

30 Years Driving Safer Roads: Saving Lives on New Zealand's Roads

WDM and NZTA marking major milestone in highway safety with 30 years of continuous SCRIM® pavement friction testing across New Zealand's state highway network.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- W.D.M. Limited (WDM) and the NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) are marking a major milestone in highway safety and asset management, celebrating 30 years of continuous SCRIM® pavement friction testing across New Zealand's state highway network.



SCRIM® surveying across New Zealand

Since the first surveys began in the mid-1990s, the long-standing partnership has helped shape

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The 2025/26 testing season marks the 30th consecutive season of SCRIM® operations in New Zealand, continuing a programme that has become a global reference point for pavement friction management.”

Barry O'Shea, NZTA

one of the world's most established and proactive skid resistance management programmes. Using WDM's SCRIM® Continuous Pavement Friction Measurement (CPFM) technology, NZTA has been able to monitor network friction performance, identify emerging safety risks and failures, and target maintenance interventions before crashes occur. It is estimated that the NZTA skid resistance programme has prevented 124 fatal and 558 life-changing crashes over the last 20 years.

Over three decades, the programme has generated an unparalleled understanding of how road surface condition, friction performance, climate, traffic, and road geometry

influence highway safety. The long-term data trends collected through annual SCRIM® surveys have supported evidence-based investment decisions, improved maintenance planning, and contributed to significant reductions in wet-road crashes across the network.

New Zealand's long-term strategic approach to skid resistance management is widely recognised

internationally as a leading example of how data-led maintenance can save lives while improving network performance and efficiency. The New Zealand experience has been shared internationally through the 5 Safer Roads conferences.

Programmes based on continuous friction measurement, and a process of prioritisation and targeted interventions have been shown to deliver substantial safety benefits, with studies indicating crash reductions of more than 30 percent and cost benefit ratios exceeding 30:1 in some applications.

Mark Stephenson, Director of Consultancy at W.D.M. Limited, said:

“Thirty years of SCRIM® testing in New Zealand represents far more than a surveying milestone. It demonstrates the long-term value of consistent, high-quality pavement friction data and the impact that proactive safety strategies can have on reducing crashes and saving lives. WDM is incredibly proud to have supported and partnered with the NZTA over three decades in delivering one of the world’s most respected skid resistance management programmes.”

Barry O’Shea, Principal Specialist Asset Information, at NZTA commented:

“The 2025/26 testing season marks the 30th consecutive season of SCRIM® operations in New Zealand, continuing a programme that has become a global reference point for pavement friction management and proactive highway safety engineering.”

Darren Newland, Project Manager, WDM said:

“The ongoing success of the surveys is a result of teamwork, both with colleagues in-house, and the team at NZTA, as well as their network of suppliers. “

WDM SCRIM® vehicles deployed in New Zealand capture:

- SCRIM in both wheelpaths
- Texture in 3 lines
- Roughness in both wheelpaths
- Rutting
- Differentially corrected GPS
- Right of Way video capture

Abi Park

W.D.M. New Zealand Limited

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