



Ministerial Intervention Powers

Changes introduced by the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Act 2025

These changes, which passed into law on 20 August 2025, belong to a wider programme of resource management reform. Visit the Ministry for the Environment's [webpage about the new Amendment Act](#) for more information.

Context

Local planning is the responsibility of local councils. Where there is a national interest, the Minister for the Environment (the Minister) can provide national direction in the form of policy, standards or regulations.

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) provided powers to the Minister to take action if a council was not exercising its functions and powers in accordance with the legislation. These powers worked together and provided for increasing levels of intervention, depending on the nature of the issue and previous action taken, enabling the Minister to:

- monitor the effect and implementation of the RMA (including any regulation under it), national policy statements, national planning standards and water conservation orders (section 24(f))
- investigate performance of a council and make recommendations (section 24A)
- appoint a person to perform a function or power in place of the council (section 25)
- direct changes to council plans (section 25A)
- direct a plan review (section 25B)
- require a council to provide information about the exercise of any of its functions, powers or duties (section 27).

The previous intervention powers have been used occasionally in specific circumstances where there have been significant environmental or council performance issues.

Key changes

- Sections 5A, 5B, 6 and 7 of the Amendment Act amend sections 24A, 25 and 25A and add new sections 25A(2A), 25A(3) through to 25A(5) to the RMA.

The Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Act 2025 (the Amendment Act) introduces new ministerial intervention powers. These are intended to bolster the central government's tools to monitor compliance with Housing Growth Targets and take proportionate responsive action when councils do not comply.

The new ministerial intervention powers will be able to be exercised in relation to other national policy statements, not just in relation to Housing Growth Targets in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development. This will ensure all national policy statements are treated consistently under the RMA.

The two new ministerial intervention powers are as follows.

- If a national policy statement requires a local authority to prepare a document (other than a plan or policy statement) and the authority has not prepared the document as required, the Minister may direct the local authority to prepare or amend the document.
- If a local authority is non-compliant with a national policy statement, the Minister may direct that local authority to prepare a plan change to address the non-compliance and specify the planning process that the authority must use to prepare the plan change.

The Amendment Act also clarifies that the Minister:

- may only make a recommendation if there has first been an investigation
- may only use the intervention powers if the authority's failure to act on a recommendation gives the Minister grounds to take action.

Implementation considerations

For regional and district councils, there are no new requirements or actions to take, unless the Minister exercises these powers.

If the powers are used, councils will need to act in the same way to existing ministerial intervention powers in that they will need to:

- consider any recommendations made by the Minister under section 24A and determine how to address them
- follow any direction issued by the Minister under section 25A, including the preparation or amendment of documents or initiating specific plan changes, as the direction instructs.

