

Future maintenance of Auckland metro network

How will KiwiRail manage maintenance on the network when the CRL is operational?

When the City Rail Link (CRL) opens, KiwiRail will manage and maintain the metro tunnels and rail infrastructure including signals and train radio systems and manage rail traffic in Auckland. We will also continue to operate freight and inter-regional passenger trains within the region and around the country.

KiwiRail is transitioning to a proactive maintenance schedule that will increase our productivity and use of valuable time on the rail network, limiting full closures.

Our Metro Maintenance Plan identifies what assets (for example, track, signals, foundations) within the rail network require repair, replacement, or upgrade. We're moving to a preventative maintenance approach which will schedule the proactive maintenance and renewal of assets to support a more resilient, reliable, sustainable rail network with reduced disruption. This works on a cyclical basis rotating around the network.

How will we proactively manage maintenance?

The work we are doing on the network before CRL opens creates a maintainable network. In addition to fixing underlying asset problems, we have created additional cross-overs, enhanced bi-directional signaling, done further sectioning of overhead lines and created on-tracking points for our maintenance vehicles. We are dividing the network into 36 zones, each of which will be self-contained enough to allow maintenance work to occur while trains continue to operate around the work zone. This has not been possible before.

We are also introducing more frequent automated track inspection technology and strengthening performance requirements.

What other tools will you utilize?

We are leveraging technology, automation and mechanisation to increase the speed at which we can work. This will increase our productivity and use of valuable time, so we reduce disruption and allow more space on the network to run trains at greater frequency. This is international best practice and how other modern international metros are successfully operating to meet future customer demands.

Will you need to shut the rail network for maintenance after CRL opens?

There will be shorter shutdowns and longer forecasts with three-to-four-year cyclical maintenance plans. As mentioned, we will have the ability to segment the network so trains can continue to run. We will still need time to complete necessary maintenance but complete shutdowns of the network beyond 2026 will no longer be a regular requirement.



What does that look like?

Let's take weekday maintenance. We will be more proactive, and less reactive. We will still operate Sunday to Thursday. We will still require long weekends and shorter periods of time over the Summer to deliver intensive often more invasive work, but it will be targeted and forward forecasted. Segments of the network will close for short periods, and single line running may be needed in some areas, but the rest of the network will stay open for trains.

For further information, please contact: mediaenquiries@kiwirail.co.nz

