

Proposed changes to RMA National Direction

Package 1: Infrastructure and development

June 2025





Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Webinar format


1. Welcome and introductions
2. Purpose of the webinar
3. RMA National Direction – purpose and process
4. National Direction Work Programme
5. Infrastructure and Development proposals
6. Q and A via chat box
7. Next steps:
 - Process for making submissions
 - Recommendations to Ministers


2. Webinar purpose


 To inform the public, iwi/Māori, interested groups and stakeholders of the RMA national direction consultation proposals.


 Webinars are part of the consultation process –

Infrastructure and Development – 4 and 10 June
Primary Sector and Freshwater – 5 and 11 June

 Forums with interested groups are scheduled in June.

 Engagement with iwi authorities and Post Settlement Governance Entities is underway.

 The consultation and engagement events will help inform and explain the proposals, in advance of making submissions.

 See MfE website for further information about the consultation and engagement process [Have your say | Ministry for the Environment](#)

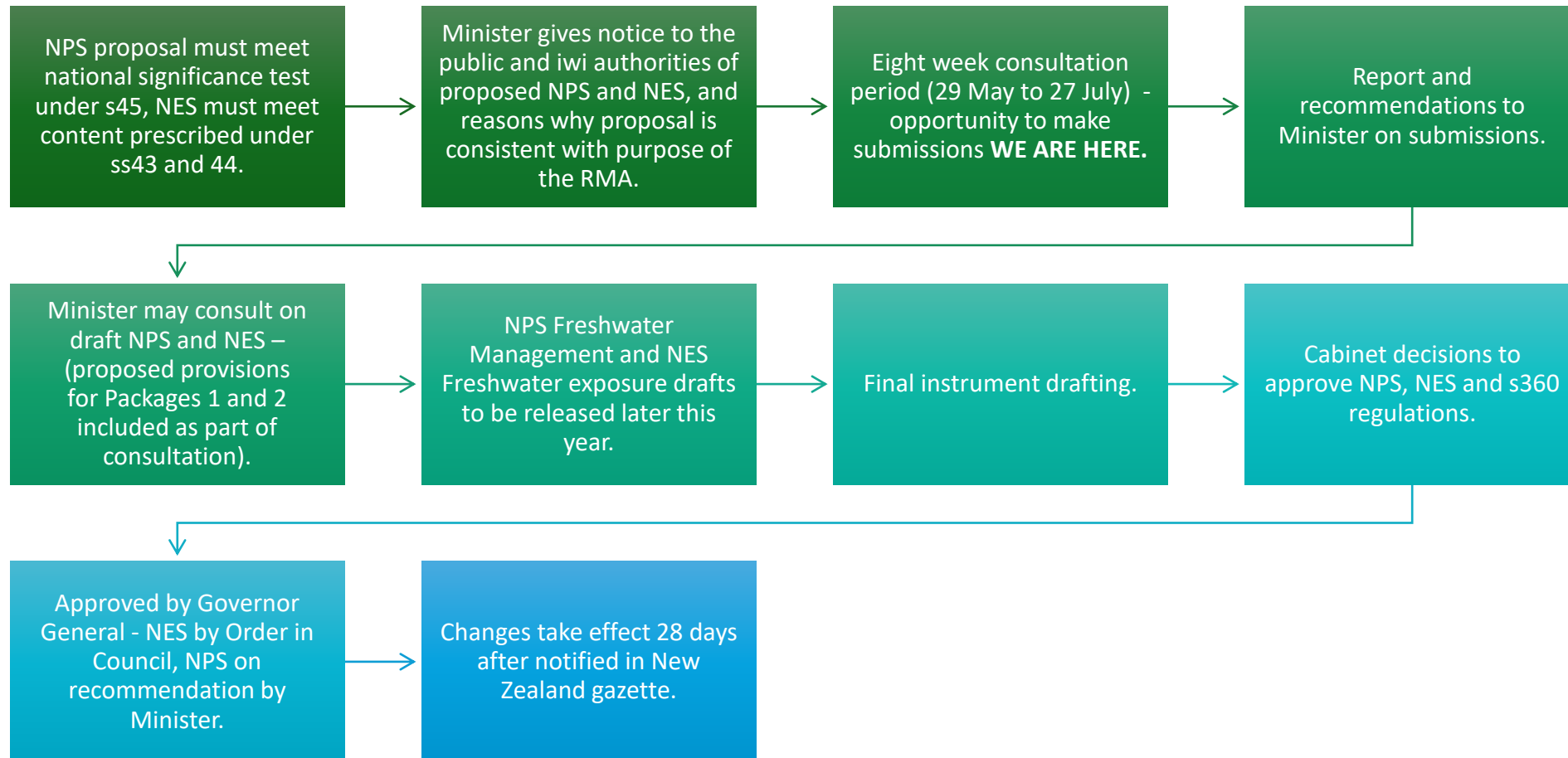
3. What is RMA National Direction?

National direction supports local decision-making under the RMA

Provided by national policy statements, national environmental standards, national planning standards and s360 regulations

National direction can direct plan changes, provide policy guidance for resource consent decisions, and can introduce nationally consistent rules and environmental standards

RMA process for making National Direction



4. National Direction Work Programme

The Government's national direction objectives:

- unlocking development capacity for housing and business growth
- enabling delivery of high-quality infrastructure for the future, including doubling renewable energy
- enabling primary sector growth and development, including aquaculture, forestry, pastoral, horticulture, and mining

Targeted amendments to 12 existing and introduction of 4 new national direction instruments to improve the operation of the resource management system under the RMA 1991

National Direction Work Programme continued...

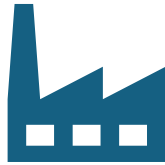
Re-scoped programme in March 2025 to:

- progress targeted changes aligned with the resource management reforms
- reduce implementation requirements on local government and communities, including less plan changes for local government
- have immediate and meaningful impact in the current system and influence development of the new system.

Four packages



**1. Infrastructure
and development**



2. Primary Sector



3. Freshwater



**4. Going for
Housing Growth**

Package 1: Infrastructure and Development

- New National Policy Statement for Infrastructure
- Amendments to the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011
- Amendments to the National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008 (to be renamed National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks)
- Amendments to the National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activity Regulations 2009 (to be renamed National Environmental Standards for Electricity Network Activities)
- Amendments to the National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities Regulations 2016
- New National Environmental Standards for Granny Flats (Minor Residential Units)
- New National Environmental Standards for Papakāinga
- New National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards

5. Infrastructure and Development proposals

The proposals will:

- enable infrastructure and development where it is needed, while managing its effects on people and the environment
- improve opportunities and choice for housing
- promote a risk-based approach for natural hazards, including direction to manage risk proportionately
- include new and amended rules to clarify where consent is required in district, unitary or regional plans, and targeted national policy direction to support resource consent and plan-making processes.

National Policy Statement for Infrastructure

The proposed new national direction for infrastructure (NPS-I) will provide:

- an objective setting out a range of infrastructure outcomes that planning decisions would contribute to including national, regional and local benefits, well-being of communities, value for money and protection from adverse effects of other activities
- general policies to recognise and enable the benefits of infrastructure, provide for the operational and functional need of infrastructure in particular environments, have regard to spatial planning, enable the timely operation and delivery of infrastructure, and recognise and provide for Māori interests
- policies on managing the interface between infrastructure and other activities
- definitions to support the proposed policies.

National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011

The proposed changes to the NPS-REG include:

- a new objective that better recognises the critical role REG plays in society and the economy to:
 - ensure security of supply
 - achieve climate emission reductions,
 - provide for social, economic and cultural wellbeing while managing the adverse effects on the environment.
- new policies that recognise the needs of new and existing REG activities, including functional and operational requirements to locate near to the source of renewable electricity and/or transmission to the national grid, and protection from reverse sensitivity.
- new policies to enable renewable electricity generation while managing effects on the environment in areas not comprising values of national importance or addressed by other national direction (e.g. indigenous biodiversity, the coastal environment, freshwater)
- new policy on recognising and providing for Māori interests, including by considering the outcomes of engagement, and providing for Māori development aspirations
- new and amended definitions to support the proposed policies.

National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008

Proposed new title: National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks

The proposed changes will provide:

- a change to the title to reflect the widened scope that now includes electricity distribution
- an amended objective to:
 - recognise and provide for the national significance and benefits of the electricity network
 - recognise and provide for the electricity distribution network.

National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008 continued...

- new policies to support the operational and functional needs of the electricity network, route selection processes and manage environmental interests
- a new policy on recognising and providing for Māori interests
- a new policy to provide greater protection of the electricity network (direct effects and reverse sensitivity)
- update to the electric and magnetic fields international standard (1998) currently incorporated in the NPS-ET and replaced with a reference to the 2010 guidelines in NPS-EN
- new and amended definitions to support the proposed policies.

National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activity Regulations 2009

Proposed new title: National Environmental Standards for Electricity Network Activities

The proposed changes will:

- change the title to reflect the widened scope to include electricity distribution activities
- enable more routine work on the electricity transmission network in all environments
- introduce new rules to establish the National Grid Yard and Subdivision Corridor to protect the transmission network
- introduce new provisions for the distribution network
- introduce new permitted activity standards for EV charging infrastructure
- Provide new and amended definitions to support the proposed policies.

National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities Regulations 2016

The proposed changes will:

- update the existing permitted activity standards relating to the size and placement of telecommunication poles, headframes, cabinets and antennas
- expand the scope of existing permitted activity standards (ie, permit new poles in more zones and remove restrictions in the road reserve)
- create a new permitted activity rule for renewable electricity generators for telecommunication facilities
- create a new permitted activity rule for temporary telecommunications facilities
- create a new permitted activity rule for customer connection lines to heritage buildings
- include other minor technical updates to modernise the NES-TF
- provide new and amended definitions to support the proposed policies.

National Environmental Standards for Granny Flats



The proposed new NES-GF will:

- enable one small, detached, self-contained, single storey house (minor residential unit as defined in National Planning Standards) per site. NES-GF will be for residential use as a permitted activity (i.e., no resource consent required) in residential, rural, mixed use and Māori purpose zones subject to meeting identified permitted activity standards.
- submissions from the 2024 consultation, “Making it easier to build granny flats”, will be considered alongside new submissions.

National Environmental Standards for Papakāinga

The proposed new NES-P will:

- permit a limited scale of papakāinga development (up to 10 homes) on certain types of land in rural zones, residential zones, and Māori purpose zones subject to meeting identified standards
- permit certain ancillary activities associated with papakāinga including commercial activities of up to 100 square metres, conservation activities, visitor accommodation up to 8 guests, education and health facilities, sports/recreation activities, marae, urupā and māra kai
- provide for papakāinga development of between 11-30 homes as a restricted discretionary activity
- provide for larger-scale papakāinga development (more than 30 units) as a discretionary activity
- enable district plan rules for papakāinga to be more lenient than the NES-P.

National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards

The proposed new NPS-NH will:

- apply to new subdivision, new use and development in all environments and zones including coastal environments
- apply to 7 hazards (flooding, landslips, coastal erosion, coastal inundation, active faults, liquefaction and tsunami)
- direct councils to take a risk-based approach to natural hazard risks, which means assessing the risk based on likelihood and consequence
- define “significant risk” using a risk matrix
- direct councils to take a proportionate response to managing risks
- direct councils to use best available information when making decisions

6. Q and A check in

- Post questions in the Chat
- Topics raised at Webinar 1 (4 June):
 - Scope of activities the national direction will cover
 - Definitions for activities
 - Clarification on when regional or district plan rules will prevail over the national direction
 - Requests for further information
 - Timeframes for implementation

7. Next steps

Information about the consultation and engagement

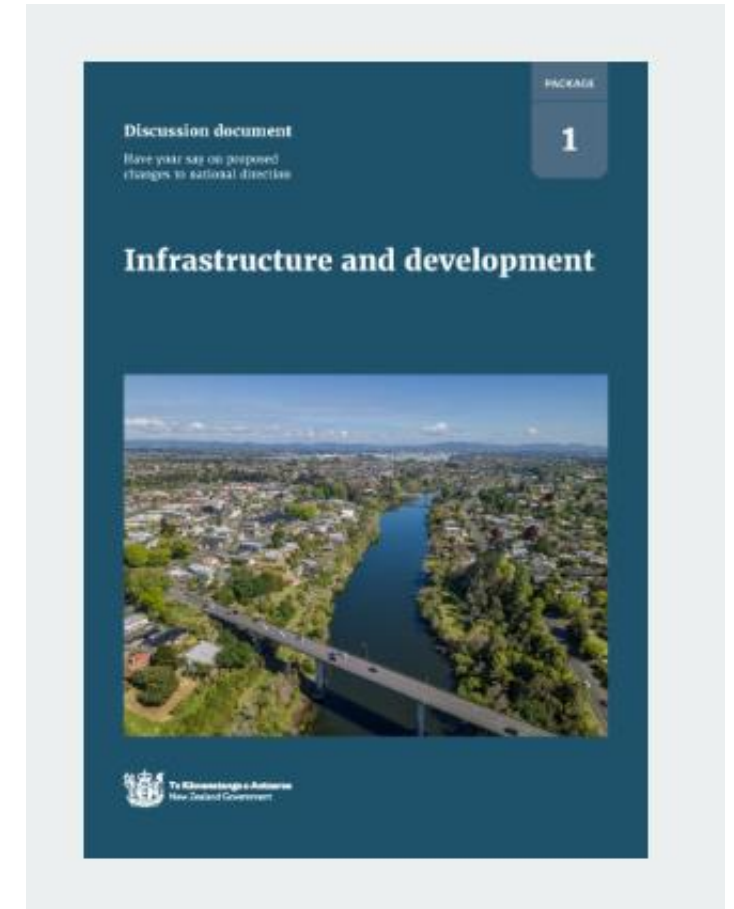
MfE website: [Have your say | Ministry for the Environment](#)

Making a submission:

<https://consult.environment.govt.nz/resource-management/infrastructure-development-primary-sector-nd>

- Infrastructure and development discussion document
- Online portal for lodging submissions
- Email and postal address

Submissions will inform recommendations to Ministers on the national direction proposals.





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Thank you for your time

<https://environment.govt.nz/news/consultation-on-updating-rma-national-direction/>