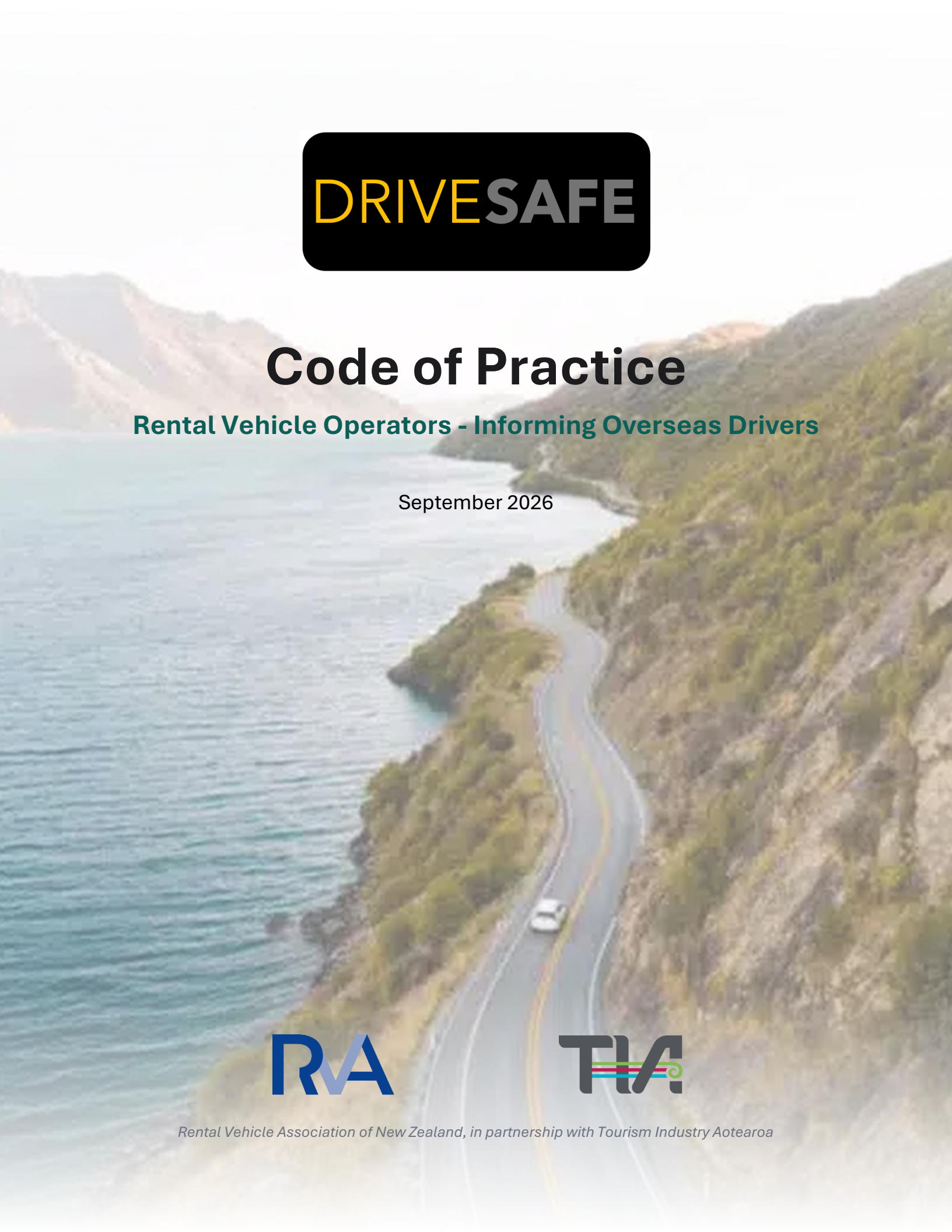


The background of the entire page is a scenic photograph of a winding asphalt road along a coastline. The road curves from the bottom center towards the upper right, bordered by a steep, green, forested hill on one side and a calm blue sea on the other. A small white car is visible on the road. In the distance, more hills and a small bay are visible under a clear sky.

DRIVE SAFE

Code of Practice

Rental Vehicle Operators - Informing Overseas Drivers

September 2026



Rental Vehicle Association of New Zealand, in partnership with Tourism Industry Aotearoa

About this Code of Practice

This Code sets out what rental vehicle operators in New Zealand must do to prepare visiting drivers for safe journeys on New Zealand roads. It reflects our commitment to manaakitanga and delivering an outstanding customer experience

New Zealand welcomes a growing number of visiting drivers each year, many driving on the left for the first time, and unfamiliar with our roundabouts, rural roads and changeable weather.

Responsibility for safe driving sits with the hirer, but the rental vehicle sector has a genuine role to play in preparing them properly, for the safety of visitors and other road users, and to protect New Zealand's reputation as a safe place to explore by vehicle.

In phase two of this work, we will look more closely at how DriveSafe can better align with Tiaki and its “Drive Carefully” pillar, strengthening the connection between visitor safety and responsible travel.

How this Code is enforced

This Code is not a legal mandate. However, signing up to it means meeting every Required Standard in this document, and attending to Excellent Practice items where possible. Operators are required to sign off annually on a self-certification checklist, confirming that every Required Standard is genuinely deployed in their business.

Operators are also expected to comply with all legal requirements relating to visiting drivers, including certification to operate (your rental service licence), checking and validating overseas driver licences, and ensuring non-English licences are accompanied by an [Approved Translation](#).

By endorsing this Code, operators also commit to being an active advocate for safe driving in New Zealand, including supporting safer vehicles through the adoption of technological improvements over time.

Formal Endorsement

This Code of Practice has been reviewed and formally endorsed on behalf of the rental vehicle and tourism industries by:

*Signed on behalf of
Rental Vehicle Association (RVA)*



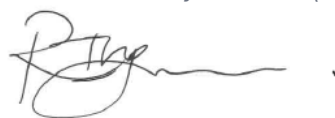
Caddie Kerr

President

Rental Vehicle Association

18th September 2026

*Signed on behalf of
Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA)*



Rebecca Ingram

Chief Executive Officer

Tourism Industry Aotearoa

18th September 2026

Principles

These apply across the whole visitor journey, not to any one stage in particular. They are the foundation of this Code, everything else sits on top of them.

1. Say it more than once

Core safety information should reach hirers more than once during their journey. Use whichever combination of booking confirmation, check-in, and pick-up works best for your business.

2. Required Standard, or Excellent Practice

Every item in this Code is one of two things:

- **Required Standard** - something every operator must do, from a busy international counter working inside a scripted global system, to a local independent operator with more time and flexibility with each customer.
- **Excellent Practice** - something genuinely valuable that not every operator is equally placed to deliver. Nobody is required to do it, though many will choose to, recognising the connection to great customer experience.

EXAMPLE: *Allowing more time for familiarisation during vehicle handover is potentially possible for a smaller campervan operator with an unhurried customer, however genuinely impractical for a larger car rental operator at an airport counter. That's exactly why it's Excellent Practice, not a Required Standard.*

3. Communicate in a way every hirer can understand

Provide information in a simple, welcoming, friendly manner, using videos, pictures or diagrams to reinforce the messaging where possible. Provide this information in the hirer's own language too, where possible. The [Driving in New Zealand](#) resource is already available in multiple languages, so this is often easier to achieve than it first appears. Operators can also use Tiaki “Drive Carefully” resources and assets, including posters and digital materials, to reinforce these messages in a visitor-friendly way.

4. Stay an active participant

Endorsing this Code means having someone from your business attend relevant industry meetings. There will likely be up to four of these per annum, mainly during low season. Attendance can be delegated to any team member in your organisation and doesn't need to be the same team member each meeting. Operators who do not respond to, or attend, two meetings in a row will be contacted directly by the programme administrators (TIA or RVA) and may be removed from the list of endorsing operators, who are signatories to the code.

Definitions

- **Required Standard** - what every operator must do, achievable regardless of business size or system. Not negotiable.
- **Excellent Practice** - genuinely valuable, but not achievable by every operator. Optional, though many will choose to do it.
- **NZTA** - New Zealand Transport Agency, also known as Waka Kotahi.
- **Operator** - any organisation providing rental vehicles to international drivers under a current NZTA rental service licence.
- **Endorsing operator** - an operator that has signed up to this Code and remains an active participant, as set out in Principle 4.
- **Hirer** - the international visitor renting and driving the vehicle, referred to as a "visiting driver" earlier in this Code.
- **Third party** - an agency, such as a wholesaler or OTA, booking on the operator's behalf.
- **Assessment Question** - the readiness to drive questions set out in the Appendix, used at Check-In or Pick Up to gauge a hirer's confidence.

The Visiting Drivers Journey

This Code follows the journey a hirer actually takes, rather than a single moment in it:

Research → Booking → Check-In → Pick Up → On Road → Drop Off → Post Hire

Not every operator runs a check-in step. Where one doesn't exist, its content simply moves into the Booking or Pick Up stages, whichever a business prefers.

The Required Standards in this Code are anchored around the Booking and Pick Up stages specifically, because they are the stages every operator has, regardless of size or system.

01 Research

Before any commitment, when a hirer is comparing operators and researching their trip, often through your website.

REQUIRED STANDARD

- Provide a link to the [DriveSafe](#) website from your homepage.
- Provide a link to the [Driving in New Zealand](#) resource from your homepage.

EXCELLENT PRACTICE

- Provide further safe driving information and resources on your website info pages from the Travel & Conditions section of the Endorsed Tools Directory in this code.
- Display the [Ten Key Road Rules](#) from the DriveSafe website on your website info pages.
- **NEW** Provide links to a variety of endorsed tools from your website info pages from the Driver Education section of the Endorsed Tools Directory in this code.

02 Booking

The moment a hirer commits, their confirmed booking with your business.

REQUIRED STANDARD

- Provide a link to the [DriveSafe](#) website from your booking confirmation.
- Provide a link to the [Driving in New Zealand](#) resource from your booking confirmation.
- Encourage hirers arriving on long-haul flights to stay overnight in that destination before driving, rather than driving while fatigued.

EXCELLENT PRACTICE

- Where a hirer books through a third party, such as a wholesaler or OTA, provide them the same information you would give a direct hirer.

- **NEW** Provide a link to [Journey Planner](#) on your booking confirmation.
- **NEW** Provide a link to [Highway Conditions](#) on your booking confirmation.
- **NEW** Provide a link to [Travel Time & Distance Calculator](#) on your booking confirmation.
- **NEW** Provide a link to [Weather Warnings](#) (or similar) on your booking confirmation.

03 Check-In

An optional digital step many operators use ahead of Pick Up, to spread preparation out and ease pressure at the counter. If you don't have this step, deliver any relevant content via the Booking or Pick Up stages instead.

REQUIRED STANDARD

- Encourage hirers arriving on long-haul flights to stay overnight in that destination before driving, rather than driving while fatigued.
- Deploy the readiness to drive Assessment Questions contained in the Code.
- Advise the hirer of the requirements for [Driver's Licence Translation](#), where their licence isn't in English.
- Provide a link to the [DriveSafe](#) website in your check-in process.
- Provide a link to the [Driving in New Zealand](#) resource in your check-in process.
- **NEW** Share a tool such as [New Zealand Driving Tips](#) or [Road Ready NZ](#) or [Guide for Tourists & Theory Quiz](#) in your check-in process, ideally toward the end, alongside downloadable links and confirmation that check-in is complete.

EXCELLENT PRACTICE

- Provide further educational information within 10 days of arrival that re-emphasises the [Ten Key Road Rules](#) for driving in New Zealand and the [Tiaki Promise](#)
- Advise the hirer to investigate driving conditions in New Zealand before arrival.
- **NEW** Provide a link to the [Journey Planner](#) in your check-in process.
- **NEW** Provide a link to the [Highway Conditions](#) in your check-in process.
- **NEW** Provide a link to [Travel Time & Distance Calculator](#) in your check-in process.
- **NEW** Provide a link to [Weather Warnings](#) in your check-in process.

04 Pick Up

The physical handover of the vehicle, the one stage every operator has in person, whatever their size or system.

REQUIRED STANDARD

- Verify the hirer's driver licence by sighting the physical card and/or suitably verifying the digital licence. Where a digital licence is used, advise the hirer to also carry the physical

card where possible, as acceptance of digital licences by NZ Police is not yet fully confirmed. Ensure the hirer understands they must be able to provide their licence and rental agreement if stopped by NZ Police.

- Complete a process for the hirer to acknowledge the receipt and understanding of road safety material provided to them which must include [Driving in New Zealand](#).
- Deploy and/or Review the readiness to drive Assessment Questions contained in the Code.
- **NEW** Where a hirer answers an Assessment Question incorrectly, or seems unsure, have a clear process to further educate that hirer utilising endorsed tools such as [New Zealand Driving Tips](#) or [Road Ready NZ](#) or [Guide for Tourists & Theory Quiz](#)
- **NEW** Provide frontline team members a simple escalation pathway so they know when and how to involve a supervisor or manager where they have concerns.
- **NEW** Let hirers know about seasonal driving conditions relevant to their trip, for example snow, ice, or the need for snow chains over the winter months.

EXCELLENT PRACTICE

- Ensure the hirer receives a copy of the [Driving in New Zealand](#) resource, either handed out physically, available in the vehicle, or provided digitally with other paperwork.
- Provide suitable training to frontline team members on giving safe driving advice and educational information to hirers.
- **NEW** Utilise tools such as [CoDriver](#) (VR simulator) or [Road Ready NZ](#) to support the education process. These are entirely optional, see the Endorsed Tools Directory.
- **NEW** Where a hirer answers an Assessment Question unconfidently, treat this as a genuine prompt to act, not a box to tick. Offer extra guidance, more time for familiarisation, or a referral to a local driving instructor. Where the concern is specifically about the vehicle's size or handling, a more suitable alternative vehicle may help; a vehicle change alone is not an adequate response if the concern is about road rules or general driving competence. These remain genuine choices depending on what's practical for your business, but the underlying concern should never simply be waved through.
- **NEW** Provide team members clear, real examples of what an unconfident driver might say or do, for example mentioning they haven't driven in the past year, or they didn't realise the vehicle was a manual.
- **NEW** Remind hirers again about the tools for [Journey Planning](#), [Highway Conditions](#), [Travel Times & Distances](#) and [Weather Warnings](#) at handover.

05 On Road

The trip itself, once the hirer has left the counter and is driving on New Zealand roads.

REQUIRED STANDARD

- Display a [Keep Left Sticker](#) in every vehicle in a location visible for the driver.

- Have a defined process for making contact with the hirer immediately by telephone if you happen to receive any complaints about their driving from the NZ Police. *(Let them know both you and Police take unsafe driving very seriously, and that repeat concerns could mean their rental agreement is terminated)*
- Have a defined process for supporting the hirer if you happen to terminate their agreement on the grounds of unsafe driving in conjunction with the NZ Police.

EXCELLENT PRACTICE

- Where practical, keep the [Driving in New Zealand](#) resource accessible to the hirer throughout their trip, whether that's the physical copy in the vehicle or the digital version already provided at Pick Up.
- Have a defined process for suggesting alternative transport to the hirer if their agreement has been terminated in conjunction with the NZ Police.
- **NEW** Provide the hirer an email communication shortly after Pick Up (1-2 days) that re-emphasises the [Ten Key Road Rules](#) and the importance of [Driving Safely in New Zealand](#). You can also remind them of the other tools available to support their journey such as [Journey Planning](#), [Highway Conditions](#), [Travel Times & Distances](#) and [Weather Warnings](#)
- **NEW** Display a reminder about courteous driving in all your vehicles, for example pulling over to let following traffic pass on narrow or winding roads.

06 Drop Off & Post Hire

The vehicle's return, and the follow-up afterward, the last real chance to hear how the trip actually went and learn from your customers experiences.

EXCELLENT PRACTICE

- **NEW** Ask hirers how their journey went: whether they felt well prepared for driving on New Zealand roads, and whether anything else would have helped. Ask your frontline team members to gather this feedback verbally at drop off, try to record any responses and learn more from your customers.
- **NEW** Update your post-hire customer satisfaction survey, to ask hirers whether they felt well prepared for driving on New Zealand roads, and whether anything else would have helped. Find a way to record the answers and share any data with the RVA for the benefit of the Code.

Endorsed Tools

A guide to every tool referenced in this Code, endorsed by RVA and TIA.

Category	Tool	Type	Description
Core DriveSafe	DriveSafe website	Website	The primary hub for road safety information, linked throughout this Code.
Core DriveSafe	DriveSafe Assessment Questions	Table	Multilingual driver readiness questions in template format in this Code, for use digitally or otherwise.
Driver Education	Driving in New Zealand Brochure	Online PDF	NZTA's official multilingual guide to driving safely in New Zealand.
Driver Education	New Zealand Driving Tips (CamperMate)	Video	A short video covering key road safety tips for visiting drivers, or an operator-branded equivalent.
Driver Education	Road Ready NZ	Video	QR-code accessible video series on New Zealand's road rules.
Driver Education	Guide for Tourists & Theory Quiz	Website	An online road rules guide and practice quiz for visiting drivers.
Driver Education	CoDrivr	VR Simulator	A virtual reality driving simulator for hands-on readiness assessment.
Travel & Conditions	NZTA Journey Planner	Website	Live journey planning across New Zealand's state highway network.
Travel & Conditions	NZTA Highway Conditions	Website	Real-time state highway conditions and closures.
Travel & Conditions	Travel Times & Distance Calculator	Website	Realistic travel time estimates between New Zealand destinations.
Travel & Conditions	MetService Weather Warnings	Website	National weather warnings and watches. (Can utilise other tools such as Windy if preferred)
Supporting Materials	NZTA Keep Left Stickers	Website	Order page for the physical Keep Left stickers required under this Code.
Supporting Materials	NZTA Approved Translations	Website	An NZTA-approved translation service in regular use by operators.

Appendix: Assessment Questions

These questions help gauge a hirer's readiness to drive in New Zealand. Wherever an answer suggests they aren't fully confident, treat it as an opening to help, whether that's the specific guidance below, or offering a relevant tool from Endorsed Tools.

Question	What confidence looks like	Potential interventions in the event a visitor answers No
Have you driven on the left-hand side of the road before?	Yes	Point them to an endorsed tool such as New Zealand Driving Tips (CamperMate), Road Ready NZ, Guide for Tourists & Theory Quiz, or CoDrivr, and remind them of the Keep Left reminder in the vehicle.
Are you comfortable driving a vehicle of this size and transmission type (automatic or manual)?	Yes	Clarify what specifically feels unfamiliar, size or transmission, to understand their level of comfort. If it's a genuine concern, offer a different vehicle or transmission type where available.
Have you driven regularly in the last 12 months?	Yes	Point them to an endorsed tool such as New Zealand Driving Tips (CamperMate), Road Ready NZ, Guide for Tourists & Theory Quiz, or CoDrivr to build familiarity before they set off, and confirm they're comfortable with the vehicle basics before handover.
New Zealand has a lot of roundabouts, which may have different rules. Are you confident about how to use them?	Yes	Point them to the roundabout guidance in the NZTA Driving in New Zealand booklet, or a video resource such as Road Ready NZ or New Zealand Driving Tips (CamperMate), before they leave.
New Zealand country roads are often narrow and winding. Are you comfortable judging when it is safe to overtake?	Yes	Point them to the overtaking guidance in the NZTA Driving in New Zealand booklet, and advise them to avoid overtaking until their confidence builds, pointing out passing bays and slow-vehicle bays as safer alternatives.
Long drives between places are common in New Zealand. Will you take regular rest breaks and avoid driving while tired?	Yes	Point them to the realistic travel-time guidance already provided (the 100% Pure New Zealand Travel Time Calculator or NZTA Journey Planner), and encourage more overnight stops than they may have planned.

Endorsing Operators

The current list of operators endorsing this Code, previously shown here as a logo grid, will be reinstated in the final published version.

[Operator logos to be re-added from the current published Code before this document is finalised.]