

# Cabinet Minute CBC Min (07) 18/16: Providing National guidance on Renewable Energy Projects through the Resource Management Act 1991

Reference number:

CBC Min (07) 18/16

On 27 August 2007, the Cabinet Business Committee:

## Background

1. **noted** that in the future, more electricity will need to be generated from renewable energy sources, because of New Zealand's international obligations with respect to climate change;
2. **noted** that in November 2004 the Cabinet Economic Development Committee invited the Ministers for the Environment and Economic Development to report on the findings of a reference group, which was set up to look into the merits of a National Policy Statement for electricity generation [EDC Min (04) 24/5];

## National Policy Statement on renewable energy

3. **noted** that consultation on the findings of the Reference Group did not occur, but that consultation on the draft New Zealand Energy Strategy provided some support for a National Policy Statement on renewable energy;
4. **noted** that a decision on providing national guidance under the Resource Management Act 1991 (the RMA) for renewable energy projects is required to finalise the New Zealand Energy Strategy;
5. **noted** that the Acting Minister for the Environment considers that it is desirable to issue a National Policy Statement on renewable energy;
6. **noted** that the Acting Minister for the Environment will consult with iwi authorities and other appropriate persons and organisations before preparing the proposed National Policy Statement;
7. **invited** the Acting Minister for the Environment, in consultation with the Minister of Energy, to commence the process for preparing a proposed National Policy Statement on renewable energy and a report under section 32 of the RMA (cost-benefit evaluation), and to report on the progress of a draft National Policy Statement to the Cabinet Policy Committee by 5 December 2007;

8. **noted** that the Acting Minister for the Environment intends to proceed with a Board of Inquiry process to produce a National Policy Statement on renewable energy;

## **Call-in powers under the Resource Management Act**

9. **noted** that applicants for renewable energy projects are expressing a growing interest in the Minister for the Environment's call-in power under the RMA, and some seem to be unclear on the circumstances in which an application would be called in;
10. **noted** that the Ministry for the Environment will provide further guidance on the call in powers under the RMA, setting out the need for early engagement;
11. **noted** that there was little interest from submitters on the draft New Zealand Energy Strategy in a consolidated consenting process, which would enable a pool of projects to be called-in and considered by the same decision making panel;

## **Publicity**

12. **noted** that the Minister of Energy and the Acting Minister for the Environment intends to announce these decisions publicly.

Andrew Doube  
Secretary

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