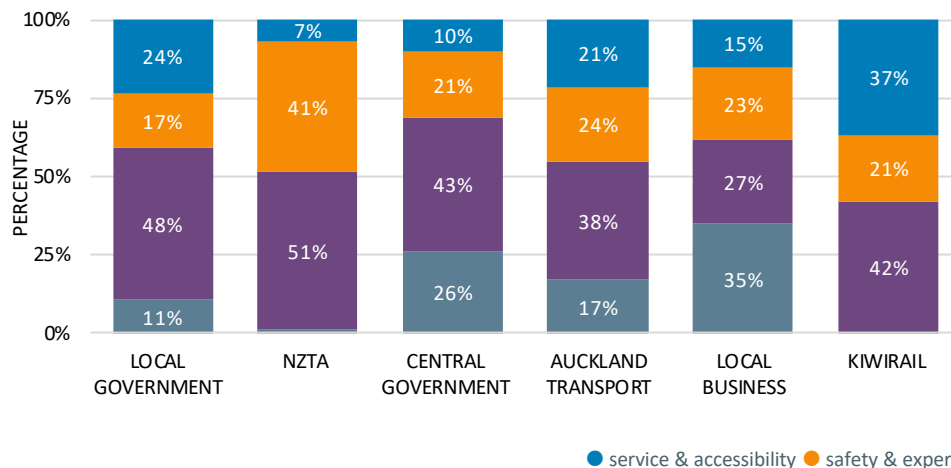


## RESPONSIBILITY

### RESPONSIBILITY BY STORY FOCUS – NEITHER APPROVED NOR DISAPPROVED

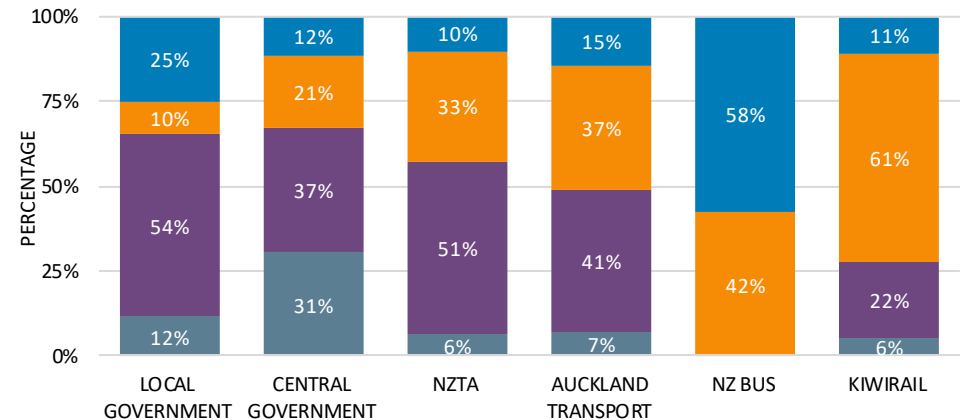


### RESPONSIBILITY BY STORY FOCUS – APPROVED



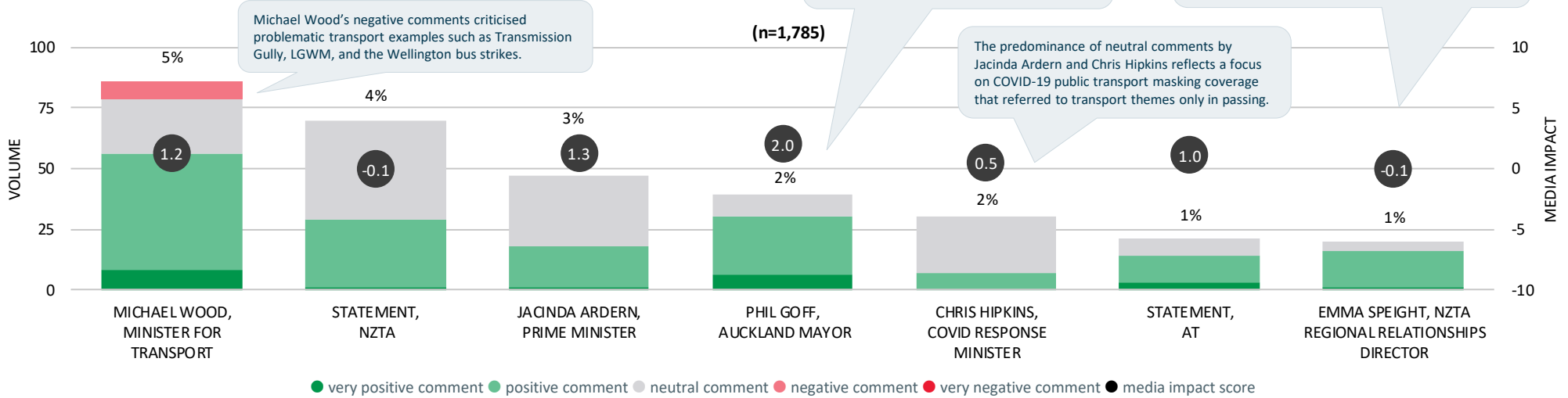
- Regardless of approval or disapproval, coverage clearly illustrated that central government, local government, NZTA and Auckland Transport were the agencies reported as most responsible for transport projects. These reports also showed clear distinctions in responsibility by story focus. For example, whether approving or disapproving, coverage reported that NZTA's responsibility was mainly for infrastructure and safety, with only a limited role in service and climate change themes.
- In other cases, this varied. Where neither approval nor disapproval was conveyed, Auckland Transport's responsibility was quite evenly divided between service & accessibility, infrastructure development, and safety & experience themes. But in approving coverage, AT had much larger shares of reporting about infrastructure development and climate change, while in disapproving coverage there was very little focus on service & access themes. Similarly, discussion of central government responsibility in climate change reporting was lowest in coverage that conveyed neither approval or disapproval, but was higher in reports that approved government action on climate change, and higher again in coverage where the government's role was disapproved.
- Local business and community groups' responsibility in transport discussions was much less common. But a notable minority of reporting recognised efforts by transport businesses to reduce carbon emissions. As with other leading sources of approval, this was often proactive or originated from the firms themselves. Notable examples included Hiringa Energy, which partnered with US manufacturer Hyzon to bring 1,500 hydrogen-powered trucks to NZ over the next five years, and with fuel distributor Waitomo to establish a refuelling network for them.

### RESPONSIBILITY BY STORY FOCUS – DISAPPROVED

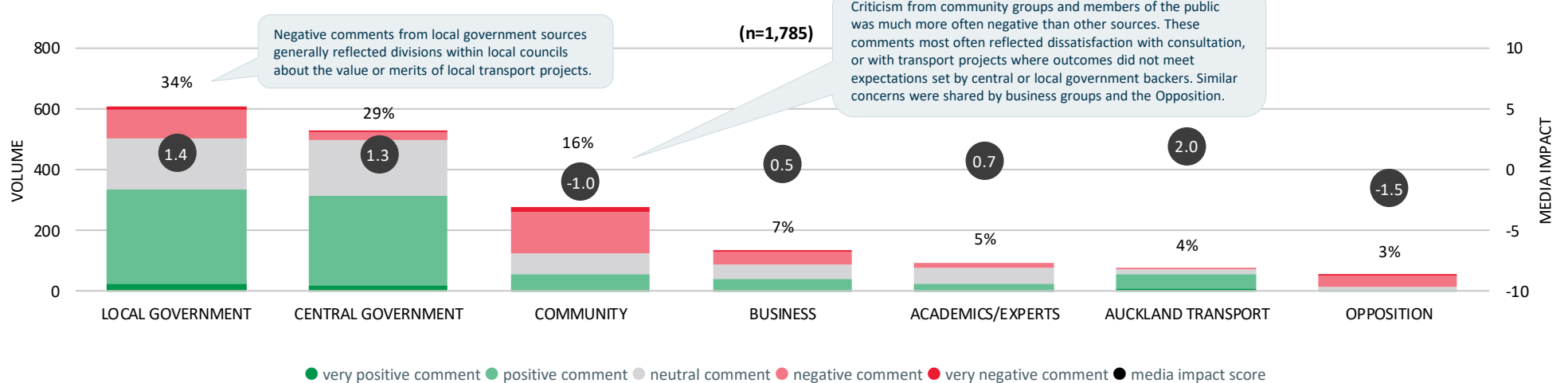


## LEADING SOURCES

### LEADING SOURCES – GOVERNMENT & SOCIETY



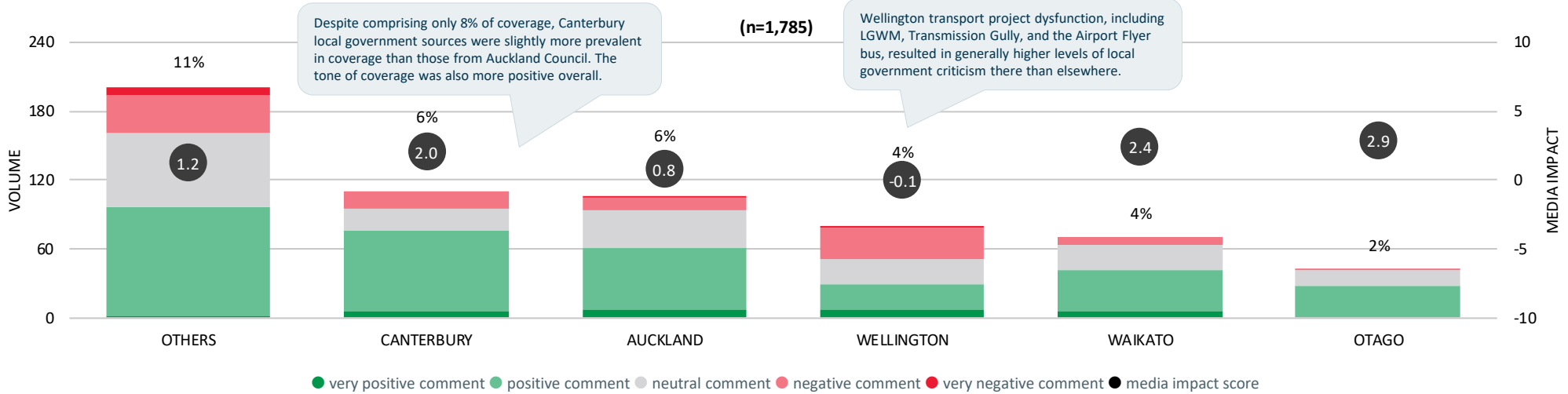
### LEADING SOURCE GROUPS – GOVERNMENT & SOCIETY



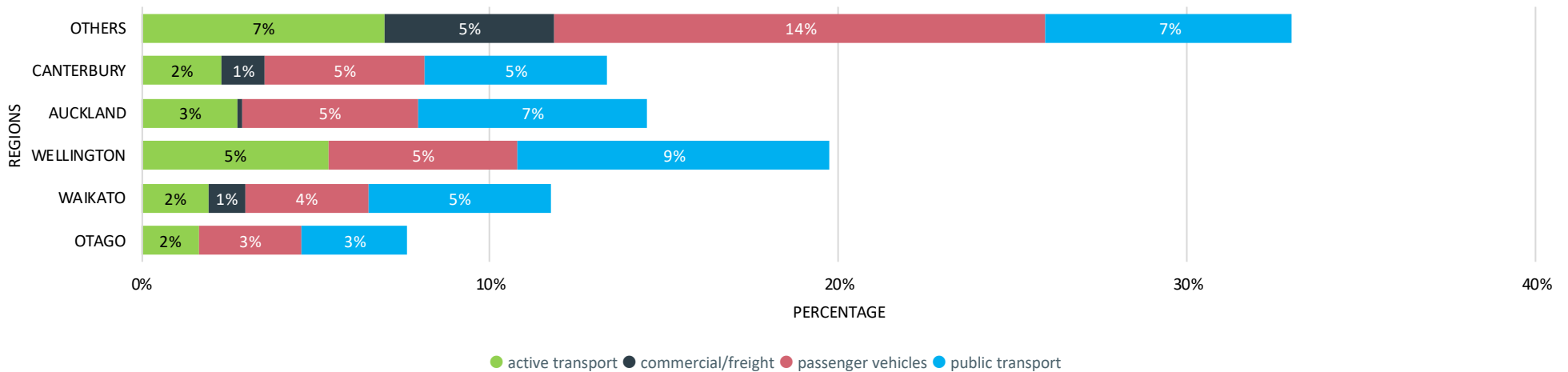


## LEADING SOURCES

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOURCE COMMENTS BY REGION & BIAS

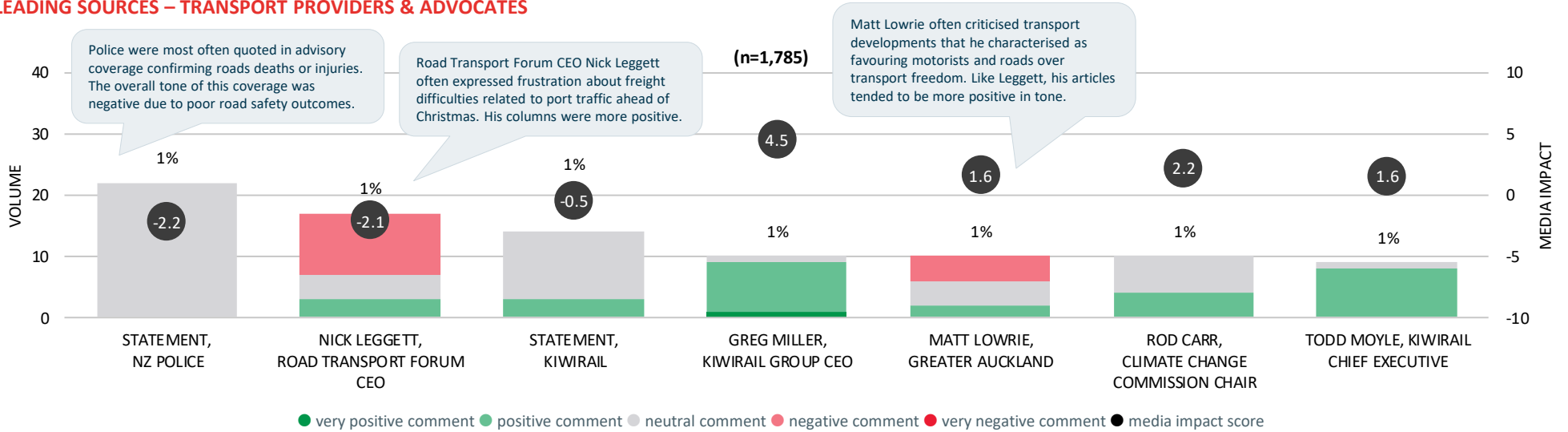


### LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOURCE COMMENTS BY REGION & TRANSPORT TYPE

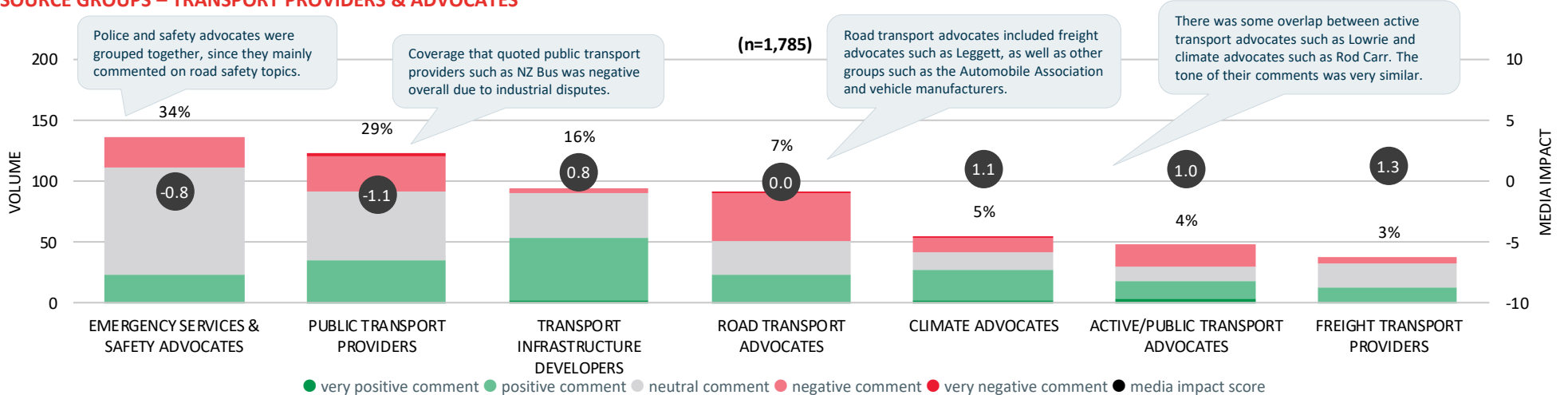


## LEADING SOURCES

### LEADING SOURCES – TRANSPORT PROVIDERS & ADVOCATES



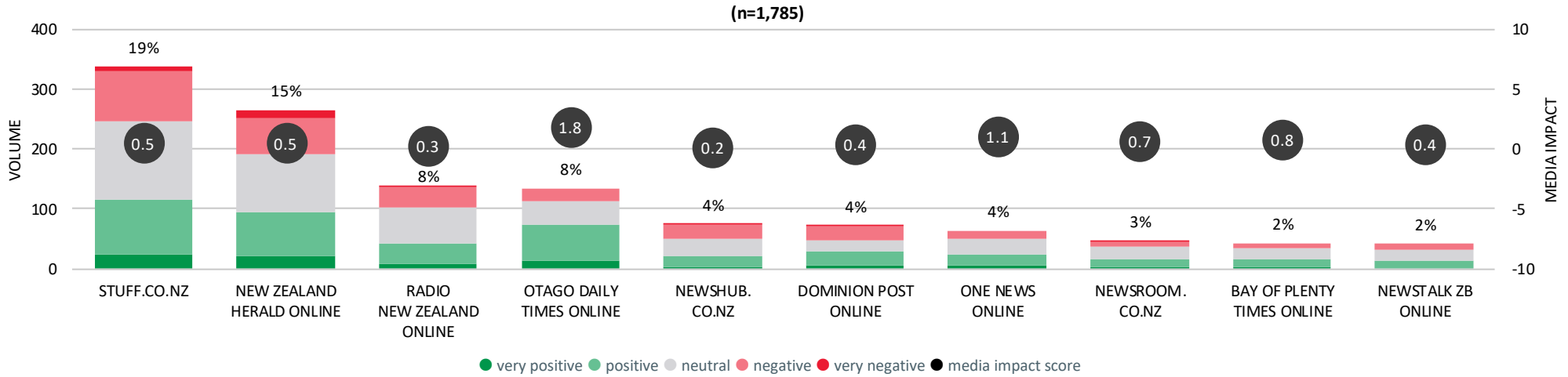
### SOURCE GROUPS – TRANSPORT PROVIDERS & ADVOCATES



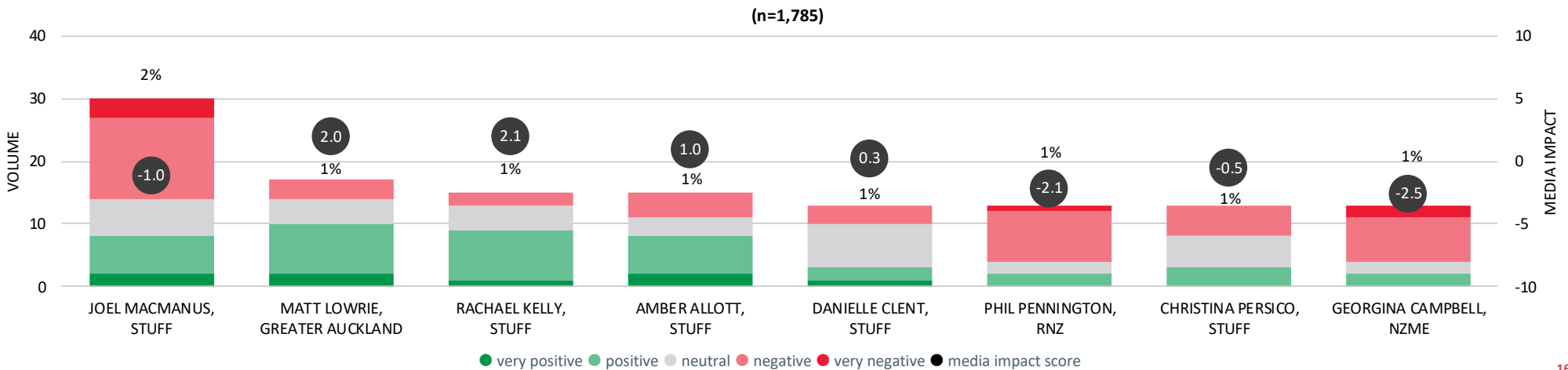


## LEADING MEDIA & JOURNALISTS

### LEADING MEDIA OUTLETS



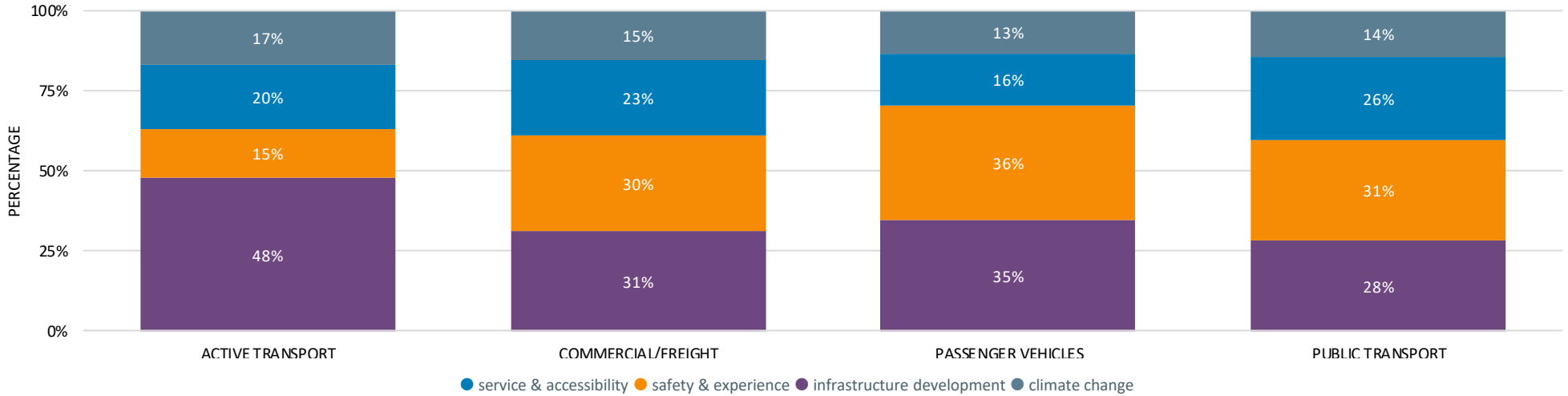
### LEADING JOURNALISTS



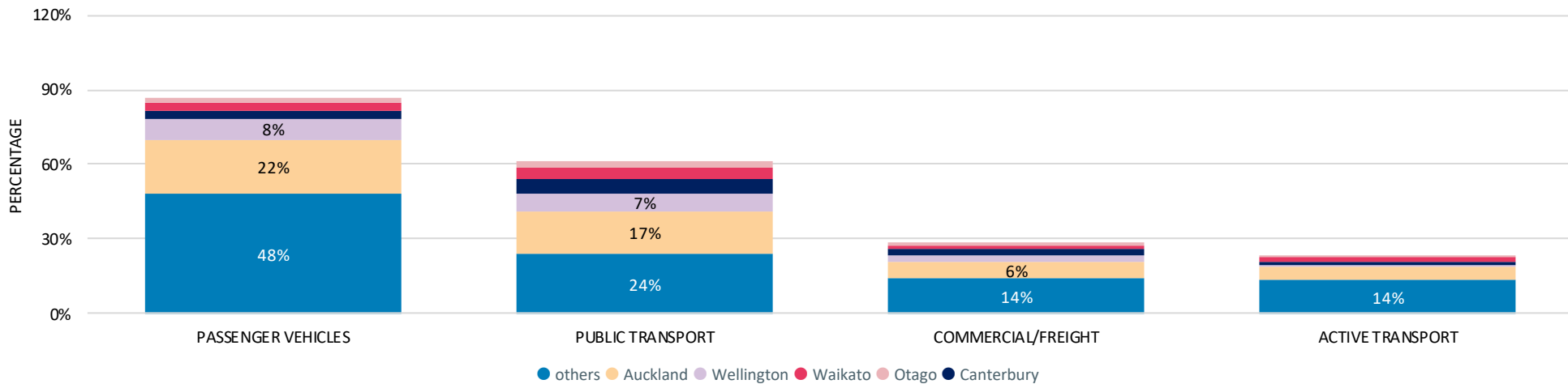


## TRANSPORT TYPE

### TRANSPORT TYPE BREAKDOWN BY STORY FOCUS



### TRANSPORT TYPE BY REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

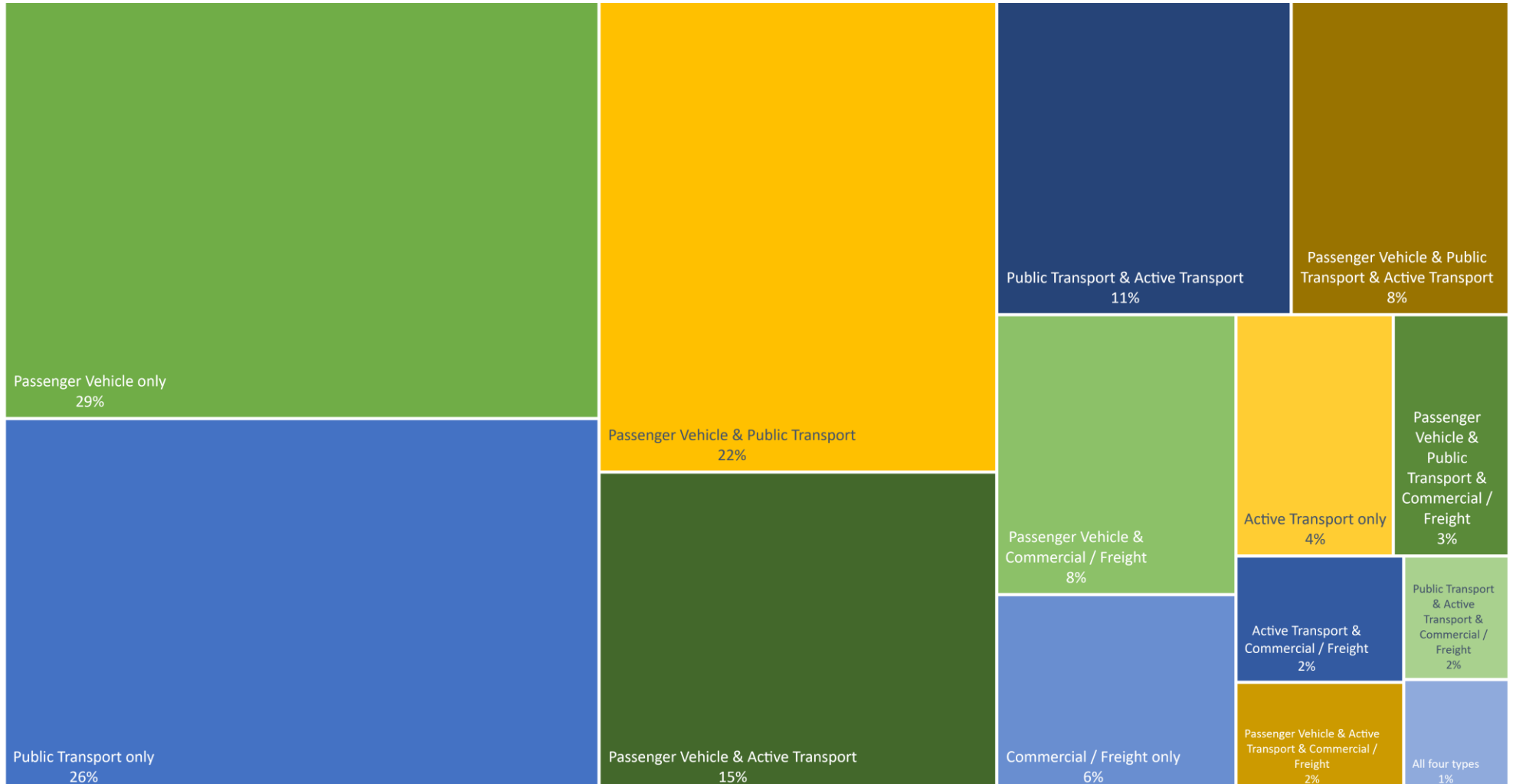






## TRANSPORT TYPE INTERACTIONS

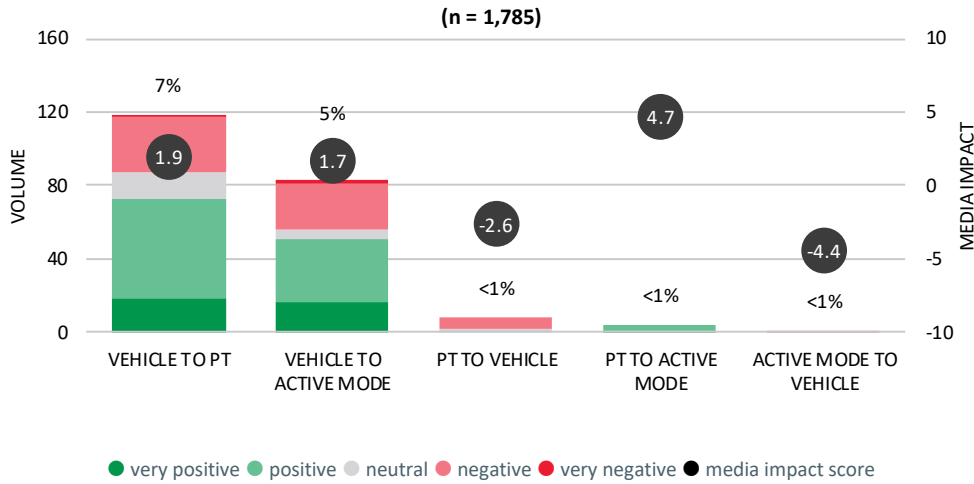
This chart shows the proportions of coverage that mentioned each transport type, and combination of transport types.



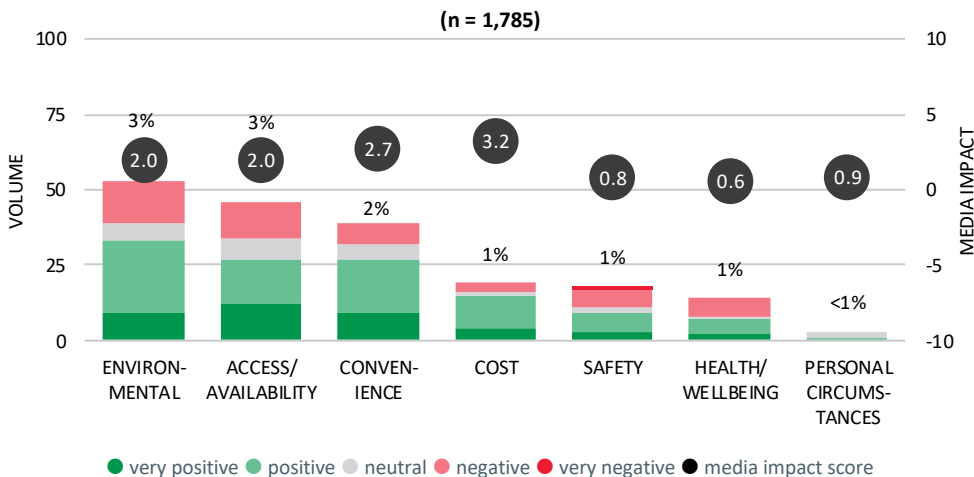


## MODE SHIFTING

### MODE SHIFTING BY TONE

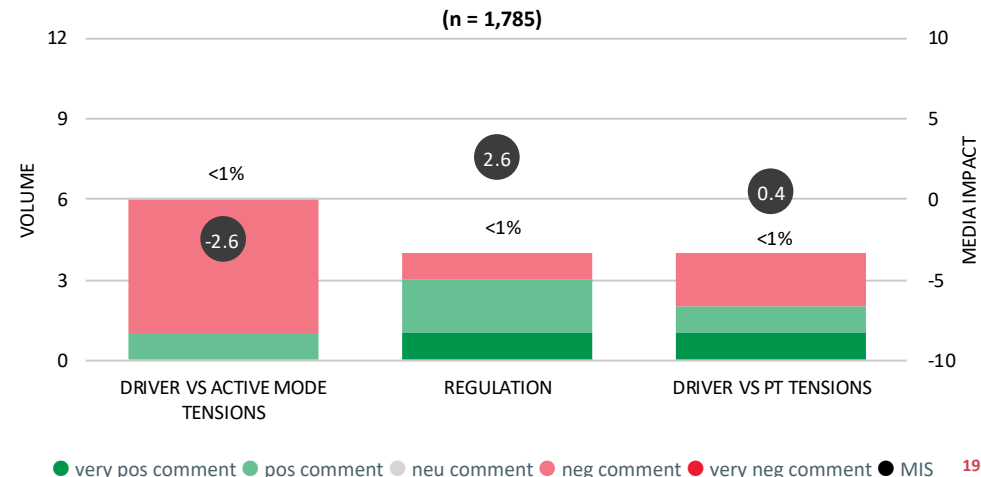


### MODE SHIFTING DECISION FACTORS



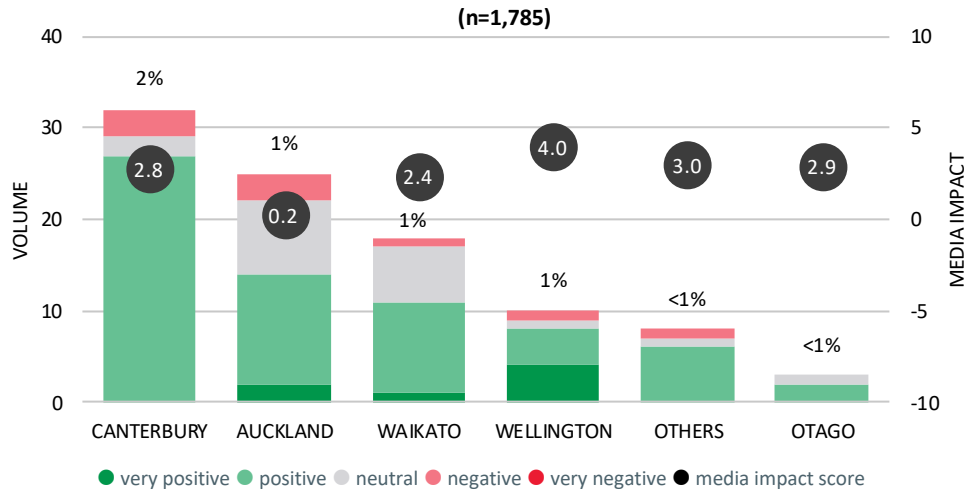
- Mode shifting was discussed explicitly in less than 10% of coverage overall, but these reports were considerably more positive than others, as most discussions took place in the context of new cycle or shared path developments, or initiatives to make public transport more viable. Reports generally did not discuss mode-shifting or multimodal transport integration explicitly, instead more often referring obliquely to the interactions of different modes. For example, coverage of cycle infrastructure often discussed road safety topics, or the importance of safe links between roads and paths, and climate change coverage often cited lower congestion as a key benefit of emissions reduction measures such as increasing public transport patronage, in each case typically without expressly discussing how or why people might switch modes.
- Nearly all discussion of mode shifting was away from private vehicles and towards public or active transport. Environmental factors – especially emissions reduction – were most commonly cited as reasons to shift modes, more often than individual cost or health benefits. Despite considerable discussion of the importance of road safety in general, this and related themes like tensions with other traffic were only rarely cited as a barrier to mode shifting. Similarly, improvements to safety from infrastructure development was also cited as an inducement to mode shifting only very occasionally.
- Access and convenience were a little more common, and included discussion of the increasing availability and quality of e-bikes and other technological solutions to access, especially in the most positive reports that emphasised the transport freedom benefits. A small proportion of mostly negative coverage focused on mode shifts in the other direction – from public or active modes to private vehicle. Typically this was a reaction to service disruptions or changes rather than a more general aversion to public or active modes.

### MODE SHIFTING TENSIONS

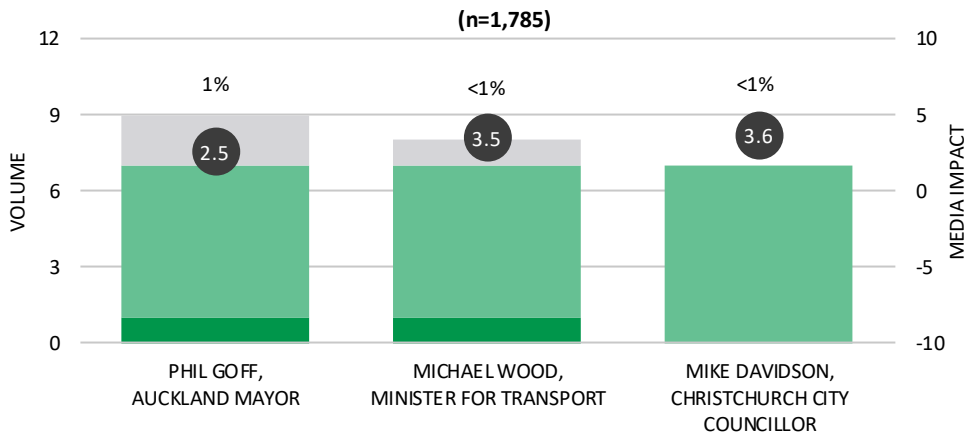


## MODE SHIFTING

### MODE SHIFTING BY REGION

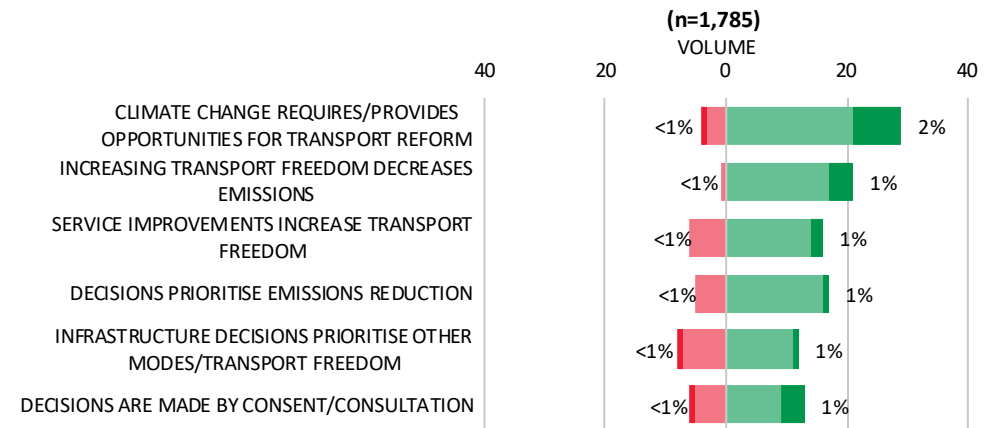


### LEADING SOURCES IN MODE SHIFTING COVERAGE



- Discussion of mode shifting was rare everywhere but, perhaps surprisingly, it was less common in coverage about Auckland (mentioned 31% of all coverage) or Wellington (12%) than about Canterbury (8%). This was largely due to the events that took place during the analysis period – the opening of the Christchurch Northern Corridor in December, discussions about free buses, and public consultation on the development of the Christchurch cycle path network were all significant themes of reporting with relevance to mode-shifting discussions.
- Coverage focusing on multimodal or non-car developments was not enough on its own to produce discussions about mode shifting. Coverage in Auckland and elsewhere often did cover such themes in reports about the future of the Skypath, pedestrianisation, and the future of rail in the city, but mode shifting was less common than in similar discussions in Christchurch. Similarly, Otago’s coverage included reports on work to complete the harbour cycleway between the city and Port Chalmers and on proposals to reduce vehicle traffic in the CBD, but this also did not prompt significant discussion of mode shifting.
- Explicit advocacy and calls to action were often required to convert discussions about transport options to discussions about mode shifting. Christchurch City Council transport chair Mike Davidson and Transport Minister Michael Wood both contributed to these discussions in the Christchurch context, as did Phil Goff and others such as *Greater Auckland’s* Matt Lowrie in Auckland, but only in quite low volumes. Similarly, mode shifting was most positively discussed in Wellington coverage, and was most vigorously advocated for in April by a group of eight councillors proposing to ban private vehicles from the CBD by 2025. But again, while positive, this did not have sufficient scale to produce widespread mode shifting discussions.

### LEADING MESSAGES IN MODE SHIFT COVERAGE

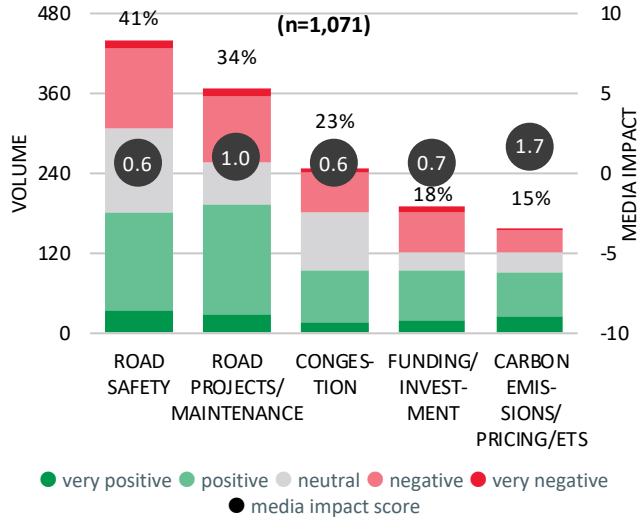


## PASSENGER VEHICLES

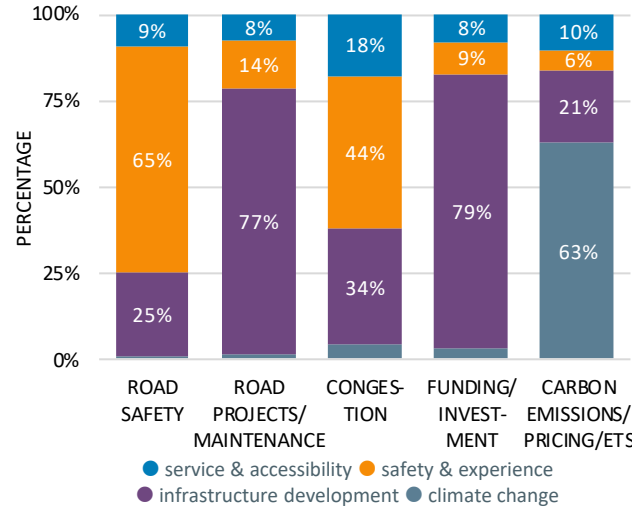
DISCUSSED IN 60% OF COVERAGE

This page looks only at the share of reports that discussed passenger vehicles.

### LEADING TOPICS BY TONE

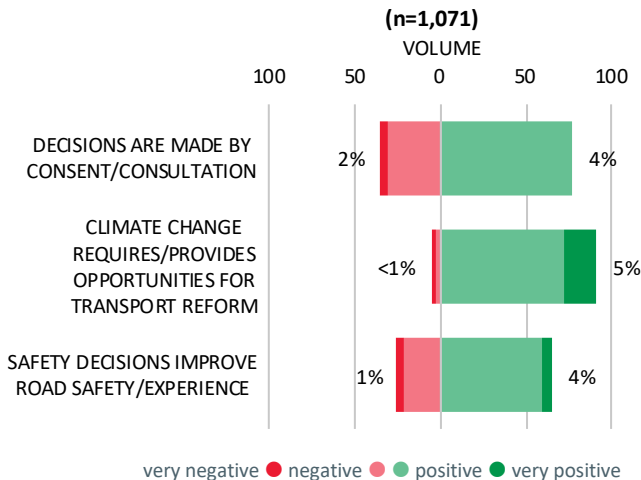


### LEADING TOPIC BY STORY FOCUS

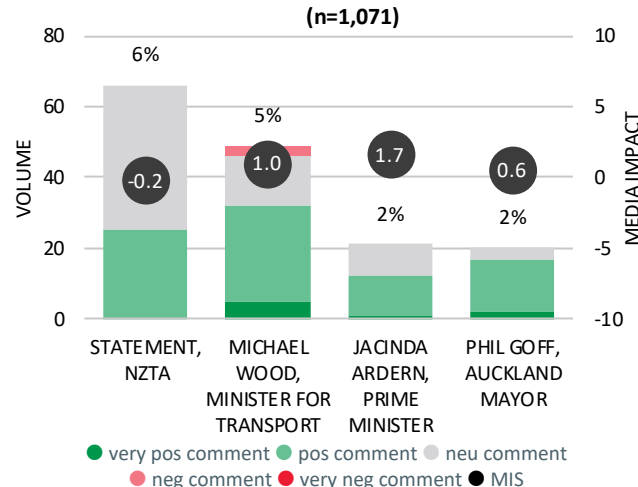


- Passenger vehicles were mentioned alone in almost a third of coverage (29%), but were also a dominant presence in coverage that discussed other transport types. They were also discussed more often in Auckland than most other regions – again because of the significance of passenger vehicle themes such as road safety, congestion, and emissions to other transport users, and the transport impacts of events such as COVID-19.
- Passenger vehicle reporting was most often focused on infrastructure development (35%) and safety & experience (36%) themed reporting. In both cases, congestion and road development were significant themes, although congestion was again largely reported as a consequence of poor road safety, rather than as a significant contributing factor.
- Leading sources were more representative of central and local government spokespeople, with negative reports linked to delayed projects, usually with messaging around lack of consultation.

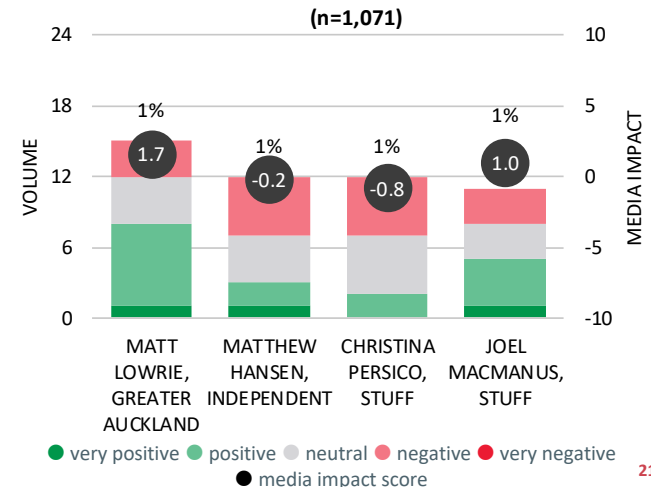
### LEADING MESSAGES



### LEADING SOURCES



### LEADING BYLINES

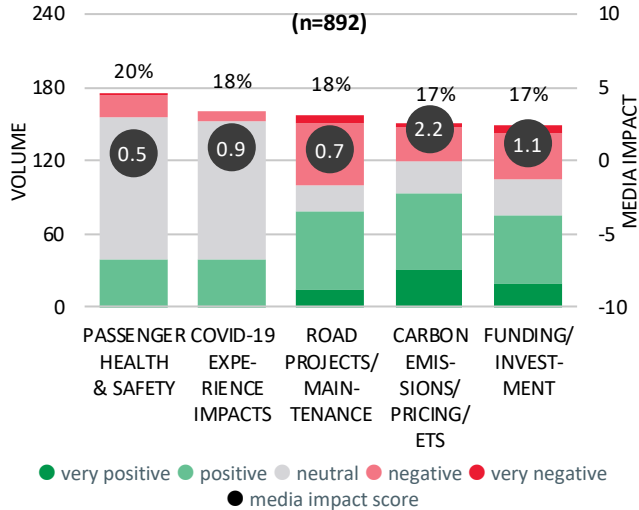


## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

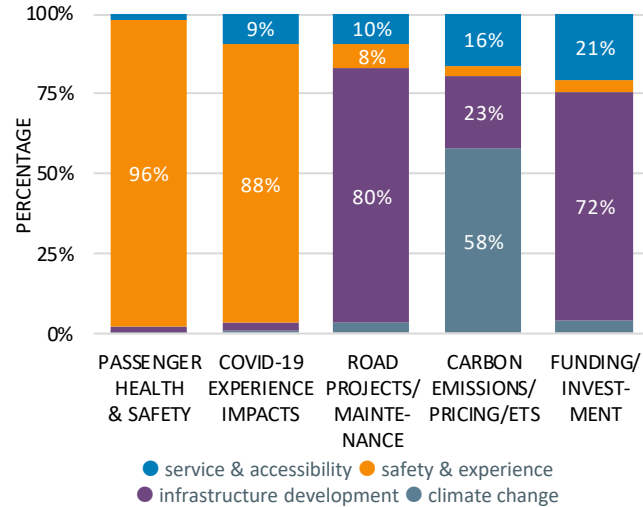
DISCUSSED IN 50% OF COVERAGE

This page looks only at the share of reports that discussed public transport.

### LEADING TOPICS BY TONE

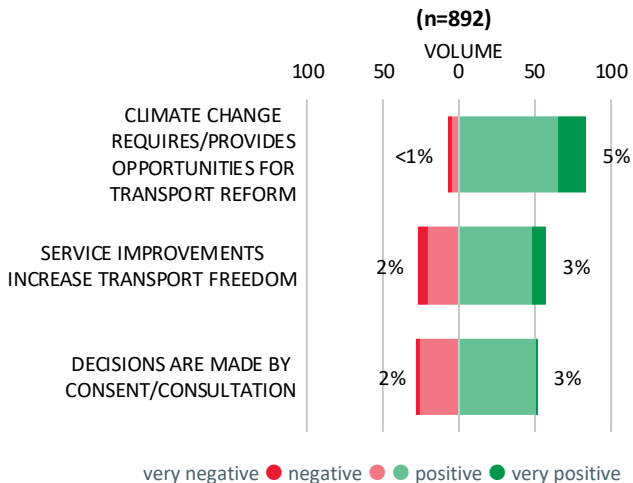


### LEADING TOPIC BY STORY FOCUS

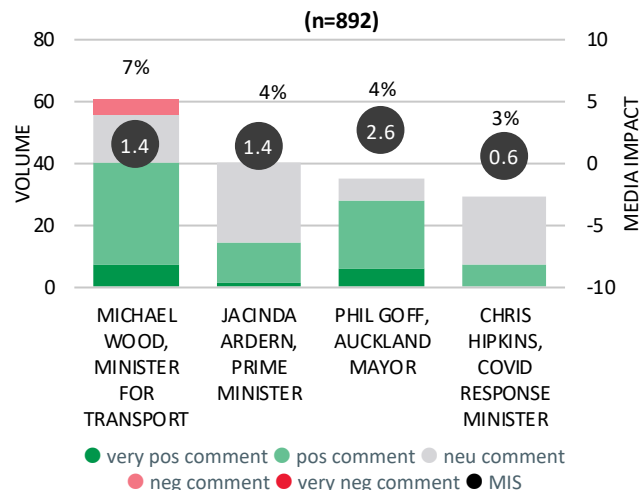


- Public transport was mentioned alone in more than a quarter of all reports (26%), and in just under a quarter of coverage alongside passenger vehicles (22%). This relationship was also evident as one of the leading topics for public transport reporting that discussed roading projects and similar dual-purpose infrastructure developments. Other leading public transport topics focused on passenger health & safety and COVID-19 impacts, both of which were reported more neutrally than other public transport topics.
- Negative coverage, especially by Stuff reporter Joel MacManus, mostly focused on public transport tensions in Wellington, focusing on industrial action and bus driver shortages, and the lack of progress on Let's Get Wellington Moving. Amber Allott's reporting on similar topics in Christchurch was much more positive, reflecting more substantial progress on public transport projects in that region.
- Reports by Matt Lowrie advocated for improvements to public transport, and while they tended to include both positive and negative messaging, they were positive on balance, especially when the focus was climate change.

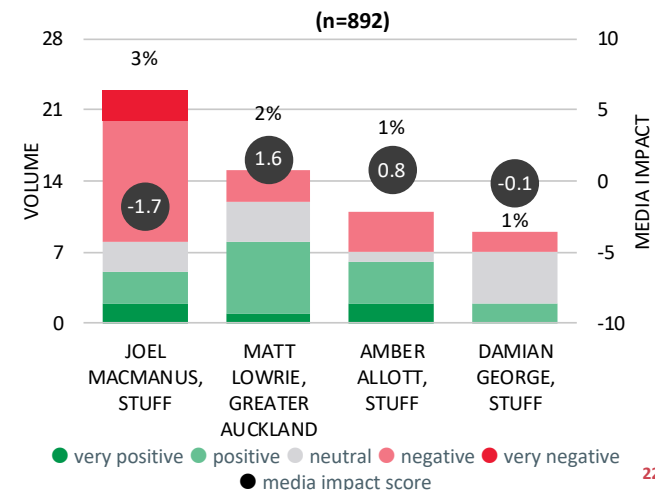
### LEADING MESSAGES



### LEADING SOURCES



### LEADING BYLINES



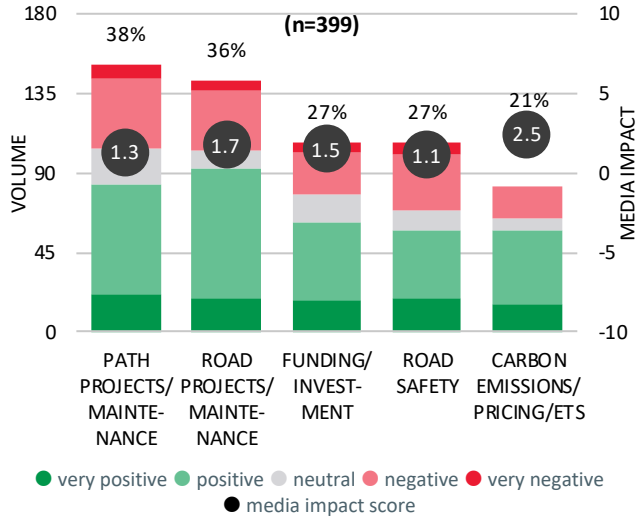


## ACTIVE TRANSPORT

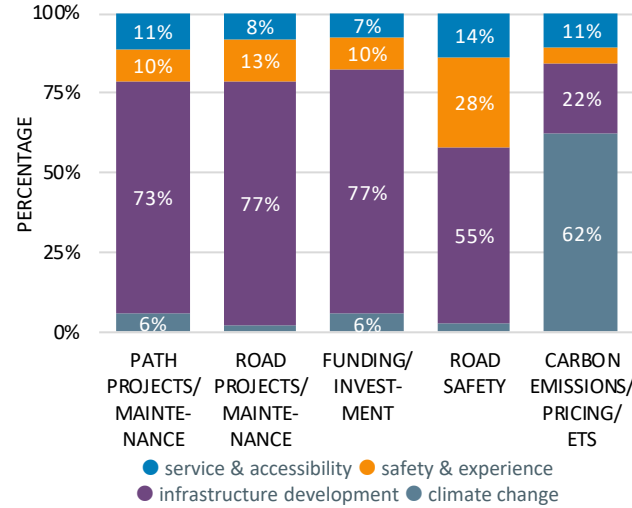
DISCUSSED IN 22% OF COVERAGE

This page looks only at the share of reports that discussed active transport.

### LEADING TOPICS BY TONE

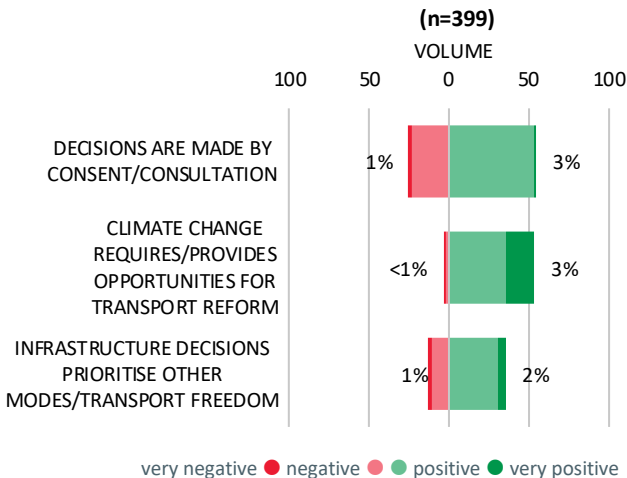


### LEADING TOPIC BY STORY FOCUS

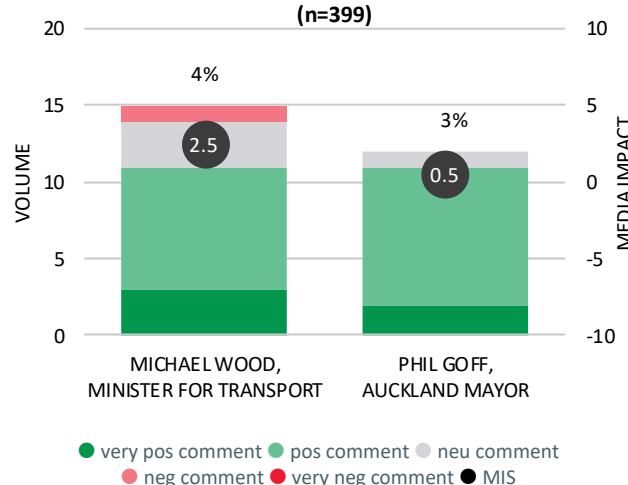


- Active transport was the type mentioned least often on its own – in only 4% of reports overall. But it was much more often discussed in conjunction with other transport types, notably public transport (11%) and both public transport and passenger vehicles together (8%).
- Unlike other transport types, active mode reporting was dominated by infrastructure discussions (48%). The leading topics and messages were also strongly focused on infrastructure development, especially relating to roads, further underlining the recognition that that investment, access, and safety decisions must be made with active and vehicle mode interactions in mind. This was also illustrated by the leading messages, which emphasised the need for good consultation on infrastructure decisions to support transport freedom.
- Negative active transport coverage most often focused on delays in project deliveries or poor consultation with interested parties. But the interested parties were not always active transport users – for example, most of Tina Law’s coverage of the Christchurch cycleway conveyed criticism from business owners who objected to the proposals and the consultation process.

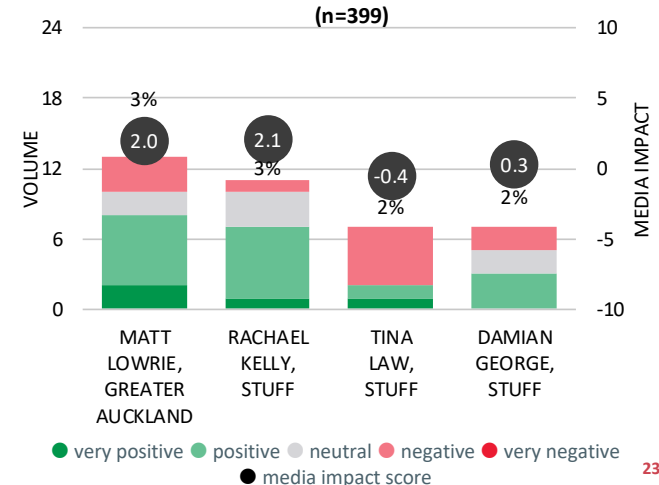
### LEADING MESSAGES



### LEADING SOURCES



### LEADING BYLINES



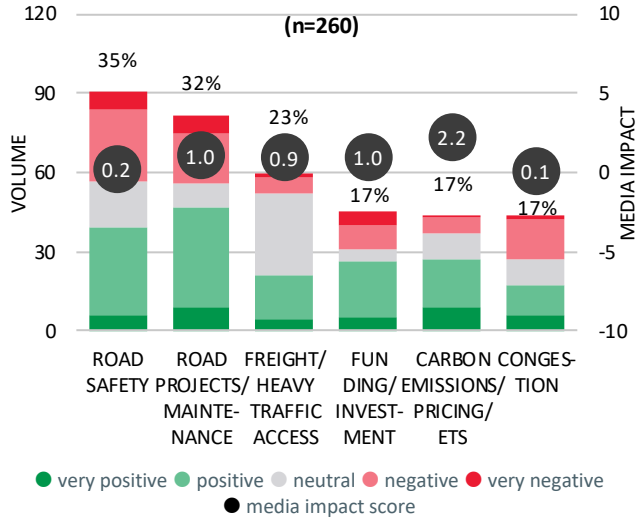


## COMMERCIAL & FREIGHT

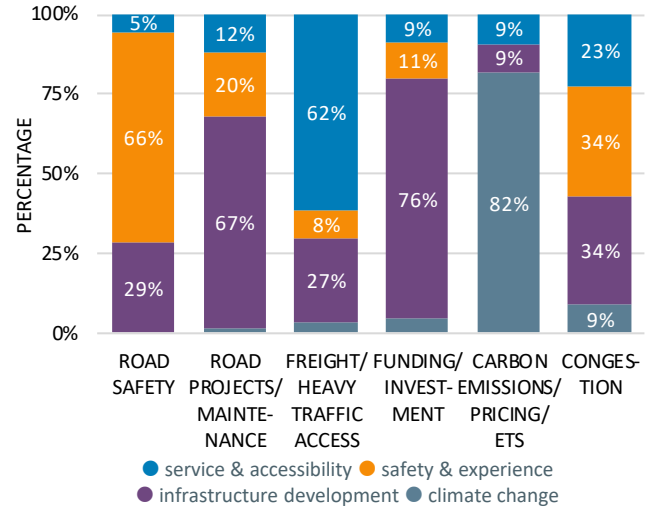
DISCUSSED IN 15% OF COVERAGE

This page looks only at the share of reports that discussed commercial and freight transport.

### LEADING TOPICS BY TONE

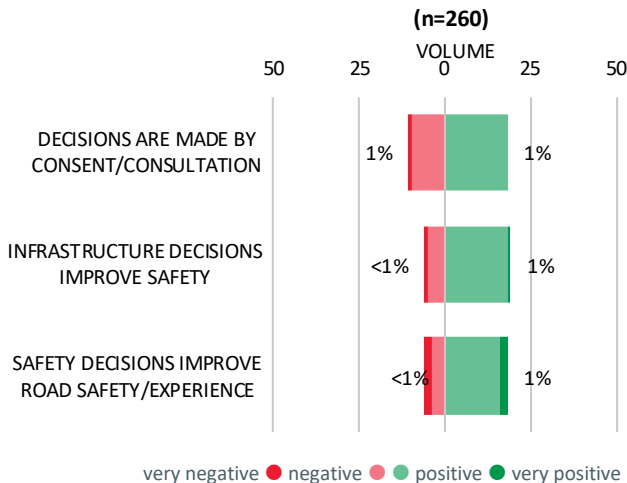


### LEADING TOPIC BY STORY FOCUS

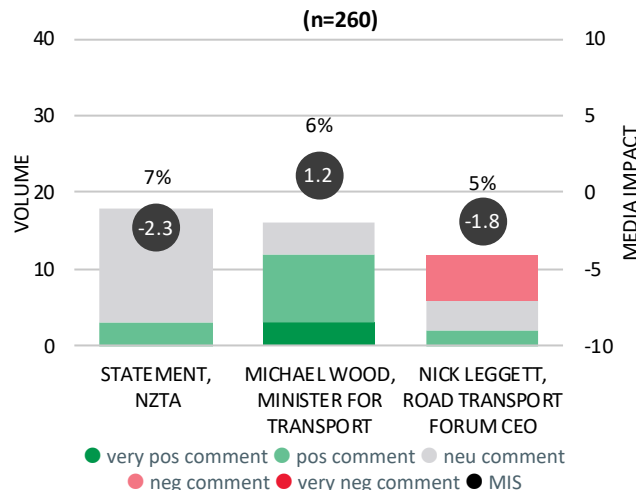


- Only 6% of coverage discussed commercial and freight transport alone, and only 8% discussed it alongside private vehicles. Freight and commercial coverage was mostly driven by infrastructure and safety reporting, although there was also a significant share of service & access coverage, especially around road congestion near ports.
- Leading bylines reporting on commercial and freight transport were often negative, especially emphasising delays caused by COVID-19. This included negative coverage from infrastructure reporters such as Phil Pennington on delays and a lack of funding for road projects.
- Similar views were often expressed by Road Transport Forum CEO Nick Leggett, especially in reports that criticised inadequate freight links between Northport and Auckland, or the priority given to funding for public and active transport initiatives rather than roads. But in his opinion pieces, Leggett's arguments were more positive and constructive, especially focusing on the importance of road and freight links to economic development.

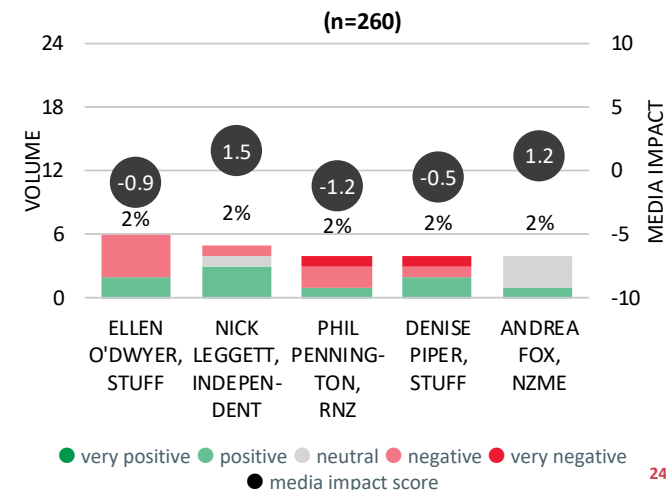
### LEADING MESSAGES



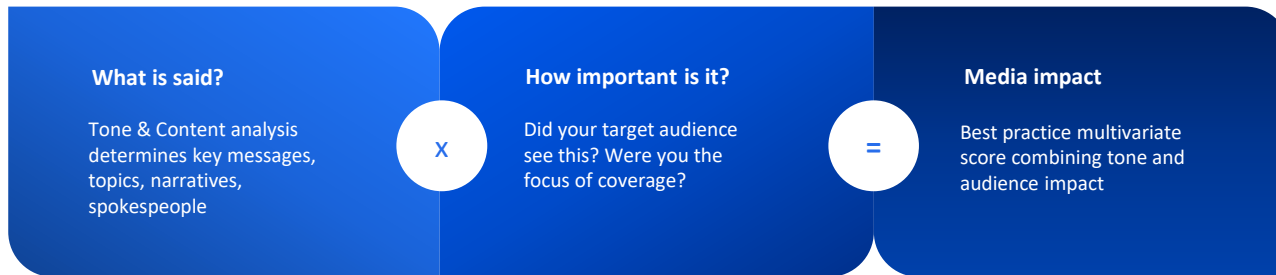
### LEADING SOURCES



### LEADING BYLINES



# Best Practice Methodology

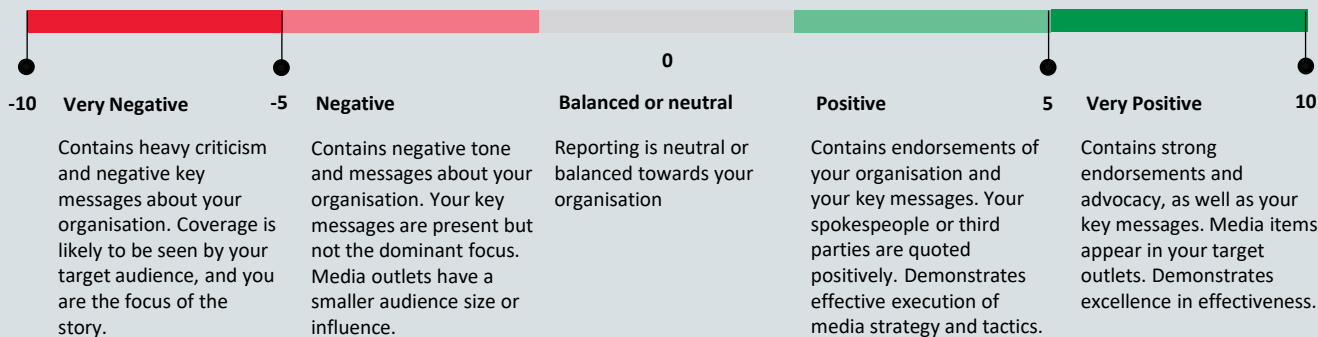


ISENTIA'S Media Analysis is a **best practice methodology** designed to measure the likely impact of communications on your target audiences. It includes robust media content analysis (quantitative and qualitative analysis), which is used to calculate the Media Impact Score of your coverage.

The Media Impact Score is a multivariate score based on the **tone of your media coverage**, as well as the **likely impact of that coverage on your key audiences and communities**. It takes your key message traction, spokesperson presence and media positioning into account, while also using audience tiers as a multiplier to show exposure and impact.

Content attributes include the tone of messages and spokespeople, as well as the tone of content; while the salience drivers include media positioning, audience size and influence.

Weightings and metrics can be customised for specific industries and clients, so that you can always measure what matters in a way that resonates with your organisation.



# amec AWARDS | 2020

GLOBAL COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS

ISENTIA is a member of the International Association for Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC), the leading organisation for media analysis and measurement and communications research globally, with more than 160 members in 86 countries and international membership chapters in North America, Asia Pacific and Europe. Having this membership means that ISENTIA complies with AMEC's strict standards, giving you confidence that you have received the best reports and insights (see [www.amecorg.com](http://www.amecorg.com)).

## Our 2020 AMEC Awards wins:

- GOLD** Most impactful client recommendations arising from a measurement study for Sport Australia: Athletes as Role Models
- GOLD** Best first step on a measurement journey for Sport Australia: Athletes as Role Models
- GOLD** Best crisis comms measurement and reporting for Plus Expressway: Managing Crisis and Reputation
- GOLD** Best evaluation on a small budget for ACRES: Stop Illegal Wildlife Trade this Chinese New Year
- SILVER** Most effective planning, research and evaluation in consumer communications for SM Supermalls: Maximising Consumer Advocacy in the Philippines







# Auckland Transport

## Media outlet audience data

The following slides detail the top 10 media outlets (by audience) that have reported on Auckland Transport and related issues in the last 12 months.

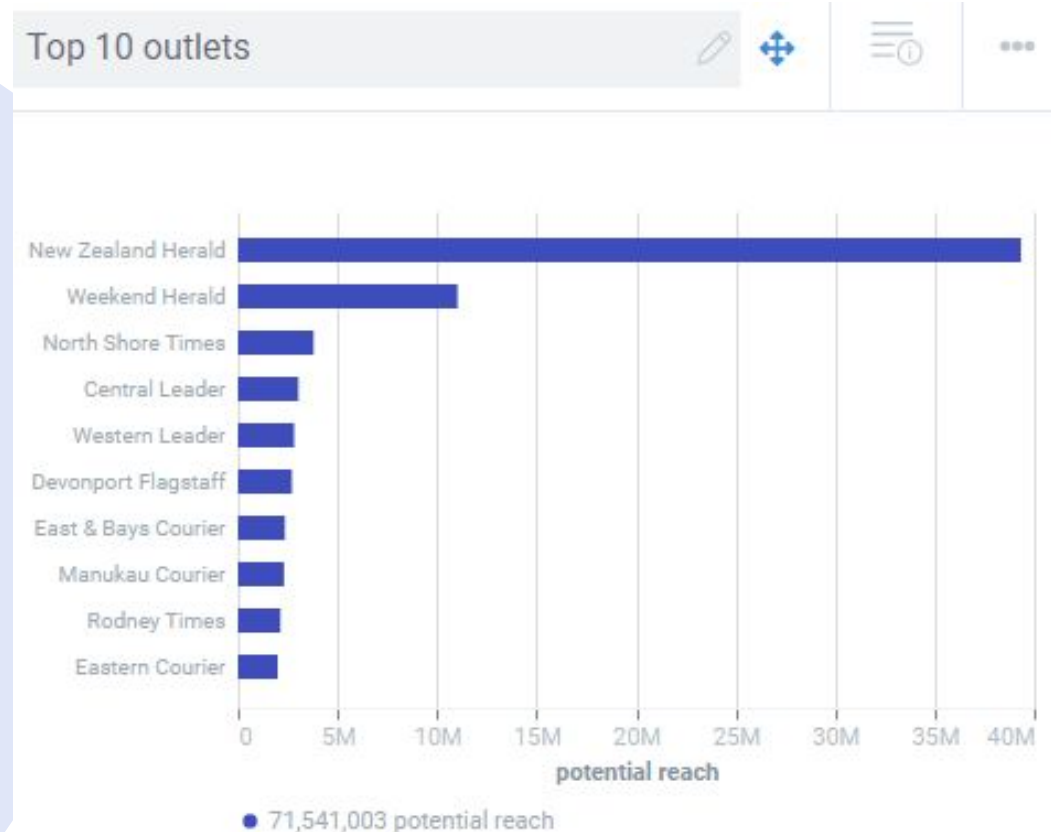
On the right is a leaderboard of the audience figures at a per outlet/per clip level. Audience data is determined differently for each media type, a guide on where the audience data is collected and how is detailed below for ease of reference.

MEDIA	AUDIENCE DATA PROVIDERS	AUDIENCE DATA METRICS
 <b>TV</b>	<p><b>OzTAM</b> Metropolitan television audience data in Australia.</p> <p><b>Nielsen TAM</b> Regional television audience data in Australia.</p> <p><b>Nielsen TAM NZ</b> Metropolitan television audience data in New Zealand.</p>	<p>Ipsentia provide average timeslot audience data and make three pieces of data available on each article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Total Individuals</b></li> <li>• <b>Males 16+</b></li> <li>• <b>Females 16+</b></li> </ul> <p>Frequency: Quarterly</p>
 <b>RADIO</b>	<p><b>GfK</b> Radio audience data in Australia and New Zealand</p> <p>Note: Some radio broadcasters do not participate in GfK surveys</p>	<p>Ipsentia provide average timeslot audience data and make three pieces of data available on each article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Total Individuals</b></li> <li>• <b>Males 16+</b></li> <li>• <b>Females 16+</b></li> </ul> <p>Frequency:            Metro: 8 per year            Regional: 3 per year            NZ: 4 per year</p>

MEDIA	AUDIENCE DATA PROVIDERS	AUDIENCE DATA METRICS
 <b>PRINT</b>	<p><b>Roy Morgan</b> Print readership data for Australia and New Zealand.</p> <p>Note: not all newspapers and magazines are covered by Roy Morgan. Where possible, Ipsentia will contact publishers directly.</p>	<p>The data estimates the 'average issue readership' (AIR) over a 12 month period, and represents the number, or %, of people who read or look into an average issue of the particular publication. This provides an estimate of the 'reach' an advertiser can expect to achieve with advertising placed in the publication.</p> <p>Frequency:            National &amp; Metro: 4 per year            Community: 2 per year            NZ: 2 per year</p>
 <b>ONLINE NEWS</b>	<p><b>SimilarWeb</b> Global online audience data.</p> <p>Note: audience data is not available for all websites. The threshold for full reporting on a website is &lt; 5,000 Monthly Unique Visitors</p>	<p>SimilarWeb provide a range of data points including: Monthly Visits; Monthly Unique Visitors and Pages / Visit</p> <p>Ipsentia presents <b>Unique Daily Visitors (UDV)</b> and <b>Average Story Audience (ASA)</b>.</p> <p>Note: Average Story Audience = Page Impressions Daily (PID) / by number of stories published daily</p>

# Top Audiences: Print media outlets

Top 10 media outlets that have reported on Auckland Transport in last 365 days and the rankings of their per clip readership

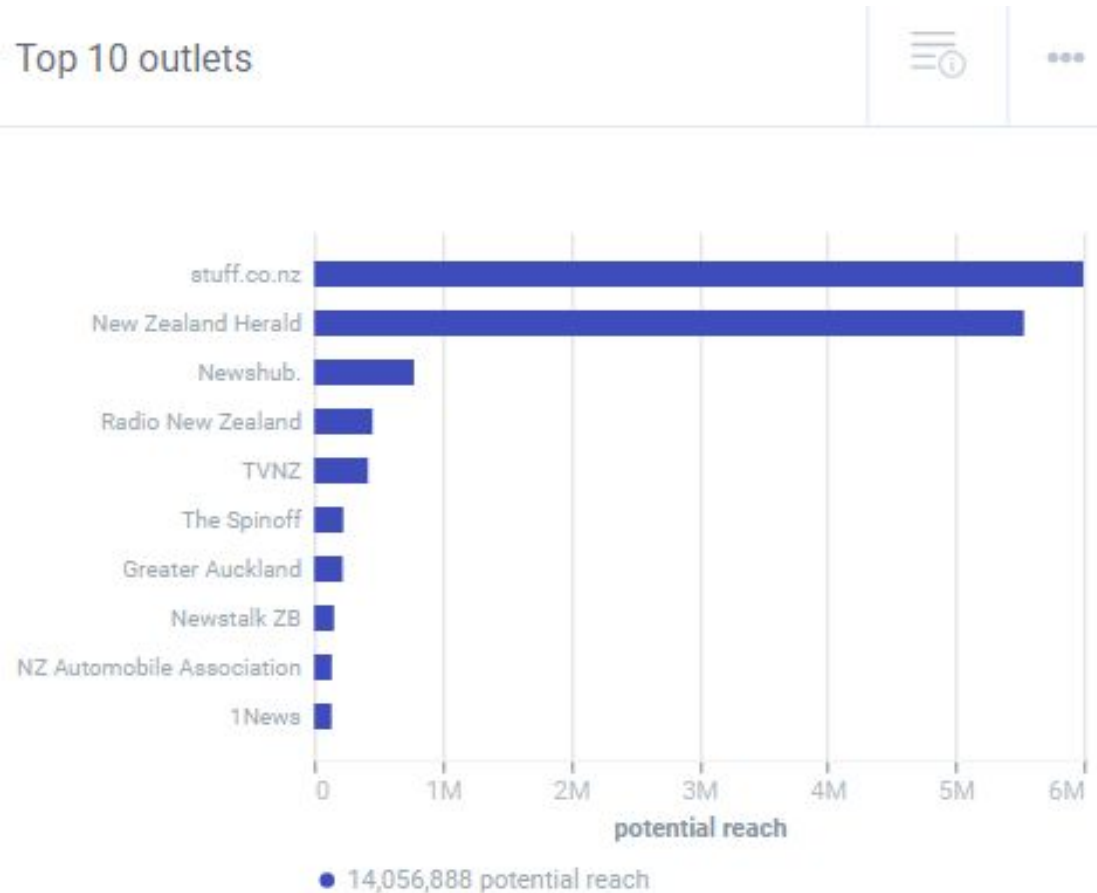


Weekend Herald - 395,847  
New Zealand Herald - 358,668  
Devonport Flagstaff - 87,480  
Central Leader - 63,423  
North Shore Times - 50,301  
East & Bays Courier - 48,114  
Easter Courier - 44,834  
Manukau Courier - 38,273  
Rodney Times - 37,179  
Western Leader - 28,431

# Top Audiences: Online media outlets

Top 10 media outlets that have reported on Auckland Transport in last 365 days and the rankings of their per clip unique daily visitors

## Top 10 outlets



1 News - 143,774

TVNZ - 91,294

The New Zealand Herald - 19,878

Stuff.co.nz - 19,707

The Spinoff - 11,728

Newshub - 10,459

Radio New Zealand - 5,618

Greater Auckland - 3,073

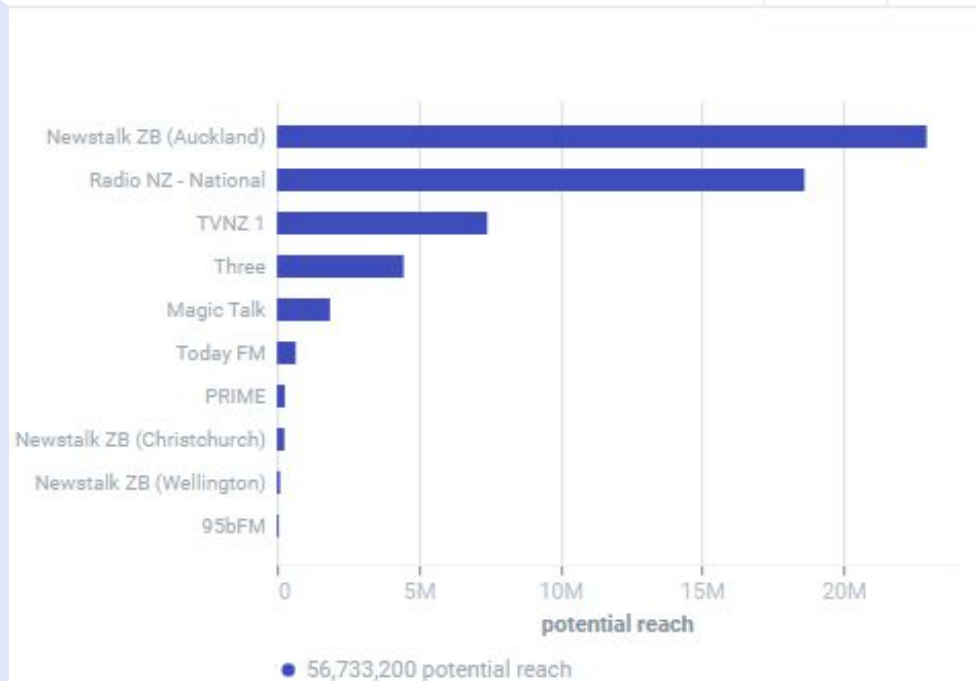
Newstalk ZB - 1,831

NZ Automobile Association - 14,213 (*worth noting just 1 article in the last 12 month*)

# Top Audiences: Broadcast media outlets

## Featured Isentia Conversations Webinar

### Top 10 outlets



Audience figure per clip level per outlet is not possible for broadcast as multiple programmes (and their respective audience figures) live under Newstalk ZB (Auckland) eg Mike Hosking Breakfast or Heather Du-Plessis Allan Drive. Audience figures are determined at a programme level rather than outlet. The below table denotes total volume of clips and cumulative audience.

TOP OUTLETS	POTENTIAL REACH	MENTIONS
Newstalk ZB (Auckland)	22,948,300	293
Radio NZ - National	18,634,200	215
TVNZ 1	7,429,200	22
Three	4,474,100	68
Magic Talk	1,874,000	115
Today FM	661,900	32
PRIME	276,600	7
Newstalk ZB (Christchurch)	262,400	28
Newstalk ZB (Wellington)	109,200	27
95bFM	63,300	47