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## Scheme targeting end to tyre waste imminent

After years of planning, Tyrewise will soon launch and officials hope projects to recycle other parts of cars won't be far behind

Adele Rose and the Tyrewise team are only months away from seeing the roll-out of a nationwide product stewardship scheme for end-of-life tyres (ELTs) and they are already planning how to tackle entire cars.

A four-month trial of the project in Hawke's Bay was completed at the end of December.

Now the programme operated by Auto Stewardship New Zealand (ASNZ) is expected to be officially launched later this year.

Rose, implementation project manager and chief executive of the 3R Group, says the trial was mainly focused on capturing data through software that tracks ELTs from their collection points all the way through to processing.

Tyrewise aims to tackle the estimated 6.5 million ELTs produced each year by ensuring they are collected and recycled instead of ending up in landfills, on roadsides or being illegally dumped.

It has set a target that 80 per cent of tyres will be collected



Adele Rose, chief executive of the 3R Group

and processed by the fourth year of operation and more than 90 per cent by the sixth year. Currently, only about 40 per cent are exported or recycled as tyre-derived products.

The scheme will be funded by an advanced stewardship fee, which has yet to be set by cabinet, being paid by importers of loose or fitted tyres.

This charge must be passed onto consumers. The money generated from it will be used to cover collection and recycling, as

well as incentivising innovative end uses.

Participants in the programme need to be registered, and include tyre and vehicle importers, generators, retailers, transporters and collection points.

Processors and manufacturers also need to be registered if they wish to receive tyres and incentive payments through Tyrewise.

Rose says while the trial has been based in Hawke's Bay, the work has stretched across the North Island.

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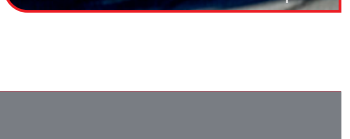
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“The next stage we’re working on is what the reporting process looks like for importers – what information they will get from the government and what they can expect from the scheme,” Rose told Autofile.

“We’re into the nitty-gritty parts now to ensure the scheme is successful when we go through to operational launch at some point in 2023.”

The government has yet to enact regulations under the Waste Minimisation Act for the project to go ahead, but that’s expected to happen early this year. There will then be a six-month period to notify affected parties before fees can be collected on imported tyres.

The 3R Group, which works with businesses on sustainability, product stewardship, and circular-economy solutions, has also begun turning its attention to other automotive projects.

It is working with ASNZ and the government in efforts to ensure that vehicles won’t be scrapped in



“Tyrewise will provide us with a launching pad for stewardship of the whole vehicle”

Adele Rose, 3R Group

their entirety and any valuable or reusable materials can be extracted.

Talks were held with David Parker, Minister for the Environment, Michael Wood, Minister of Transport, and James Shaw, Minister of Climate Change, in October, and Rose adds they were “very engaged around the concept of stewarding the vehicle as a whole”.

A key discussion point was around how product stewardship can support New Zealand into a low-carbon economy.

“The government is making

changes to scrappage. We want to ensure stewardship is the best it possibly can be for that, and to highlight some of the benefits of reporting and tracking vehicles.

“It makes no sense to talk about tyres one day and batteries the next when the stakeholders are the same. It makes sense to look at the vehicle as a whole under the automotive stewardship framework.

“Clearly, efficiencies are to be had if we’re not duplicating management, and finance and insurance, by having multiple product-stewardship organisations.

“Tyrewise will provide us with a fantastic launching pad for stewardship of the whole vehicle. We’re not at a cold start.

“There are already three priority products affecting vehicles – tyres, batteries and refrigerants – plus

programmes for oil filters and oil recovery, so we can work from there. That’s good for the industry.”

Rose adds ASNZ has become a broader product stewardship organisation that “holds the big picture”.

The 3R Group initially founded ASNZ 10 years ago to provide the governance structure for Tyrewise because the industry was calling for a mandatory scheme to eliminate wasted rubber.

This was based on tyres being a visual problem and, if dumped in the wrong place, they can be hazardous if they catch fire.

“We’re working on what these types of systems look like and what data is needed,” says Rose.

“A big part is the system for independently verified end markets, which makes sure things are going to where we think they’re going with a focus on product use in New Zealand.”

While the development of stewardship schemes is expected to accelerate as industry and governments seek to protect the environment and better manage waste, they still need to prove they can be successful.

For Tyrewise, one way to do this includes gathering mass-balance data reporting of tyres coming into the country and those being processed.

Rose says companies have also ▶

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## Priority products

Product stewardship is an environmental management strategy that means whoever designs, produces, sells or uses a product takes responsibility for minimising its environmental impact throughout its life cycle, including end-of-life management.

The New Zealand government has declared six priority products for regulated product stewardship under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008.

These are tyres, plastic packaging, refrigerants, farm plastics, agrichemicals and their containers, and electrical and electronic products, including large batteries.

To declare a priority product,

the Minister for the Environment must be satisfied that:

- ▶ It will or may cause significant environmental harm when it becomes waste.
- ▶ Or there are significant benefits from reduction, reuse, recycling, recovery or treatment of the product.

The minister must also be satisfied the product can be effectively managed under a stewardship scheme.

As soon as is practicable after being declared a priority, a stewardship scheme for that product must be developed and accreditation obtained.

The government is working with stakeholders to co-design schemes for each of the chosen product groups so far.

◀ bought into the idea of product stewardship, and some are already working together on how they can make the scheme and systems more successful.

“With more demand for tyre-derived product, we predicted there would be some joined-up commercial relationships.

“Engagement has been fantastic and companies processing tyre-derived products are working with collectors directly, which is creating efficiencies for transport and processing.

“Industry certainly got the signal that a regulated scheme meant changes were coming and they’re making some of those changes themselves already.”

One of the challenges when first developing Tyrewise was bringing together different stakeholders because of the lack of associations for new tyre importers, recyclers and processors.

Rose notes sustainability is a good platform on which to build such relationships and the



New Zealand's current biggest use of ELTs is for tyre-derived fuel at Golden Bay Cement's plant in Northland. On-site from left are Adele Rose, 3R Group chief executive, David Vinsen, Auto Stewardship NZ member and VIA's chief executive, Trevor Tutt, general manager of innovation at 3R Group, and Kelly Stevens and Russell Dyer, of Golden Bay Cement

co-design approach also means people from different types of business have been able to have meaningful input.

Getting people to the table was the first step and providing opportunities for them to have their views listened to and recorded required trust, which had to be built up over time.

“One of the other big hurdles is making sure you have the right people around the table. There

has to be those who are pro and against so you have robust discussions.

“Developing the scheme also levels the playing field. There are companies already doing the best they can. They have systems in place and can operate legitimately.

“Other businesses struggle to get on that pathway. A stewardship scheme offers everyone the chance to get to that same level and participate in the market.

“We’re only going as fast as the industry can go itself without people feeling they’re being bullied into a position.”

Adding another level of compliance enables market access and businesses don't need to do more than they are in terms of reporting, so “it's more about access to the data”.

It's estimated about 60,000 tonnes of ELTs will be processed every year under the scheme,

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but they will not all end up in the same place.

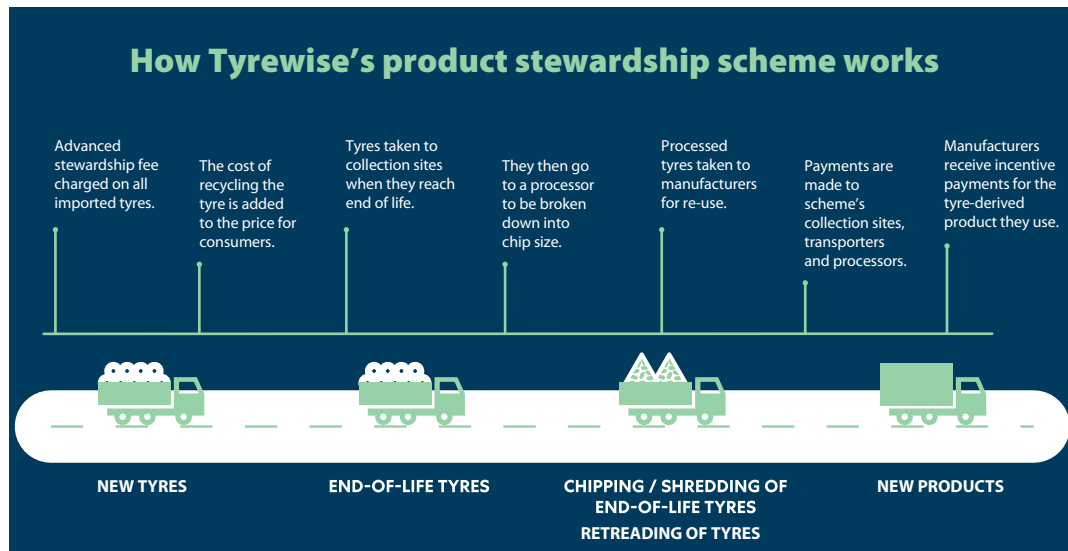
Their top current use is for making tyre-derived fuel for Golden Bay Cement's manufacturing plant in Portland on the western side of Whangarei Harbour, Northland.

It can take 25,000 to 30,000 tonnes a year and, while the company is the biggest procurer of such fuel, about 20 per cent of the residual tyre goes into its cement.

Recycled tyres also get turned into arena chip, with Treadlite in Waikato and Matta manufacturing out of the Kapiti Coast supplying products nationally and internationally.

The third key area is around civil engineering solutions, with the University of Canterbury putting a focus on using tyre-derived products.

Rose says some of those products can be used in roading construction and bitumen mix, which Tyrewise and other companies are trying to progress



with local councils. Trials are under way.

"The NZTA has shut the door on rubber in roading for the next seven years so highways won't have the product, but through local councils we can push for it to be used on the roads they have control over," she adds.

"A big mover will be when Tyrewise starts getting revenue

from the advanced stewardship fund. At the moment, research and development is largely funded by private enterprises. But once the scheme is up and running, Tyrewise can put funds into incentivising innovation."

Rose notes there's more demand for tyre-derived products than there are systems for supply at present. While it looks like

there are 60,000 tonnes of tyres available, it's not as simple as that.

The reason is there is a mixture of different types and they are quite different products in terms of how they can be used at end of life.

"The challenges are collecting and processing oversized tyres, and finding a market for that product compared to passenger tyres where that's more easily done."

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## Wood keeps transport

Michael Wood has been retained as Minister of Transport in Prime Minister Chris Hipkins' first cabinet line-up and has picked up extra responsibilities.

Wood has moved up the rankings from 16th to seventh, and has been named Minister for Auckland and Associate Minister of Finance.

He also continues to hold the immigration, and workplace relations and safety portfolios he took on under Ardern's government, while Kiri Allan has been made Associate Minister of Transport.

Other changes announced by Hipkins on January 31 include Ginny Andersen becoming Minister for Small Business and Associate Minister of Immigration.

The cabinet has 20 ministers with four outside of it, including Dr Duncan Webb who is the new Minister of Commerce and

Consumer Affairs. Green Party co-leaders James Shaw and Marama Davidson remain as co-operation agreement ministers.

Meanwhile, Simeon Brown stays as transport spokesman for National – and Matt Doocey is still associate spokesman – after leader Christopher Luxon's reshuffle of the party's caucus last month.

National's new-look team will contest this year's general election, which has been set down for Saturday, October 14.

Highlights among the changes revealed by Luxon on January 19 include Chris Bishop picking up urban development and Resource Management Act reform, and Michael Woodhouse being named shadow leader of the house.

Ex-leader Todd Muller also enjoyed some promotions, with him taking on the new roles of foreign direct investment and digitising government. He has been confirmed as spokesman for agriculture and climate change.