Ministry for the Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Resource Management Act Reform Weekly Update

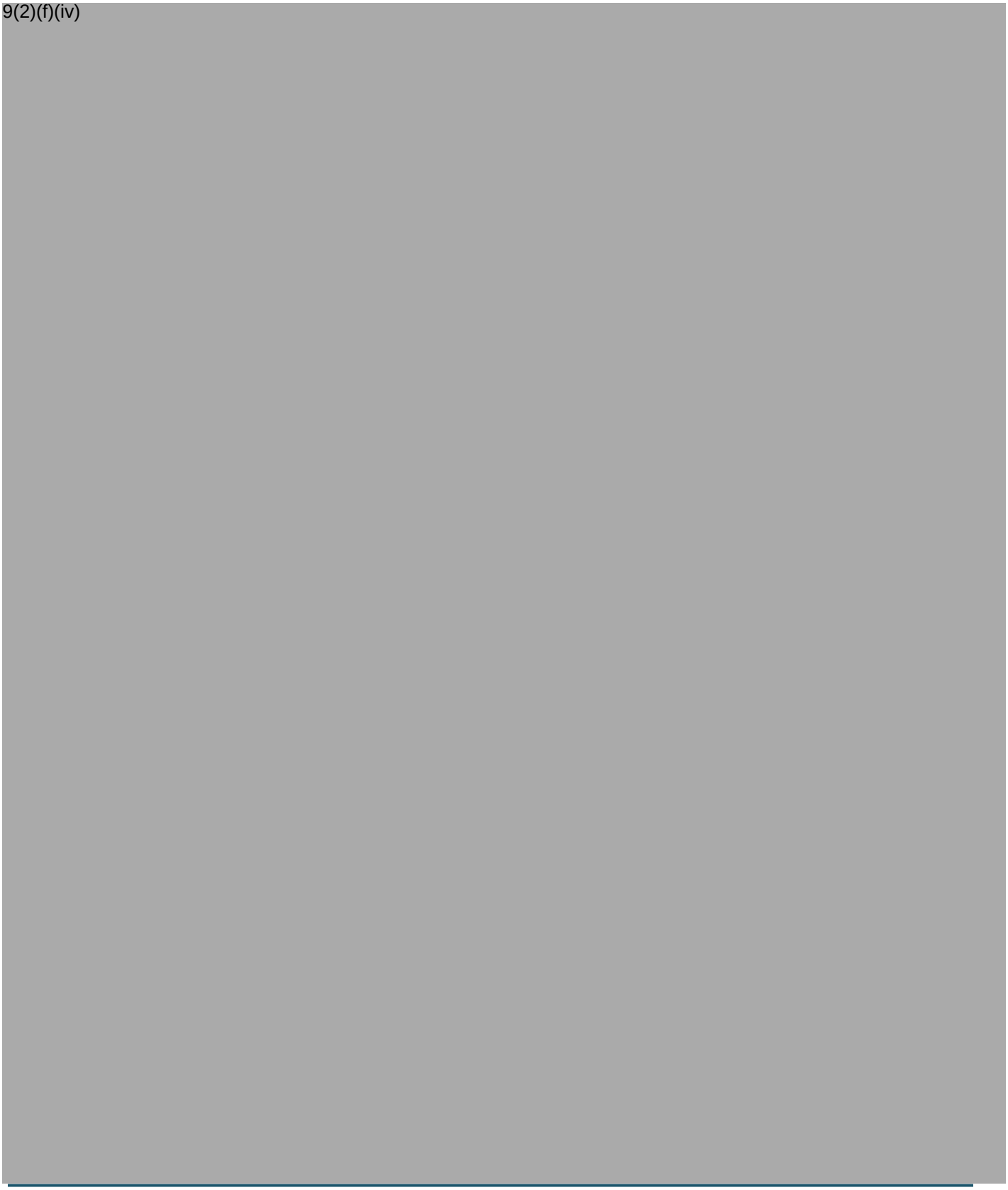
Whakanaketanga Whakarite Rawa Ahuarangi ā-Wiki

For the week ending 20 June 2025

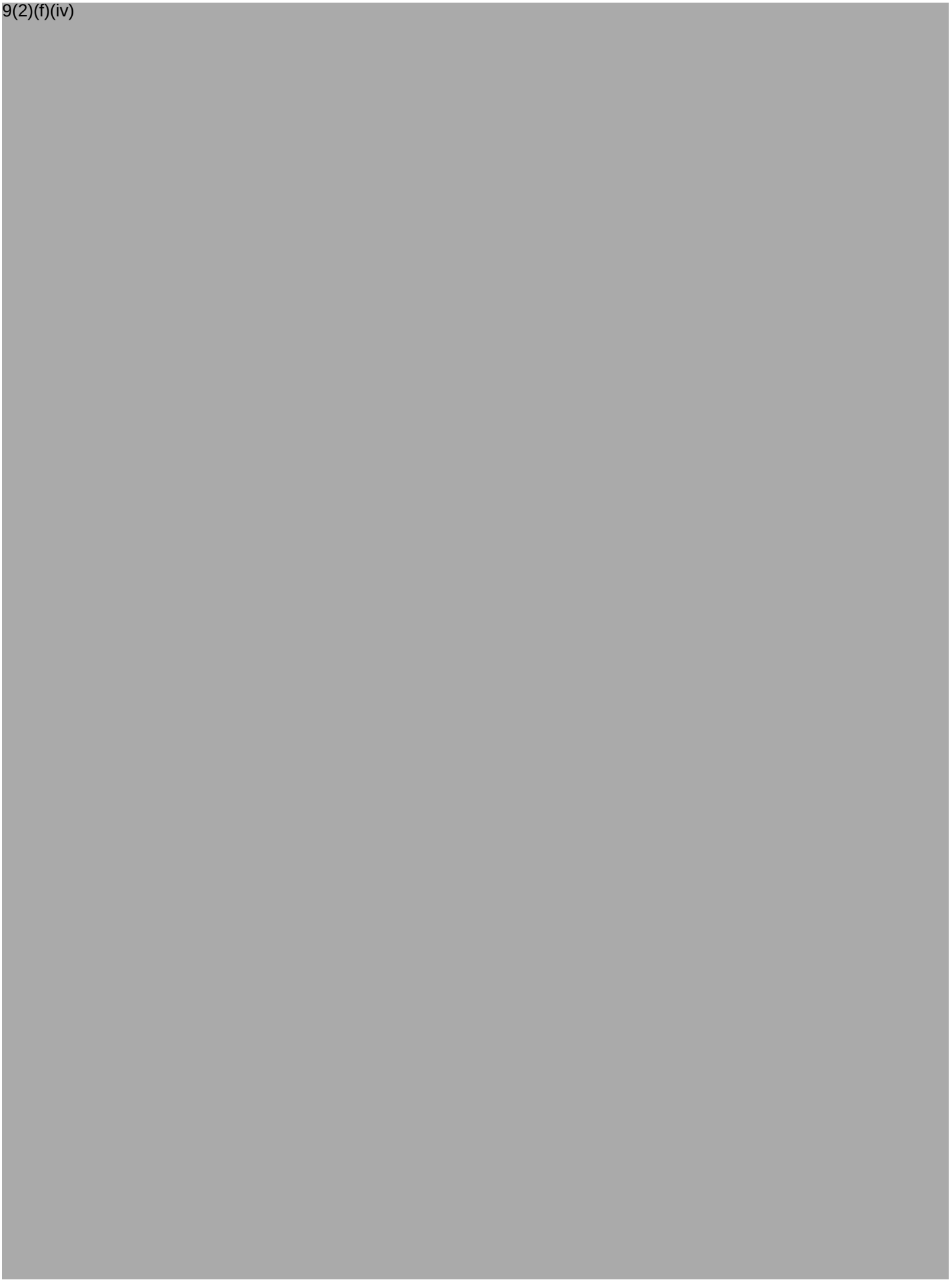
Hon. Chris Bishop, Minister Responsible for Resource Management Act Reform

Key Updates

9(2)(f)(iv)



9(2)(f)(iv)



Update: Phase 2 National Direction engagement

Work continues during this submission period. There continues to be interest in this work.
An email was sent to approximately 7000 people last Friday, 13 June, updating them about the process, where to find information, and on-line Forums for consultation.

Package 4 was notified on 18 June.

Online Forums

- Three forums have been held this week, to cover the National Direction instruments in more depth.
- Four more forums are being held next week.
- Partner agencies and SMEs have sent invites out to their contacts and interest groups for the Forums.
- Three online forums are being held for post-settlement governance entities in early July.

Webinars

- Four webinars have been held on Packages 1 and 2.
- Recordings of two webinars, the presentation and answers to questions posted in the webinars are on the Ministry website.

Other meetings with key stakeholders are continuing.

Submissions

- As at 16 June – 1,394 submissions had been received.
- Packages 1 and 2: Infrastructure and, Development and Primary Sector – 34 submissions. Granny flats and highly productive land are still the key topics in submissions received.
- Package 3: Freshwater – 1,360 submissions. Te Mana o te Wai continues to be a key topic in submissions received.
- It is usual for most submissions to be received in the last few days of consultation.

Business Group: Environmental Management and Adaptation
Owner: Jo Gascoigne, 027 531 7202.

Reporting provided to DPMC for the Government Quarterly Plan

On 12 June, the following update was provided to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to be included in the Government Quarterly Plan report:

Action item 11: Begin public consultation on National Direction to the Resource Management Act 1991 to unlock development in infrastructure, housing, and our primary industries.

Due date: 29 May 2025.

Update: The Cabinet paper: *"Resource Management Reform Phase 2 National Direction: Approval to Consult"* and four discussion documents were approved by the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee on 7 May and confirmed by Cabinet on 12 May. Public consultation began on 29 May and will end on 27 July.

Business Group: Environmental Management and Adaptation
Owner: Jo Gascoigne, 027 531 7202

Consultation on Ministry's Approach to Crown Entity Monitoring and Board Appointments

The Public Service Commissioner (PSC) is seeking assurance that our approach to statutory entity board appointments is robust, fit-for-purpose, and delivering value. To support this, the PSC has requested that we undertake an assessment and report back on its current capability and approach.

We will conduct a desktop analysis and a series of interviews to assess our practices against the PSC's Guidelines *for Crown Entity Monitoring*, and the *Board Appointment and Induction Guidelines*, alongside other best practice frameworks.

As part of this process, PSC has asked that we consult with you to ensure your perspectives are incorporated into the assessment and any resulting improvement plans.

We will discuss this with you at an officials' meeting, within the next two weeks, to gather your views on our approach to statutory board appointments.

Please let us know your availability, and feel free to reach out with any questions.

Business Group: Office of the Chief Executive, Governance
Owner: Ngaire Best, 027 449 6925

Request for expansion to RMA s70 changes

The Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill (the Bill) proposes amendments to section 70 of the Resource Management Act 1991 that would enable councils to permit discharges that could result in significant adverse effects on aquatic life, provided doing so would contribute to improvement over time. These amendments are aligned with recent amendments to section 107 through the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024.

In their submissions on the Bill, some regional councils (including Environment Southland and Waikato Regional Council) requested further amendments enabling them to permit discharges in other situations (i.e. where they are currently prevented from doing so). In particular, in situations where discharges could result in conspicuous change in the colour or visual clarity[CC5] [AG6] of the receiving waters. Select Committee reported back to the House on 11 June and did not recommend any expansion to the scope of amendments to section 70.

We have since been contacted by Waikato Regional Council with concerns about their ability to permit discharges under an amended section 70, and that this could mean some additional consents are required as part of Plan Change 1 in the Waikato. We will continue to engage with the councils to understand what an amended section 70 means in practice (e.g. for consent numbers that can be expected as part of Plan Change 1). If this shows that there is a substantive issue to be addressed, you will be provided with further advice. You may also wish to discuss this further with your Ministerial colleagues.

Business Group: System Oversight
Owner: Macaela Flanagan, 022 023 4470

RMA Statutory Notifications to the Minister for the Environment

Type	From	Planning Instrument	Purpose	Date Received	Consultation Period or Statutory Timeframe	Response
Notification (Clause 5, Schedule 1)	Kāpiti Coast District Council	Proposed Private Plan Change 4 (Welhom Developments Ltd) to the Kāpiti Coast District Plan	To rezone 12.65ha from Rural Lifestyle Zone to General Residential Zone.	11 June 2025	30 May 2025 - 1 July 2025	Further advice can be prepared on request.
Notification (Clause 5, Schedule 1)	South Taranaki District Council	Proposed Plan Change 4 to the South Taranaki District Plan	To make amendments to Urban Development, Hāwera Structure Plan and Financial Contributions provisions, including: • Improving provisions to achieve better alignment and integration between infrastructure provision and capacity, and urban development. • Updating structure plan maps to provide a more cohesive approach to development. Updating zoning to better reflect existing and anticipated activities. Changing the provisions for financial contributions.	10 June 2025	10 Jun 2025 - 22 July 2025	Further advice can be prepared on request.
Application (s16A NES-AQ)	Bay of Plenty Regional Council	N/A	Exceptional circumstances application for three exceedances of the PM10 air quality standard on 17 and 19 April 2025. These have been attributed by the Council to be salt spray.	11 June 2025	The statutory deadline for your decision is 11 September 2025.	Advice is being prepared.
9(2)(f)(iv)						

9(2)(f)(iv)



This information is also included in the RMA Reform Weekly Update in recognition of the correlation between the Environment and RMA Reform portfolios.

Intensification Planning Instrument Progress

Process step	Council	IPI progress	Finish date (notify decisions on IHP recommendations)
Recommendations referred to Minister	Waikato District Council	Council referred two rejected IHP recommendations to you for a final decision on 31 October 2024. We provided you with advice on 3 April 2025 (BRF-5555 refers), and you made your decisions on 14 April 2025. You accepted one of the IHP recommendations and deferred your decision on the other. You wrote to the Council on 17 April 2025, informing them of your decisions.	22 October 2024 (completed on time)
	Christchurch City Council (NPS-UD Policy 3 and 4 parts of PC14)	Council made decisions on the balance of IHP recommendations required to give effect to Policies 3 and 4 of the NPS-UD on 2 December 2024, rejecting 20 recommendations. Council referred the rejected recommendations to you on 24 February 2025. We provided you with advice on 12 May 2025. You made your decisions on 25 May 2025, and these were communicated to the Council. We are working with your office on the proactive release of our advice.	20 December 2024 (completed on time)
In progress	Waimakariri District Council	Council must make decisions on IHP recommendations by 30 June 2025 and notify these decisions by 14 July 2025. The Council is intending to consider recommendations at a meeting next week. We will provide you with an update on this. Mayor Gordon wrote to you requesting a meeting to discuss their IPI. We have provided a draft response for your consideration to your office.	14 July 2025
	Christchurch City Council (MDRS parts of PC14)	Council has deferred decisions on those parts of its IPI not subject to Policies 3 and 4 of the NPS-UD (i.e., MDRS components). Council has requested a further extension to make decisions on the balance of its IPI. We provided advice (BRF-6127 refers), and you declined the request. You wrote to the Mayor of Christchurch on 9 May 2025, informing him of your decision.	12 December 2025
	Auckland Council (rest of PC78, non-Policy 3(a))	Hearing on 'Metropolitan Centre Outstanding Matters' scheduled for 3 June 2025.	31 March 2026

Process step	Council	IPI progress	Finish date (notify decisions on IHP recommendations)
Completed	Kāpiti Coast District Council	Completed.	20 August 2023
	Selwyn District Council	Completed.	20 August 2023
	Hutt City Council	Completed.	22 September 2023
	Porirua City Council	Completed.	14 December 2023
	Upper Hutt City Council	Completed.	20 December 2023
	Western Bay of Plenty District Council	Completed.	1 March 2024
	Wellington City Council	Completed.	20 March 2024
	Rotorua District Council	Completed.	31 March 2024
	Tauranga City Council	Completed (substantive IPI).	17 July 2024
	Waipā District Council	Nearly completed; Council to publicly notify your decisions on referred recommendations. Council staff have indicated this will be done by 1 July 2025.	30 August 2024
	Christchurch City Council (NPS-UD Policy 3 and 4 parts of PC14)	Nearly completed; Council to publicly notify your decisions on referred recommendations, expected in the week of 16 June 2025.	18 September 2024
	Tauranga City Council (Tauriko West)	Completed (Variation 1).	31 December 2025
	Hamilton City Council	Completed.	20 December 2024
	Auckland Council (Policy 3(a) parts of PC78)	Completed. Decisions were notified on 29 May and became operative on 6 June.	30 May 2025

Upcoming Briefings for Minister Bishop

Papers due to the Minister in the following 3 weeks
As at 1pm, 18 June 2025

Tracking Number	Title	Purpose	Responsible General Manager / Chief Advisor	Title Suitable for Proactive Release?	Date due to Minister
BRF-6038	Replacing the RMA - Allocation and Freshwater Rights and Interests	Seeks decisions on the approach to allocation of natural resources, and freshwater rights and interests.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	Sent 17 June
BRF-6300	[redacted]	9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	19 June
BRF-6142	Replacing the RMA - Planning Tribunal	Seeks decisions on the establishment of a Planning Tribunal, including purpose and functions.	Jo Gascoigne	Y/N	19 June
BRF-6151	Replacing the RMA - Coastal marine area	Seeks decisions on aspects relating to the Coastal Marine Area.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	23 June
BRF-6340	Meeting with Te Tai Kaha - 26 June 2025	Provides notes and talking points for meeting with Te Tai Kaha on freshwater allocation proposals.	Clare Maihi	Y/N	24 June
BRF-6353	9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]	9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	24 June
BRF-6362	Advice on the correspondence from the New Zealand Institute	Provides a response to the draft report by the New Zealand Institute on the	Jo Gascoigne	Y/N	25 June

	regarding regulatory barriers to the entry of new grocery retailers	regulatory barriers for entry to the market.			
BRF-6109	Replacing the RMA - Heritage in the system	9(2)(f)(iv)	Jo Gascoigne	Y/N	26 June
BRF-6246	9(2)(f)(iv)	9(2)(f)(iv)	Martyn Pinckard	Y/N	26 June
BRF-6338	Replacing the RMA - Further Treaty decisions	Seeks remaining Treaty-related decisions required for drafting of replacement legislation.	Clare Maihi	Y/N	26 June
BRF-6119	Replacing the RMA – decisions on residual matters	Seeks decisions on the residual matters not decided in previous briefings.	Martyn Pinckard	Y/N	26 June
BRF-6116	Replacing the RMA – Implementation transition timing	Seeks decisions on the overarching approach to transition from the current Act to the two new Bills.	Martyn Pinckard	Y/N	26 June
BRF-6117	Replacing the RMA - System Funding and Cost Recovery	9(2)(f)(iv)	Martyn Pinckard	Y/N	26 June

Cabinet Papers

As at 1pm, 18 June 2025

Tracking Number	Title	Description	Committee	Responsible General Manager	Date due to Minister's Office	Lodgement Date	Date of Committee Meeting	Date of Cabinet Meeting
CAB-535	Te Awa Tupua | Whanganui River - Te Pou Tupua: APH documentation to confirm joint appointments	Provides documents for reappointments to the Office of Te Pou Tupua.	APH	Martin Workman	19 February (revised paper sent 11 June)	19 June	24 June	30 June

Ministerial Correspondence Update

As at 1pm, 18 June 2025

We are preparing responses to 34 pieces of correspondence on a wide range of topics including:

- concerns for Heritage listed buildings and areas
- concerns for recent decisions around Plan Change 78 and Plan Change 50
- queries around land use and ownership of water and other resources
- issues with freshwater nitrate pollution
- concerns around iwi consultation in resource consenting and council planning, and
- a range of various resource consenting issues about:
    - compliance costs,
    - granny flats in future urban zones,
    - housing intensification,
    - rezoning of residential land,
    - riverbed gravel extraction,
    - solar farms,
    - rural subdivisions, and
    - music venues.

Written Parliamentary Questions Update

As at 1pm, 18 June 2025

We are preparing responses to written parliamentary questions on the liquidation of TTE Limited, numbers of staff and workstations in the head office of the Minister's responsible agencies, and advice received and taken to Cabinet during weeks of 2 and 9 June 2025.