

Rural Bulletin

August 2009



Rural Women

NEW ZEALAND

www.ruralwomen.org.nz

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Consultation

Defence Review 2009

Your views are sought on the Defence Review 2009. Major issues facing Defence that are under consideration in this review include:

- current and emerging threats and challenges to NZ's security;
- the role of the Defence Force in responding to such threats and challenges;
- how the Defence Force should cooperate with other international security partners and other NZ government agencies;
- military capabilities required by the Defence Force to carry out its roles effectively;
- Defence Force recruitment, retention, training, and the role of Reserves; and
- management of Defence business, including procurement, real estate, infrastructure and finance.

In particular, submissions would be welcome on how each of these issues should be addressed in four distinct environments: our land and maritime domain, the South Pacific and Australia, the Asia-Pacific region, and the wider world.

Submissions close on 24 August 2009. There is an on-line submission form at <http://www.defence.govt.nz>. Alternatively, you can upload or email completed submission forms to review09@defence.govt.nz, fax them to (04) 496 0859, or send them to: Defence Review 2009 Ministry of Defence PO Box 12703

Holidays Act Consultation

A Ministerial Advisory Group is reviewing the Holidays Act and your views are sought on (amongst other things):

- the way relevant daily pay (RDP) is calculated;
- trading the fourth week of annual leave for cash at the employee's request;
- allowing all employers and employees to agree to transfer the observance of a public holiday listed in the Act to another day;
- accumulating alternative holidays (days in lieu);
- holidays and leave entitlements of casual employees;
- the significance of NZ public holidays (Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, 2 January, Waitangi Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, ANZAC Day, Queen's Birthday, Labour Day, and Provincial Anniversary Day); and
- shop trading on Easter Sunday.

Submissions close on 21 August 2009. Email them to ERconsultation@dol.govt.nz, or post them to Holidays Act 2003 Review (DX no. SR57080), Department of Labour, PO Box 3705, Wellington. More is at <http://www.dol.govt.nz/consultation/holidays-act-review/>

NZers' Use of Alcohol

Although the moderate use of alcohol can be a positive aspect of our lives, a significant minority of NZ drinkers drink excessively, and this affects us all (because of health costs, law and order costs and accident compensation costs, amongst others).

Evidence of alcohol-related harms, along with some preliminary ideas for reform of the law, is presented in "Alcohol in Our Lives", a public Issues Paper released by the Law Commission which reviews the rules relating to the sale and supply of liquor. Among the options the Commission is putting forward include:

- a completely new Sale of Liquor Act;
- making cheap alcohol (that tend to favoured by price-sensitive young and heavy drinkers) less available;
- cutting back on the hours that alcohol can be purchased; and
- introducing a split-purchase age for alcohol allowing young people to drink on a licensed premise at 18 and to purchase from an off-license at 20.

Submissions close on 30 October 2009. Hard-copy submissions should go to the Liquor Project Coordinator, Law Commission, PO Box 2590, Wellington 6140, or by email to liquor@lawcom.govt.nz. In addition, you can take part in the Commission's new online discussion forum, called "Talk Law" at <http://www.talklaw.co.nz/liquor>

Prostate Cancer Inquiry

The terms of reference for this inquiry are to seek:

- literature describing the incidence, mortality, groups at risk, testing options (with particular reference to age and family history, treatment, and what other countries are doing);
- opinions from affected and asymptomatic men, their families, patient advocacy groups, specialist clinicians, and other interested parties;
- the best way to promote awareness for early detection and treatment of prostate cancer; and
- a cost benefit analysis, if appropriate.

Submissions close on 21 August 2009. Find out more at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/IPB/SC/MakeSub/f/8/f/49SCHE_SCF_00DBSCH_INO_9159_1-Inquiry-into-early-detection-and-treatment.htm

Sustainable Biofuel Bill

The purpose of this bill is to ensure that biofuels (e.g. ethanol, biodiesel and biogas) supplied or sold in NZ from 1 May 2010 are sustainable biofuels (sustainable biofuels can be made here from crop and animal wastes, and as a by-product of food production).

Three examples of unsustainable biofuels are:

- cultivation and processing of some crops using so much petroleum energy that the total life cycle carbon emissions of these are higher than for petroleum fuels;

- using food grains to make biofuels may drive up world grain prices and deprive low income countries of food; and
- biodiesel from palm oil grown after clear felling of indigenous forests in Southeast Asia destroys the habitat of many threatened species.

Submissions close on 11 September 2009. Two copies go to the Local Government and Environment Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/member/2009/0049/3.0/versions.aspx>

Offering Back Public Works Land

Public submissions are now being invited on the Public Works Bill (Offer Back of and Compensation for Acquired Land) Amendment Bill. The purpose of this Bill is to make sure that former owners of Maori or general land taken or acquired by the Crown for the purposes of a public work are given the first right of refusal to purchase that land where the Crown no longer requires it for the public work for which it was originally taken or acquired.

Submissions close on 14 August 2009. Two copies go to the Local Government & Environment Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/member/2007/0139/latest/versions.aspx>

NZ Place Names Consultation

Anyone can make a submission to support or object to a proposed official name within NZ's territorial boundaries. The NZ Geographic Board is currently consulting on the following NZ place name proposals: Clarke Mound; Dargaville Branch; Grafton Railway Station, Granville Point; Katau Creek; Katau Knob; Komarukeka Creek; Kronos Creek; Lake Hood; Lake Opuha; Landsborough River; Makaor/Ward Island; Mount Aitkin; Mount Chamberlain; Napier Port Branch; Onehunga Branch; Opango Stream; Seeligers Creek; Southdown Branch; Stillwater-Ngakawau Line; Tatawhaka Creek; Tai Tapu; The Caitlins; Venus Valley; Whanganui; and Washbourne Creek.

Written submissions close on 17 August 2009. Use the "contact us" form at <http://www.linz.govt.nz/about-linz/contact-us/index.aspx>, or write to Secretary for the NZ Geographic Board-Nga Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, c/- Land Information NZ, PO Box 5501, Wellington 6145, fax 04 460 0112. More about each name is at <http://www.linz.govt.nz/placenames/consultation-decisions/index.aspx>, or tel freephone 0800 665 463

Minimising Harm from Gambling

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is seeking submissions on a draft set of plans in "Preventing and Minimising Gambling Harm 2010-2016". They include a six-year strategic plan, a three-year service plan, a problem gambling needs assessment, and problem gambling levy calculations over the 2010-2013 period.

Submissions close 21 August 2009. Comments go to N Clark, National Problem Gambling Team, Ministry of Health, PO Box 5013, Wellington, email problemgambling@moh.govt.nz. A submission form and more information are at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/preventing-and-minimising-gambling-harm-consultation>

Recovering Wild Animals: Permits

The Department of Conservation (DoC) is seeking public comment on the draft national Wild Animal Recovery Operation (WARO) concession permit. This permit is required any time an aircraft is used on public conservation land to search for, shoot and/or recover wild animals. WARO concession permits have been issued for five-year periods, and the current ones are due to expire in September 2009.

DoC wants to put in place a new set of concessions relating to specific activities like carcass recovery, the capture and carrying of live animals, and heli-hunting. The new permits would be put in place from 1 October 2009.

Submissions close on 19 August 2009. Email them to mcuddihy@doc.govt.nz, or post them to Canterbury Conservancy Office, Private Bag 4715, Christchurch Mail Centre, Christchurch 8140. More information is at www.doc.govt.nz/waro

Producing and Processing Seed Sprouts

The development of a primary production and processing standard for seed sprouts is now being considered following two outbreaks of food-borne illness in Australia that were attributed to eating seed sprouts in 2005-2006. Seed sprouts are a ready-to-eat sprout. They are produced from a wide range of seeds including alfalfa, onion, radish, broccoli, sunflower, cress, snow peas, lentils, peas, and mung beans.

Submissions close on 26 August 2009. Electronic submissions can be made via http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/_srcfiles/P1004%20PPPS%20Seed%20sprouts%201AR%20FINAL.pdf. Hard copy submissions go to Food Standards Australia NZ, PO Box 10559, The Terrace, Wellington 6036, email standards.management@foodstandards.gov.au

Statistics NZ Consultations

Culture and Identity Statistics Review...

Statistics NZ (SNZ) is reviewing these statistics and is seeking submissions from data users and people with an interest in culture and identity related policy or research. Initial views are contained in "Culture and Identity Statistics Domain Plan: Draft for Consultation" which includes information about current culture and identity information sources, and present gaps in data sources, and considers possible directions for statistical development over the next five to ten years. Topics covered include: social cohesion and national identity, cultural expression and wellbeing, cultural experiences and cross-cultural participation, active citizenship, Maori identities and culture, sexual orientation, and immigrant settlement.

Feedback is specifically sought on:

- key information needs for government agencies, researchers, businesses and the broader community;
- priorities for statistical development and/or further research; and
- the adequacy and comprehensiveness of existing data sources for culture and identity statistics.

Submissions close on 14 August 2009. More at <http://www.statisticsnz.govt.nz/Publications/PopulationStatistics/review-of-culture-and-identity.aspx>

...& Sexual Orientation Statistics?

A separate paper on sexual orientation has also been prepared, which discusses sexual orientation as a potential area for the collection of official social statistics. Feedback is sought as part of the Review of Culture and Identity Statistics (see above) on the need for sexual orientation statistics.

Submissions close on 14 August 2009. The paper is at <http://www.stats.govt.nz/Publications/SocialConditions/considering-sexual-orientation.aspx>

Commerce Act Part 4: Consultation

The Commerce Commission has published a discussion paper as the first step in a consultation process to develop information disclosure requirements for companies that supply regulated electricity lines, gas pipelines, and specified airport services. The purpose of Part 4 of the Commerce Act 1986 is to promote the long-term benefit of consumers in markets where there is little or no competition, or no likelihood of a substantial increase in competition. The reason for developing information disclosure rules in this context is to make sure that people who want to, can readily find out whether the purpose of Part 4 is being met.

Submissions close 4 September 2009. The discussion paper is available at www.comcom.govt.nz under Industry Regulation/Part 4

IRD Consultations

Binding Tax Rulings

An Inland Revenue (IRD) issues paper seeks feedback on suggested changes to the legislation on binding tax rulings. A binding ruling is issued by IRD when a taxpayer requests one. Its sets out how IRD will apply the tax laws to a particular business arrangement. Introduced in 1992, they provide certainty for taxpayers on the tax consequences of their proposed transaction.

Among the changes suggested to the current system are:

- replacing the general prohibition on "questions of fact" with a limited list of factual matters so taxpayers are aware of what the Commissioner of Inland Revenue cannot issue a ruling on;
- introducing a more flexible fee-waiver provision which applies to fees charged when applying for a binding ruling; and
- extending the ability to request a ruling to promoters of mass-marketed and publicly promoted schemes to remove an unnecessary restriction on who can request a ruling for these schemes.

Submissions close on 28 August 2009. They go to Binding Rulings Review, C/- Deputy Commissioner, Policy Advice Division, IRD, PO Box 2198, Wellington 6140, email policy.webmaster@ird.govt.nz with "Binding rulings review" in the subject line. The issues paper "The Binding Rulings System: Legislative Issues" is at www.taxpolicy.ird.govt.nz

Meaning of "Building" in the Depreciation Provisions

This draft statement sets out the meaning of the term "building" in the context of the depreciation provisions, and in some situations the Commissioner's view has changed. The appendix to the statement sets out some items that previously may not have been considered to be buildings that would now be considered to be buildings, and vice versa. Any new depreciation determinations required as a result of this statement being finalised will be issued in draft form for consultation.

Submissions close on 11 September 2009. The statement is at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/resources/2/8/28f42e004f01d4c1896fad4bfdc4072d/ins0096.pdf>

Fines/Penalties & Income Tax Deductions

This draft interpretation statement from IRD considers whether taxpayers are allowed an income tax deduction for fines and penalties imposed on them or their employees or contractors. The statement concludes that taxpayers are not allowed income tax deductions for fines and penalties. This is the case whether the fines and penalties are imposed on the taxpayer or their employees or on an independent contractor.

Submissions close on 14 August 2009. More is at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/resources/7/8/78032b004eaedd0bb4dbbc4bfdc4072d/ins0006.pdf>

Email all IRD submissions to public.consultation@ird.govt.nz, or post them to Team Manager, Technical Services, Office of the Chief Tax Counsel, National Office, IRD, PO Box 2198, Wellington

Tax Rates Bill

The Taxation (Consequential Rate Alignment and Remedial Matters) Bill contains changes to tax rates following recent tax rate and thresholds adjustments.

Submissions close on 25 August 2009. Two copies go to the Finance and Expenditure Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2009/0055/8.0/DLM2226507.html>.

DoC Consultations

Threatened Status of Invertebrates

The Department of Conservation (DoC) classifies all wild things in NZ according to their risk of extinction. It is currently updating the lists covering the threatened status of NZ terrestrial and freshwater invertebrates (animals that do not have a backbone, e.g., a worm).

Submissions close on 30 September 2009. They go to: R Hitchmough, Scientific Officer (Species), Terrestrial Conservation Unit, email threatstatus@doc.govt.nz (or you can make an online submission). More is at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/consultations/current/>

Threatened Status of NZ Lichens

DoC is also developing a list of the threatened status of NZ lichens, the first time lichens have been included in the "threatened status" system.

Submissions on this one also close on 30 September 2009 – and they go to: R Hitchmough, Scientific Officer (Species), Terrestrial Conservation Unit, email threatstatus@doc.govt.nz (or you can make an online submission). More is at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/consultations/current/>

Kahurangi National Park

DoC has published a draft "partial review" of the Kahurangi National Park Management Plan, and your views are sought.

Submissions close on 4 September 2009. They go to Kahurangi National Park Management Plan Partial Review, DoC, Private Bag 5, Nelson 7042, email kahurangi@doc.govt.nz. The draft is at

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/consultations/current/kahurangi-national-park-management-plan-draft-partial-review/>

Dusky Dolphin Watching Review

DoC is reviewing dusky dolphin watching and swimming at Kaikoura, ahead of the expiry (in November 2009) of a 10-year moratorium on new permits for commercial dolphin viewing. The moratorium was put in place following earlier research found dolphin behaviour was being affected by boating activities.

Submissions close on 31 August 2009. More, including submission details, is at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/consultations/current/tourism-effects-on-dusky-dolphins-at-kaikoura/view-the-dusky-dolphin-tourism-report/>

Aoraki/Mount Cook Long Term Community Plan

The Long Term Community Plan (LTCP) for Aoraki/Mount Cook describes the services provided to the Aoraki/Mount Cook community by DoC under its "local-body" function (e.g., water, rubbish disposal, sewage treatment, and roading), and outlines changes coming up in the next 10 years. It also outlines the costs associated with these services or the proposed levels of service for each activity.

Submissions close 21 August 2009. Download the LTCP at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/getting-involved/consultations/current-consultations/canterbury/draft-aoraki-ltcp-july2009.pdf>

Biosecurity NZ Consultations

There are three (submission closing dates are in brackets):

- **Review of submissions and a draft risk analysis – freshwater / marine ornamental fish, marine molluscs and crustaceans** (17 August 2009). More at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/biosec/consult/ros-draft-ra-ornamental-fish-molluscs-crustaceans>
- **Draft Import Risk Analysis: Equine germplasm from Australia, Canada, the European Union and the USA** (4 September 2009). More at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/biosec/consult/draft-ira-equine-germplasm-aust-can-eu-usa>
- **Import Risk Analysis: White Rhinoceros (Ceratotherium simum) from Australia** (4 September 2009). More at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/biosec/consult/draft-ira-rhinoceros-aust>

Submissions go to MAF Biosecurity NZ, Attn. Risk Analysis Team Support Officer, PO Box 2526, Wellington 6140, email risk.analysis@maf.govt.nz

Food Safety Authority Consultations

There are four of these (submission closing dates are bracketed):

- Comments are sought on the **Proposed Amendment to the NZ Folic Acid Standard – NZFSA Public Discussion Paper no. 10/09**. The paper is at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consultation/folic-acid/proposed-amendment-nz-folic-acid-standard/index.htm> (12 August 2009)
- **Proposals to Amend the NZ (Maximum Residue Limits of Agricultural Compounds) Food Standards 2009 Public Discussion Paper 08/09**. The paper is at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consultation/mrl-2009/index.htm> (28 September 2009);
- **Data Protection for Agricultural Compounds**. Public Discussion Paper No 07/09. The paper is at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consultation/data-protection-for-agricultural-compounds/index.htm> (12 September 2009); and
- **Draft Generic RMP Model for the Slaughter and Dressing of Pigs** <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consultation/draft-generic-rmp-for-slaughter-and-dressing-pigs/draft-document/index.htm> (28 August 2009).

Submissions go to NZ Food Safety Authority, PO Box 2835, Wellington 6011, fax: 04 894 2501, email nzfsa.info@nzfsa.govt.nz. More, including how to make a submission, is at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consultation/>

ERMA Consultations

... and there are five Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) consultations (submission closing dates are in brackets):

- **HSR09054**: to import or manufacture Flamprop-M-isopropyl and TnI 2644 for use as an agricultural substance for the control of wild oat in ryegrass seed crops (31 August 2009)
- **ERMA200029**: to import or manufacture GF-1981 as a herbicide for commercial use on a range of newly planted crops to control broadleaf weeds (31 August 2009)
- **ERMA200045**: to import or manufacture MOPA1582LM as a veterinary medicine for use in horses (31 August 2009)
- **ERMA200049**: to import or manufacture DIHC2031LM as a veterinary medicine for use in cattle, horses and pigs (31 August 2009)
- **HSR08042**: to approve for importation or manufacture for release in NZ a substance containing an ester of MCPB, for use as an herbicide to control broadleaf weeds in new and established pastures and white clover seed crops (Category C) (28 August 2009)

Submissions go to ERMA NZ, PO Box 131, Wellington 6140, email submissions@ermanız.govt.nz. More is at <http://www.ermanız.govt.nz/consultations/consult-apps.html>

Which Maori National Flag?

Maori are being asked which flag they would choose out of: the National Flag of NZ (Flag of the Independent Tribes); the NZ Flag; The NZ Red Ensign; or the Maori Flag (the Tino Rangatiratanga Flag). They are also being asked whether the chosen flag should be flown only on Waitangi Day/ or also on other special occasions e.g., ANZAC Day, Queens Birthday.

Submissions close on 28 August 2009. They go to National Maori Flag Consultation, Te Puni Kokiri, PO Box 3943, Wellington 6140, email maoriflag@tpk.govt.nz

A Bond Bank for Councils?

The Government and local government are looking at setting up a "bond bank" to help councils finance up to \$30 billion of planned infrastructure over the next decade. This kind of arrangement is common overseas. A study will look at whether combining councils' borrowing needs would result in lower interest rates and transaction costs, as well as investigating options for how such an organisation could be run.

A joint Government and Local Government NZ steering group has been set up to look at the proposal expects to receive the study sometime this month. Decisions about whether such a vehicle is feasible, and if so how to operate it, will follow.

You can have your say on this proposal at <http://billenglish.co.nz/index.php?archives/463-Government-considers-local-body-bond-bank.html>

Motor Vehicle Sales Amendment Bill

This Bill makes amendments to the way motor vehicle traders renew their annual registration. Amongst the proposed amendments is one increasing the financial limit on the jurisdiction of the Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal from \$50,000 to \$100,000, and one aimed at reducing compliance costs associated with requiring an annual declaration to be made as part of the registration renewal process.

Submissions close on 20 August 2009. More at <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/SC/MakeSub/b/2/8/49SCCOMotorvehiclesalesame200908201-Motor-Vehicle-Sales-Amendment.htm>

Foundation for Blind: Plans

The Royal NZ Foundation for the Blind is consulting on its draft business plan 2009-2012. It is inviting you to have your say on the work the Foundation will do in the next three years (2009 to 2012) to move in the direction the Board has set for them in the strategic plan.

Submissions close on 12 August 2009. You can call the RNZFB telephone service dialing your local area number and use option 3 6 2. If you do not have a local area number, call 0800 36 33 44 and use option 3 6 2. You can also post submissions to RNZFB business plan consultation, Private Bag 99941, Newmarket, Auckland, or email them by clicking on [strategicplan](#). More is at www.rnzfb.org.nz/aboutus/reportsandplan/businessplan/draftbusinessplan2009-2012/

Separated Parenting: Poll

The Families Commission wants to find out more about what separated parents need to help them make care, contact and financial arrangements for their children. It is interested in

hearing from anyone, regardless of whether they are a separated parent or not.

The poll will close on 13 August 2009. To participate go to <http://www.thecouch.org.nz/poll/takepoll/39>. An earlier report on the subject is at <http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz/files/IP-pathways-parental-separation.pdf>

Rural

Latest SONZAF Report

NZ's primary sectors have ridden out the global recession remarkably well, according to the annual Situation and Outlook for NZ Agriculture and Forestry (SONZAF). SONZAF shows many sectors including meat and forestry will see steady increases in returns over the coming few years to 2013, while dairy will improve on the current pay-out without getting to the record levels of 2007/08.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) report looks at issues facing the primary sectors currently and forecasts the trends over the coming three to five years. Here is a brief snapshot of some of the main findings:

- *Dairy*: prices for dairy products on international markets have fallen dramatically over the past year and are now back to levels considered normal before the price rises of 2007 and 2008. Once the recession is over, demand for dairy products is expected to resume a steady rate of expansion, supporting higher prices;
- *Forestry*: except for China, demand for wood and paper products in international markets remains subdued. Longer-term, our forest resource is maturing and has the potential to produce increasing volumes of logs and wood and paper products;
- *Meat and Wool*: lamb and venison schedule prices surged in the past 12 months due to falling supply in NZ and elsewhere. Beef and wool prices have been merely holding their ground in NZ dollar terms. Sheep, deer and beef cattle numbers dropped markedly over the year ended 30 June 2008. This will constrain lamb, beef, wool, and venison production in coming years;
- *Horticulture and Arable*: the horticulture industry has so far escaped the worst of the economic recession. The summer and autumn of 2009 has seen generally good harvests of grapes, pipfruit, and vegetables. Kiwifruit volumes are up, despite a hailstorm affecting some localities. Wet weather during the grain harvest reduced the quality of an otherwise large harvest;
- *Wine*: Marlborough sauvignon blanc continues to dominate. However, MAF is concerned that the marked increase in the proportion of wine exported in bulk (around 30% from about 4% in recent years) risks damaging the value of the premium Marlborough sauvignon blanc brand; and
- *Gross agricultural revenue and expenditure*: gross agricultural revenue is estimated to rise only 1.8% for the year ended 31 March 2009. This small rise is due to gross revenue increases from the sheep, cattle and horticulture industries exceeding the fall estimated for dairy. Lower interest rates for the year ending 31 March 2010 onwards will ease the burden of debt servicing, particularly for the more highly geared dairy industry.

You can download this publication from www.maf.govt.nz/publications.
Hardcopies can be ordered from: Policy Publications, MAF Policy, PO Box 2526,
Wellington. Tel: 0800 00 83 33, email: policy.publications@maf.govt.nz

Please contact leigh.c@hortnz.co.nz for more information, or go to the HortNZ
website www.hortnz.co.nz

Animal Welfare: NAWAC Report...

The 2008 annual report of the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC - an independent advisory committee providing advice on the welfare of animals in NZ) is now available. A code of welfare for the commercial slaughter of animals was published at the end of the year, together with codes of welfare for dairy cattle, dog, sheep and beef cattle codes. NAWAC is currently working on a number of other codes, including one on the welfare of pigs, and one on transporting livestock (the public will shortly be consulted on a draft of this).

NAWAC is committed to writing minimum standards as statements of welfare from the animal's perspective rather than as prescriptions of facilities e.g., the size of cages.

The annual report is <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/animal-welfare/nawac/annual-reports>, or by request from animalwelfare@maf.govt.nz

... & Animal Ethics Committee Report

The 2008 annual report of the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) is now available. NAEAC advises on ethical and animal welfare issues in research, testing and teaching (RTT), develops and revises animal welfare codes of practice, and recognises excellence in the humane use of animals in RTT. During 2008, nine new codes were approved, 45 organisations made arrangements to utilise existing codes, and five organisations terminated their arrangements.

The report is at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/files/regs/animal-welfare/pubs/naeac/naeac-ar-08.pdf>

New Horticulture Industry Plan

Horticulture NZ has released a new strategy, called "Growing a New Future", that aims to double the size of the country's commercial fruit and vegetable industry to \$10 billion by 2020. One of the main points from the Strategy is that an increasingly competitive global market means maintaining the status quo is not an option – market share will actually decline. So change is necessary.

The strategy argues that a successful future will not and cannot be based on increased volumes and areas planted in commodity products. Instead, there is a need to grow and market value-added products, capture intellectual property, and dominate market niches. One way this could be done, says the strategy, is to develop a unified "NZ story" (in conjunction with Tourism NZ) that identifies our unique cultural and quality attributes, and creates a point of differentiation in markets.

Kids on ATV's

Department of Labour research highlights that off-road vehicles, in particular tractors and ATVs, are a leading cause of death and injury on farms. And ACC statistics show that 300 children were injured in ATV accidents from 2006 to 2008.

Slightly further back, between 2000 and 2006, 212 children were hospitalised (and 15 died) due to ATV accidents. More than half of the injured children had been driving at the time and the youngest driver was only two years old! Only 14% of the children had been wearing helmets. Other sobering facts about these children include: the average age of those injured was 9.8 years old; 17 were admitted to intensive care; and 10 suffered skull fractures, 10 suffered facial fractures, and 6 suffered permanent disabilities.

ATVs are designed for adults and are not fun farm toys. The Agricultural Health and Safety Council Guidelines state that, in general, youths under the age of 15 years have less sense of danger and lack the physical strength and size to safely handle a farm ATV.

Industry guidelines also state that children aged between 12 and 15 should not be allowed to drive a farm ATV unless their guardian or employer is sure they are capable and competent to drive the particular ATV, and extra precautions and limits are imposed as follows:

- the youth has the physical strength and size to operate the ATV;
- the youth is adequately trained;
- the youth is wearing a suitable helmet and solid footwear at all times;
- no passengers are carried;
- no implements or loads are carried that may make it harder to safely handle the ATV;
- appropriate limits are placed on speed (keep speed down), terrain (flat ground), and enforcement of no-go areas; and
- the youth is adequately supervised.

It's also important to ensure ATVs and motorbikes are regularly serviced and maintained (daily checks before use are desirable).

In general, here are some other tips for keeping children safe:

- do not let children ride on tractors, ATVs or the back of utes;
- remove keys from all vehicles;
- never leave vehicles unattended with the motor running; and
- tie spare tractor/ATV wheels to a wall or leave them lying flat so that they can not topple over onto a child.

You can learn about more safety tips at www.farmsafe.co.nz

MAF Farm Monitoring Report: Changes

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's (MAF's) Farm Monitoring Programme was recently reviewed, and MAF will now be producing three sets of information for each of the horticulture, arable and pastoral monitoring programmes. Excel tables will be published soon after monitoring is completed (around mid-July/or mid-September for sheep and beef models); data with a commentary, and commentary only chapters, will be available in early August/mid-October; and later on a sector overview and information on sector issues, national models, and research results will be published.

If you want to go onto the farm monitoring publications database email policy.publications@maf.govt.nz

"Communities Taking Control" Campaign

"Communities Taking Control" is the UK-based Plunkett Foundation's major new campaign to promote to rural communities what is possible when rural people believe in what they can achieve together. From communities owning and running essential rural services to taking control of their food and where it comes from, these communities across the world are increasingly taking control of the issues affecting them.

Communities Taking Control has three main messages which are: take control of essential rural services affecting your everyday lives; take control of your food and where it comes from; and take control of reconnecting producers and consumers.

The Plunkett Foundation has promoted and supported community-owned in rural communities across the UK and internationally for the last 90 years. Amongst the projects it manages is one providing funding and support for rural communities looking to set up and run a community-owned shop.

For more go to <http://www.plunkett.co.uk/newsandmedia/news-item.cfm/newsid/176>

Environment

US Report on Climate Change...

The United States Global Change Research Programme (a group of US Government agency experts and academia) has produced the latest version of its publication, "Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States." Although this report talks specifically about the US, its conclusions are valid for many other parts of the world.

While there are likely to be some benefits and opportunities in the early stages of warming, as climate continues to change, negative impacts are projected to dominate. For example, take transport. The report warns airports and airlines may lose money from warmer temperatures and cancelled flights. Hotter air is less dense and reduces aeroplanes' lift, especially in high altitude regions, so planes will need higher take-off speeds and longer runways. Extreme weather and rising sea levels will impact the transportation infrastructure on which the US

economy depends, as well as potentially causing delays in air, rail and road transport.

Key points include:

- population shifts (e.g., increasing urbanisation) and development choices are making more Americans vulnerable to the expected impacts of climate change;
- vulnerability is greater for those who have few resources and few choices;
- city residents and city infrastructure have unique vulnerabilities to climate change;
- climate change affects communities through changes in climate-sensitive resources that occur both locally and at great distances; and
- insurance is one of the industries particularly vulnerable to increasing extreme weather events such as severe storms, but it can also help society manage the risks.

Find out more at <http://www.globalchange.gov/publications/reports/scientific-assessments/us-impacts>

Sustainable Development in NZ

"Measuring NZ's Progress Using a Sustainable Development Approach: 2008" - a new report from Statistics NZ (SNZ) - looks at whether this country is progressing towards or away from sustainable development*. It finds that:

- in terms of meeting our needs (how well do we live?) people living in NZ over the past 20 years have higher living standards with greater health expectancy, rising incomes, and lower death rates from crime. The progress in rising incomes has not been shared evenly over the period with the differences between those on high incomes and those on low incomes widening;
- in relation to how efficiently we are using our resources and what are we leaving behind for future generations, the report finds increased labour force productivity, and rising efficiency in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. However, resources available to future generations showed mixed results with aspects of the natural environment in the form of water quality, net greenhouse gases, and biodiversity appear to be moving away from sustainable development;
- education attainment and the stock of productive assets over the period have increased while the proportion of Maori speakers of te reo Maori, an aspect of culture which is unique to NZ, has decreased slightly;
- although our net greenhouse gas emissions have increased, a positive move towards sustainable development is that they've decreased in relation to our economic activity; and
- one in seven NZers have a healthy lifestyle (non-smoking, safe drinking, sufficient physical activity, fruit and vegetable intake, and maintaining a healthy weight).

* Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The report is at www.stats.govt.nz/sustainabledevelopment

Developing NZ Water Policy...

The Government has set up a new Land and Water Forum (LWF) that will contribute to development of NZ water policy. The LWF is made up of over 65 organisations, with membership including iwi, environmental, electricity generation, and rural industry group interests.

It has also indicated that freshwater allocation methods will need to encourage economic efficiency and growth and provide for public purposes or community values, including Treaty and settlement interests, drinking water, biodiversity protection, the ability to swim and fish, and intrinsic values (an object has intrinsic value when it is valued for itself, i.e., for its own sake). These will need to be dealt with before water is allocated for economic purposes.

The Land and Water forum report back by 30 July 2010.

A related Cabinet paper is at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/water/freshwater/new-start-for-fresh-water-paper.html>

...Water Quality Trends Report...

This report, which is part of the Ministry for Environment's (MfE) national environmental reporting programme, summarises water quality trends at National River Water Quality Network sites between 1989 and 2007. It shows that the trends in water quality for these years are similar to those reported in the Ministry's state of the environment report, Environment NZ 2007 (ENZ07) with all going in the same direction. Overall, some aspects of water quality have deteriorated in rivers over the past 20 years mainly as a result of pastoral land cover, and environmental gains because of reduced "point" pollution* of waters in NZ are being overshadowed by increasing "diffuse" pollution*.

*Point-source pollution is pollution that can be traced back to a single source. Diffuse polluting substances can't be easily traced back to a definite source.

The report is at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/water/water-quality-trends-1989-2007/index.html>

... & Health of NZ River Fish

The Ministry for the Environment has released a report on river fish communities that looks at the health of fish in rivers. The main findings are:

- rivers surrounded mostly by native vegetation have more fish species and healthier fish communities than rivers dominated by pastoral or urban land-cover;
- the health of fish communities declined between 1970 and 2007, especially over the last decade (2000 to 2007); and
- the biggest decreases in the health of fish communities were in rivers in mostly pastoral or urban areas.

You can access the report, called "Temporal and land-cover trends in freshwater fish communities in NZ's rivers: an analysis of data from the NZ Freshwater Database - 1970 - 2007", from <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/water/temporal-land-cover-freshwater-fish/index.html>

Emissions Tool for Exporters

A new Greenhouse Gas emissions calculation tool for sea freighted container cargo has been launched by NZ firms AIRSHED and Catalyst R&D. They jointly developed the tool with a view to helping exporters in Australasia better understand the impact their shipping activities have on climate change.

The online tool is available free of charge on each of the companies websites: <http://www.airshed.co.nz/> or <http://www.catalystnz.co.nz/>

Super Energy Efficient House

A Golden Bay holiday home may be this country's most energy efficient house, achieving nine out of ten stars under the Home Energy Rating Scheme - the highest rating awarded yet under the scheme. The "Little Greenie" house in Wainui Bay is so efficient that its room heating and hot water bills are expected to cost less than \$50 per year. Its energy efficient features include:

- large double-glazed windows orientated towards the sun;
- smart use of building material - concrete floor and adobe walls collect the sun's warmth on sunny days and release it overnight;
- super insulated roof, walls and floor (more than double that required by the Building Code); and
- solar water heating.

Find out more at <http://www.eeca.govt.nz/node/4165>

How Prepared for Disasters Are We?

The Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management carries out an annual survey to gauge how aware NZers are of possible disasters and how well prepared we are should a disaster occur. This year's survey shows that more people are thinking about what they should do in a disaster and are talking more to family and friends about preparing but they also show that we need to do more to actually be prepared. For the survey "being prepared" means having emergency items and water to last at least three days, and an emergency plan - and regularly updating these.

Survey results included:

- 76% of NZers said they know what they need to do to be prepared for a disaster;
- 40% have taken some steps in the last year to prepare;
- 23% are well prepared at home; and
- 10% are well prepared at home and at work.

You can access further information on this survey by following the links at the bottom of the following page: http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/memwebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Media-Index?OpenDocument and for more information about being prepared at home, school, or at work go to http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/memwebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Being-Prepared-Index?OpenDocument

Tourism

NZ Tourism Among World's Best

The recently announced World's Best Awards 2009 features Air NZ as one of the world's top ten international airlines, with The Lodge at Kauri Cliffs and The Farm at Cape Kidnappers among the World's 100 Best Hotels (The Lodge and The Farm also took first and second place, respectively, in the Resorts of Australia, NZ and the South Pacific category). Queenstown was also named as the third best city in the Australia, NZ and the South Pacific category.

Travel + Leisure Magazine is considered to be one of the world's leading travel magazines with circulation of the US edition alone reaching almost a million people each month.

How Kiwi Tourists are Perceived

Kiwi tourists rank among the most tight-fisted spenders in the second annual global Expedia Best Tourist Survey, to be precise the sixth most stingy tourists among the 27 nationalities surveyed. However, we ranked 14th as the world's Best Tourists overall. Kiwis also performed well in the politeness stakes and for being sparing in their complaints (10th place and 9th place, respectively).

Around 4,500 hoteliers across the globe provided their opinions on the best travellers overall, as well as on specific categories including behaviour, spending habits, fashion sense and willingness to try and speak the local language.

The Japanese retained the top prize, with hoteliers worldwide naming them the world's best tourists. They ranked not only as the quietest and most polite, but also the cleanest and least likely to complain. The British again came in second place overall, followed by the Canadians.

The survey also revealed that the French are perceived as the world's worst tourists. According to hoteliers, as well as being the most frugal and meanest tippers, they can also lay claim to being the most impolite tourists.

Kiwis are considered more courteous with noise levels their Trans-Tasman counterparts, ranked 16th loudest as opposed to Australians, who were ranked 4th loudest. However, NZ travellers were seen as the less generous tippers and less likely to attempt the local language, coming in 19th and 14th place respectively, compared with Australians who came in 5th place for both categories.

Other findings include:

- worldwide, the Japanese, British, Canadians, Germans, and Australians are considered the most polite nations;
- the top three loudest nations are the Americans, Italians, and the Spanish;
- after the Americans and the British, the next biggest tippers are the Germans and the Japanese; and
- after the Japanese, the Canadians, Swiss, Australians and Dutch were the other top five nationalities named as least likely to complain.

Forecasting Tourism: Growth Slows

International visitor arrivals are forecast to grow by an average of 2.5% per annum over the next seven years, forecasts released by the Ministry of Tourism show. By 2015 international visitor numbers are forecast to reach 2.9 million, up by 18.6% or 455,000 more visitors than we get now. However, given the substantial impacts of the global recession and more recently the Influenza A (H1N1) pandemic, these forecasts for tourism are less than predicted from forecasts made last year (an annual average growth rate of 4%). Over the balance of 2009, the Ministry expects to see a drop of arrivals of around 4.2%, but after that growth is expected to re-emerge.

Health and Welfare

Free Flu Jabs Available

The Ministry of Health has advised that free flu vaccines for seasonal influenza vaccine are available through GPs to anyone who wants one.

The offer closes on 30 September - or when supplies run out

Blood Pressure & Strokes

St John is joining forces with the Stroke Foundation to run a National Blood Pressure Awareness Campaign, aimed at reducing the risk of stroke. The two charities will offer free blood pressure checks to the public on Saturday 12 September 2009 at around 150 community venues nationwide. Reducing blood pressure can greatly reduce the risk of stroke - the second largest single killer in this country and a major cause of adult disability. While it is largely preventable, 8,000 NZers a year suffer a stroke, a third of which are fatal. One in five NZers have high blood pressure and a third of these do not know it.

A bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions (STR) S – Ask the individual to smile. T – Ask the person to talk (speak a simple sentence). R – Ask him/her to raise both arms. If he/she has trouble with any one of these tasks, call 111 immediately. The new sign of a stroke is to get the person stick out the tongue. If the tongue is crooked – goes to one side – that also indicates a stroke.

Tel 027 211 2159 for more information

Cardiac Clinical Network Formed

A new National Cardiac Clinical Network has been formed to improve NZ's cardiac surgical services and reduce the number of people on waiting lists. The network is made up of clinical directors of cardiac surgery from the five DHBs that deliver cardiac surgery (Auckland, Waikato, Capital and Coast, Canterbury and Otago DHBs). It will also include nurses, anaesthetists and intensive care specialists.

More is at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pages/MH8430>

Kids & Family Conflict: Research...

The University of Otago's Centre for Research on Children and Families has been awarded \$424,000 to examine the specific features of conflict between parents that explain why some children experience little or no difficulties as a result, while others develop long-term emotional and behavioural problems. The aim is to improve the lives of children most at risk of serious emotional and psychological harm.

The work is being funded by the Nuffield Foundation and carried out in association with the Department of Psychological Medicine at Cardiff University, Wales.

...& Children: Protection Orders Explained

Skylight* has published a new children's booklet called "What's a Protection Order?" It is for children aged 7-12 years who have witnessed or experienced family violence. The booklet, which explains the "what" and the "why" about protection orders in easy to understand language, has been published to make sure children know what to do to keep themselves safe. It also includes the latest information in the upcoming law change which will shortly allow the Police to give protection orders on the spot, for up to five days.

Ministry of Justice statistics for 2007 show that 3249 children were involved in the 2006 new protection orders granted (6400 children were involved in 4511 in all types of applications for protection orders in 2007).

*Skylight is a national, not-for-profit charitable trust that provides support for children, young people and their families/whanau through change, loss, trauma and grief - regardless of its cause.

"What's a Protection Order?" is available for a small cost through Skylight's website www.skylight.org.nz or by calling 0800 299 100

Chinese Mental Health Website

A bilingual website that aims to reduce stigma and discrimination related to mental illness in NZ's Chinese community has been set up. It is thought to be the first project in a Western country to use culturally appropriate approaches to counter stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness in Chinese communities. Bilingual in Mandarin and English the site provides insight and context into Chinese beliefs about mental illness.

The website is at www.kaixinxingdong.org.nz

2008 Abortion Statistics

Key points in these stats were:

- 17,940 abortions were performed in NZ in 2008, down from 18,380 in 2007 and the peak of 18,510 in 2003;
- the general abortion rate was 19.7 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years in 2008, down from 20.1 per 1,000 in 2007 and lower than the peak rate of 20.8 abortions per 1,000 in 2003;

- women aged 20-24 years had the highest abortion rate (37 abortions per 1,000 women aged 20-24 years) in 2008;
- the median age of women having an abortion was 24.3 years in 2008; and
- in 2008, most abortions (63%) were a woman's first abortion.

New Drug Units for Prisons

Three additional drug treatment units are to be established in NZ prisons by December 2011. They will be located at Otago Corrections Facility, Wanganui Prison and a still-to-be-decide prison in the northern region. Corrections will also introduce a second drug treatment programme that is shorter but equally intensive, to help prisoners who are serving shorter sentences.

There are six other drug treatment units at prisons around the country.

UK-NZ Food Agency Agreement

The NZ Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) has signed an arrangement with the United Kingdom Food Standards Agency (UKFSA). The UKFSA has a similar role to NZFSA and is responsible for protecting consumer interests in relation to food safety and food standards. Under the arrangement, the two agencies will work together in areas like science, nutrition, and composition and labelling. They will also host study tours and staff exchanges. NZFSA has similar agreements with Health Canada and Food Standards Australia NZ.

What are Friends for?

In the quest for better health, it seems that many people overlook a powerful weapon that could help them fight illness and depression, speed recovery, slow aging and prolong life: their friends.

A 10-year Australian study has found that older people with a large circle of friends were 22% less likely to die during the study period than those with fewer friends - and last year, Harvard researchers reported that strong social ties could promote brain health as we age.

While many friendship studies focus on the intense relationships of women, some research shows that men can benefit too. In a six-year study of 736 middle-age Swedish men, attachment to a single person didn't appear to affect the risk of heart attack and fatal coronary heart disease, but having friendships did. Only smoking was as important a risk factor as lack of social support. People with strong friendships are also less likely than others to get colds (perhaps because they have lower stress levels?).

Exactly why friendship has such a big effect isn't entirely clear. While friends can run errands and pick up medicine for a sick person, the benefits go well beyond physical assistance - and being close by does not seem to be a factor. Friendship clearly has a profound psychological effect.

From a New York Times article (which has links to the results of several scientific studies). The item is at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/21/health/21well.html?em>

Education

New NCEA Rules

Secondary school students will have a maximum of one reassessment chance for internally assessed NCEA standards from 2010, under new rules and procedures announced by the NZ Qualifications Authority (NZQA). This means students will have a maximum of two assessment opportunities per standard, per year. Under the new rules and procedures:

- a maximum of one further opportunity for assessment of a standard can be provided within a year;
- a further assessment opportunity is only appropriate if additional teaching and learning has taken place since the first assessment opportunity;
- it is not compulsory to offer an opportunity for further assessment, but if it is offered, it must be offered to all students; and
- all grades must be available as a result of a further assessment opportunity (i.e., Not Achieved, Achieved, Merit, and Excellence, in the case of achievement standards).

The rules also cover resubmission – where a student can be offered the opportunity to correct a minor error in an assessment but only if they are capable of identifying the error independently. Resubmissions will be limited to one per assessment opportunity.

A detailed summary of the new rules and procedures is available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/publications/circulars/secqual/index.html> and a copy of the Consultation Report on Further Assessment is available on request.

Army Camp Training Scheme Expanded

The Government is boosting the number of places on the Limited Service Volunteer (LSV) scheme, which helps young people at risk of long term unemployment gain the skills and confidence necessary to get a job. The LSV scheme targets 18-25 year olds who are on an Unemployment Benefit. Currently, 720 places are available in five, 6-week residential camps held at Burnham each year.

Funding will increase by up to \$19 million so that an extra 1250 LSV places will become available in each of the 2010 and 2011 calendar years. It will also establish two new programmes, one in Auckland and the other in the Lower North Island, by January next year.

The LSV scheme uses the Defence Force ethos and values to develop effective team members. The scheme offers a range of training including fitness, communication, budgeting and financial skills.

“Maori in Industry” Scheme

A new scheme called “Maori in Industry and Trades” will provide 250 training places at entry level through to diplomas in the civil infrastructure industry – 50 in Waikato; 100 in the Northland/Auckland area; and 100 in the East Coast/Hawkes Bay area. InfraTrain (the Industry Training Organisation for the civil infrastructure industry) has agreed that at least 20% of the trainees will be new employees, with the remainder moving into higher level qualifications (most at level 4 and above on the National Qualifications Framework) in industries with strong employment prospects.

Maori make up more than one third of the current civil infrastructure workforce in the North Island.

Summer Scholarships for Students

Sixteen hundred scholarships will provide university students with on-campus research-based scholarships during the summer months. during the next summer break. The aim is to provide a productive alternative for students to traditional summer employment, which is likely to be more difficult to obtain in the current economic climate. Total funding for the scheme will be \$8 million, split 50:50 between the Government and universities. Each full-time equivalent scholarship will be worth \$5000 and it will go directly to students. The scholarships will be limited to research or research-related activities.

Employment

“Job Ops” for Young Kiwis

A new Government “Job Ops” scheme worth \$20 million is aimed at getting unskilled 16 to 24 year olds with low or no qualifications into work. This age-group currently make up around one-third of all those on the Unemployment Benefit. The funding will equate to around 4000 entry-level jobs. Job Ops will subsidise employers \$5000 for each young person hired into an entry level position for six months. Young people will get the chance to build their work experience while small-to-medium sized businesses will be supported to fill entry roles with limited risk. Employers are now encouraged to come forward with jobs.

The Job Ops programme will finish in December 2010.

To be a part of this scheme businesses need to call 0800 778 008 to see if they are eligible. You can find out more details from the original press release at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/job+ops+young+kiwis>

Workplace: Age and Gender Trends

A recent report from The Equal Employment Opportunities Trust (EEO Trust) shows that professions currently dominated by older men and younger women – such as law, medicine, veterinary medicine, and planning – may experience a double blow over the next decade. As large numbers of older workers approach the traditional retirement years, some younger women may leave to have children.

The report also shows that most occupational groups are ageing, with particularly mature workforces in bus and railway-engine driving, all levels of the education sector, nursing, midwifery, social work, and fitting and turning. Younger people predominate in IT, media, banking, call centres, policy analysis, science, and catering.

Download the report, “Workplace Age and Gender: Trends and Implications”, can be found at http://www.eeotrust.org.nz/content/docs/reports/2644%20EEO%20Age%20Gender%20Report_WEB_V2.pdf and see www.eeotrust.org.nz/toolkits/older_workers.cfm for 12 tips on recruiting and retaining older workers.

Annual Work Stoppages Decrease

Two work stoppages ended in the March 2009 quarter and twenty-two work stoppages ended in the March 2009 year, Statistics NZ said recently. Stoppages in the March 2009 year involved 4,944 employees, and losses of 8,588 person-days of work and an estimated \$2.4 million in wages and salaries. In comparison, the 26 stoppages in the March 2008 year involved 3,664 employees, and losses of 11,049 person-days of work and an estimated \$1.8 million in wages and salaries. Eighteen complete strikes and four partial strikes ended in the March 2009 year.

Transport

NZ/Canada: More Air Links

NZ and Canada have signed a new air transport agreement to allow more flights between the two countries. The agreement removes previous limitations on the frequency of flights that can be provided. In addition, NZ and Canadian carriers can now operate to and beyond each others' country over any routing. Almost 49,000 Canadians visited NZ in the year to April 2009, and 20,000 NZers travelled to Canada.

Housing

Recession Hits Rents: Survey...

An oversupply of residential rental properties is putting pressure on rent prices, which reduced by an average of 3.5% across the country in the past three months, First National Group reports. Apart from a few pockets around the country, supply continued to outstrip demand providing plenty of choice for tenants.

Summary by region:

- *Northland* - Rents down by average of 1.6%;
- *Auckland* - Rents down an average of 5%;
- *Central North Island* (Bay of Plenty, Rotorua, Taupo) - Higher than usual vacancy rates in Bay of Plenty and Rotorua but short term work projects keeping Taupo rental market stable;
- *Lower North Island* (Taranaki, northern Wellington, Manawatu) - Rents stable with the occasional increase;
- *Upper South Island* (Nelson, Blenheim) - Rent drops of \$10 - \$40 per week;
- *Christchurch* - Rents are dropping by average of 5%;
- *West Coast* - Portfolio rents increased over 8%;
- *Lower South Island* (Alexandra, Invercargill) - Rents are stable; and
- *Invercargill* - Rents have remained stable over the past quarter.

...but July Positive for Property

First National Group's nationwide market activity indicators show a stabilising picture in July, with more contracts signed and buyer interest continuing to climb. In the company's monthly office survey, 48% of its offices reported more overall activity in July than the previous month, 37% the same amount and 15% reported less activity. Over 50% reported more contracts signed than the previous month while 20% reported fewer contracts signed. This compares with June's survey where 30% of offices signed more sales contracts than May and 37% signed fewer.

Regionally, stronger market signals were reported by South Island offices, with 63% reporting more contracts signed in July compared with June, and just 10% reporting fewer contracts signed. Forty-five percent of First National's North Island offices reported more contracts signed, and 20% had signed fewer contracts.

Building Consent Figures

The seasonally adjusted number of new housing units authorised (excluding apartments), rose 3.0% in June 2009, following a fall of 3.2% in May 2009. Including apartments, the seasonally adjusted number of new housing units authorised fell 9.5% in the same period, following rises of 3.0% in May 2009 and 11% in April 2009.

For the year ended June 2009, consents were issued for 14,175 new housing units, including apartments. This was the lowest annual number for a June year since the series began in April 1965.

For the month of June 2009, the value of non-residential building consents was \$307 million, the lowest monthly value since September 2007. April and May 2009 had the two highest monthly values since the series began.

For the June 2009 year, the value of consents issued for residential buildings fell 30%, while the value for non-residential buildings rose 8%, compared with the June 2008 year.

New Building Law

The recently passed Building Amendment Bill (No 2) aims to speed-up the building consent process and reduce costs. The Bill introduces multiple-use building approvals - a measure that will reduce duplication and fast-track the consent process for group home builders who build homes on sites across the country using the same, or similar, designs.

It also defines a new streamlined process to manage minor variations to building plans after the consent is issued, saving time for applicants and councils. And it makes project information memorandums, known as PIMs, voluntary.

A copy of the Building Amendment Bill is at www.legislation.govt.nz

Building/Construction Task Force Reports

Two Building and Construction Taskforce reports - from the Productivity and the Urban Taskforces - were recently released.

The Productivity Taskforce highlights the need to improve building and construction sector productivity by developing a sector-wide skills strategy and improving the procurement of construction projects.

The Urban Taskforce identifies ways to improve urban development by removing barriers, and reducing the cost, of quality urban development projects.

Copies of both Taskforce reports are available on www.dbh.govt

Plain English Real Estate Forms

Home buyers and sellers in will hopefully find understanding the process they are signing up for easier with the introduction of plain English real estate forms. The Real Estate Institute of NZ (REINZ) has been working for some time on developing the forms, engaging a team of writing and legal specialists to ensure the forms achieved their objective of simplifying the process while maintaining the forms' legal integrity (it took some 50 drafts before everyone was satisfied).

Energy

Developing Countries: Going Nuclear?

A total of 60 developing countries are now considering nuclear power as part of their future energy mix, while 20 of them might have a nuclear power programme in place by 2030, according to the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Over the next two years, the IAEA is expected to assist 38 national and six regional nuclear programmes, a three-fold increase from the previous reported period.

Find out more at <http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/News/2009/nuclearrole.html>

Primary Industries' Energy Use

According to Statistics NZ (SNZ), businesses in NZ's primary industries used 42,288 terajoules of energy in 2008. This is roughly equivalent to the electricity used by 1.5 million households in a year, or filling up a 40-litre petrol tank of a small car 80,000 times every day for a year. It is about 9% of the total energy supplied to final consumers in NZ.

The information comes from the NZ Energy Use Survey, which collects information on the use of electricity, liquid fuels, and other energy sources throughout the economy, and on energy saving practices.

In 2008/09, its first year, the survey covered businesses in primary industries including agriculture, fishing, forestry, and mining (other industries will be surveyed in the next two years).

Of these, mining (including petroleum extraction and exploration, quarrying, and services to mining), was the largest user of energy in 2008, with 24% of the total primary industry

usage. Next was the sheep, beef cattle, and grain growing industry with just under 20%.

Diesel was the largest energy source for primary industries, making up 50% of the energy they consumed. The main use for diesel was in mobile off-road applications (i.e., vehicles/machinery used away from roads). Other significant energy sources were electricity and petrol, accounting for 20% and 10% of the total energy source, respectively.

The survey was carried out by Statistics NZ in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Development and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority.

SNZ's press release on the subject is at <http://www.stats.govt.nz/products-and-services/media-releases/energy-use-survey/energy-use-survey-primary-industries-08-mr.htm>

Justice/the Law

Disputes Tribunals Claim Levels Rise

The maximum level you can claim through the Disputes Tribunal was recently raised from \$7,500 to \$15,000 - or, with the consent of both parties - from \$12,000 to \$20,000.

Obtaining Court Papers: New Rules

On 12 June 2009, revised civil and criminal rules for access to court documents came into force. The objectives of the new rules are to, amongst other things: improve and clarify the rules; promote consistency between the rules relating to civil and criminal cases; provide for a more streamlined process for access to Court documents during committal and trial phases; and clarify appeal pathways in criminal cases.

More is at http://www.justice.govt.nz/media/RegistryREVISEDRULESFORACCESSTOCOURTDOCUMENTS_1.pdf

Court-ordered Settlement Conferences

The High Court in Auckland is to introduce a pilot scheme in November that will see private mediators undertake court-ordered mediation in some civil disputes. A panel of between 12 and 15 experienced legal practitioners who are also qualified and experienced in mediation will be established. A High Court Judge or Associate Judge will decide if a dispute should be referred for mediation by a private mediator (the agreement of the parties will be required). The mediators will have no judicial status, powers or immunities.

A review of the scheme will take place after the pilot, and if successful may be extended to other parts of the country.

Criminal Procedure (Simplification) Project

The Ministry of Justice and the Law Commission are working on a Criminal Procedure (Simplification) Project that is being undertaken to address a number of inefficiencies and issues with criminal procedures. Proposals for change include:

- requiring parties to discuss cases in an attempt to resolve them, to avoid unnecessary court appearances;
- changing the process to determine whether jury trials are held in the High Court or the District Court;
- requiring the defence to identify issues in dispute so the court can focus on those issues at trial;
- removing the prosecution's ability to choose a jury trial for something that could go to summary trial, and potentially raising the jury trial threshold from more than three months to more than three years;
- making clearer rules for proceeding in the absence of the defendant; and
- introducing legislation to enable the different participants in criminal proceedings to appear by audio-visual link.

More is at www.justice.govt.nz/Simplification-Project/Criminal-procedure.html

New Legal Maori Archive

The first stage of a much bigger Maori Legal Project - the Legal Maori Archive – has been completed. The Archive is a collection of more than 14,000 pages of nineteenth-century documents that illustrate the bi-lingual nature of NZ's legal history. It was created in partnership with Victoria University of Wellington's NZ Electronic Text Centre (NZETC), which has digitised the documents and made them available as fully-searchable text.

The Legal Maori Archive is free to access at <http://www.nzetc.org/>

Parliament

MPs' Expenses: Regular Updates

The expenses paid to individual members of Parliament (MPs) by the Parliamentary Service for Wellington accommodation, out-of-Wellington accommodation, air travel and surface travel costs will now be publicly available every three months. The next disclosure expected at the end of October for the quarter ending 30 September.

A full schedule of MPs' expenses is at <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/MPP/MPs/Expenses>; the schedule for Ministers is at <http://www.dia.govt.nz/press.nsf/index>

Public Sector/Local Govt

Briefings (BIMs): the Good Oil

The Briefings to Incoming Ministers (BIM) offer a good snapshot of how government agencies work and who they work with, and they also highlight the issues that are top of the pile in the particular portfolio. The following BIM have recently been released:

- Aviation Security Service at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Aviation%20Security%20Service%20-%20BIM.pdf>
- Civil Aviation Authority at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Civil%20Aviation%20Authority%20-%20BIM.pdf>
- Maritime NZ at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Maritime%20New%20Zealand%20BIM.pdf>
- Ministry of Transport at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Ministry%20of%20Transport%20-%20BIM.pdf>,
- NZ Transport Agency at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/NZ%20Transport%20Agency%20-%20BIM.pdf> and
- Transport Accident Investigation Commission at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Transport%20Accident%20Investigation%20Commission%20-%20BIM.pdf>
- Gambling Commission at http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_Gambling_Commission_2009.pdf;
- Internal Affairs at http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_IA.pdf
- Internal Affairs at [BIM IA Responsible June 2009.pdf](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_IA_Responsive_June_2009.pdf)
- Internal Affairs at http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_IA_Responsive_June_2009.pdf
- Internal Affairs at [BIM IA Welcome.pdf](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_IA_Welcome.pdf) http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_IA_Welcome.pdf
- Ministry of Justice at [BIM Justice June09.pdf](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_Justice_June09.pdf)
- Lotteries Commission at [BIM Lotteries Commission.pdf](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_Lotteries_Commission.pdf)
- Fire Commission at [BIM NZ Fire Commission Brief 2009.pdf](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_NZ_Fire_Commission_Brief_2009.pdf)
- Office of Film and Literature Classification at [BIM OFLC 20 July 2009.pdf](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_OFLC_20_July_2009.pdf)
- Archives NZ at http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_Archives_NZ_June_2009.pdf
- National Library at http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/BIM_Library_June_2009.pdf

Government Websites: Maori Language

A Human Rights Commission survey has found that central and local government websites have little or no Maori language content despite Maori being an official language of NZ.

Findings from the survey of 123 central and local government websites include:

- almost all government agencies have a Maori version of their name on their website (notable exceptions are the Crown Law Office and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet - DPMC);
- only a very small number of agencies have fully bilingual websites (notably Te Puni Kokiri, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Maori, and the Ministry of Women's Affairs);
- a few have a Maori option;
- a few have a link on their home page to basic information in Maori about their organisation or services or to wider Maori language content; and
- most have little or no Maori content and if they do, it is not accessible from the home page (the NZ Police, for instance, have information in 11 languages, but not in te reo Maori).

The Commissioner's speech on the issue can be downloaded at http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/10-Jul-2009_13-48-04_Language_and_Swine_Flu_Joris.doc

UK Muslim Communities: Report

A Department for Communities and Local Government (UK) report with this title pulls together the findings of separate research and reports on 13 Muslim ethnic communities in England who originally came from Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Turkey. The aim of the research was to identify the key characteristics of the communities in order to help community and local government with delivery of projects, and also help with its international engagement programme.

The report is at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/summarymuslimcommunity>

Not-for-Profits

New Vulnerability Report

The NZ Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) has released the first of an ongoing series of reports that focus on the economic and social hardship faced by many NZers. The reports are a mix of government data and feedback from community based organisations, and they are designed to provide a picture of the impact of the recession on our society. They will be produced quarterly. Main findings include:

- while the Consumer Price index (CPI) rose 3 % in year to March ended March 2009, the Food Price index rose by 6.8% in the year to May 2009;

- as of March 2009 about 211,000 children were living in benefit-dependent households;
- the Salvation Army have experienced a 20% increase nationally in the number of people seeking budgeting services in the year to March 2009;
- there have been significant increases in hardship assistance and special needs grants for food in every year over the last three years; and
- 12% more people were assessed as having a significant housing need in March 2009 from a year ago.

See the whole report at http://www.nzccss.org.nz/site/page.php?page_id=117 or on www.justiceandcompassion.org.nz

Defining Effective NZ Charities

The Charities Commission is currently working with charities to define what it actually means to be an "effective charity", and it has surveyed NZ groups online whether they consider UK Charity Commission "hallmarks of an effective charity" to be relevant to NZ. The UK Commission suggests that an effective charity:

- is clear about its purpose;
- is always mindful of its charitable purpose in all that it does;
- has a good understanding of the needs and requirements of its beneficiaries;
- delivers its services efficiently;
- manages its resources in the best way to help it achieve its objectives;
- has a board or trustee body with a mix of skills and experience;
- understands its accountabilities and has good systems in place to manage them;
- assesses its performance and measures the impact and outcomes of its work; and
- is accountable to the public.

The Commission will be posting responses to its consultation on its website at <http://www.charities.govt.nz/>

Want to Increase Donations?

According to recent research well-designed non-profit websites attract new donors and efficiently support small-scale impulse giving.

American researchers Target Analytics (TA) asked participants what information they want to see on non-profit websites before they decide whether to donate. The two things they needed to see most were the organisation's mission, goals, objectives, and how the organisation uses donations and contributions. Well back in third place was that they liked to see the presence of the organisation in the user's own community.

Once people found the information on the website and decided to make a donation - and once they found a donation button on sites (this was sometimes difficult) - making a donation wasn't too tricky. However, use of third-party payment services stumped some users.

In 2008, non-profits received about 10% of their donations online. Given the high growth rate for internet donations, TA estimates that online donations will make up the majority of donations to non-profits by 2020.

The researchers note, though, that websites are less effective than email newsletters at sustaining long-term donor relationships.

To read a summary of the research go to: www.useit.com/alertbox/nonprofit-donations.html

Developing a Partnership Agreement

Two recent publications in the "Putting Pen to Paper" series cover the development of partnership agreements between different kinds of organisations such as local government, central government, Iwi/Maori organisations, business, and NGOs. The first one highlights some of the challenges and opportunities in developing and sustaining partnering agreements, and the second is a collection of actual partnering agreements and how they were set up.

More is at [www.communityoutcomes.govt.nz/web/coutcomes.nsf/files/pptp/\\$file/pentpaper.pdf](http://www.communityoutcomes.govt.nz/web/coutcomes.nsf/files/pptp/$file/pentpaper.pdf). For free copies of the "Putting Pen to Paper" publications email communityoutcomes@dia.govt.nz

Business

Biotechnology: Going Strong

The second Biotechnology* Industry Growth Report (or BIG report) delivered news of growth in the following main areas:

- biotechnology export revenues grew from \$56 million in 2005 to \$104 million in 2007;
- the number of biotechnology organisations has grown from 126 in 2005 to 168 in 2007;
- Government investment in research in the biotechnology sector increased from \$200 million in 2005 to \$250 million in 2008;
- private equity and venture capital investment in biotechnology have tripled since 2005 to a total of almost \$67 million in 2007;
- patent volume has grown, with 192 patents granted in 2005 and 230 granted in 2007; and
- NZ biotechnology companies increased their exposure internationally, with Living Cell Technologies in 2008 becoming the first kiwi company to list on the International OTCQX (a US-based stock market that allows trading in companies listed in other countries).

*Biotechnology involves the use of biological processes in industrial production. Early examples of biotechnology include the making of cheese, wine, and beer, while later developments include vaccine and insulin production.

The BIG report and a summary are at www.nzbio.org.nz

Securities Amendment Bill Passed

The recently-passed Securities (Disclosure) Amendment Bill allows businesses to issue a simplified disclosure prospectus and this will reduce the need to duplicate information that is already publicly available under the continuous disclosure obligations. Companies listed on the stock exchange will be able to use this new type of prospectus for offers of certain securities, instead of a full registered prospectus and investment statement. The Bill also makes technical changes relating to categories of people exempt from disclosure requirements, which will make it easier for all companies, listed and unlisted, to raise capital.

Chinese Communities and Auckland Business

The Asia NZ Foundation has released a report called "Chinese Businesses and the Transformation of Auckland", that looks at how different Chinese communities have responded to the opportunities and challenges of setting up businesses in Auckland.

The full report is available at <http://www.asianz.org.nz/files/Asia%20NZ%20Chinese%20Businesses.pdf>

Meetings... Meetings... Meetings!

Fed up with time-wasting meetings that involve lots of talk but very little action? You're not alone, according to a new survey by global recruitment specialists Robert Half.

NZ's finance, accounting and HR managers think more than one-quarter of the meetings they attend – 25.7% to be precise – are a waste of time, according to Robert Half's 2009 Workplace Survey. And the main reason they're a waste of time is the participants lose focus and discuss anything they want, rather than the issue the meeting was called for.

But that's not the only reason – frequently the finance, accounting, HR and executive-level managers Robert Half surveyed don't know why the meeting was called in the first place. And they often feel people are involved who simply don't need to be there.

If that sounds all too horribly familiar, spare a thought for the Swiss and Spanish, who think 38.8% and 38.4% of meetings respectively are a waste of time. In Switzerland they are most commonly a waste of time because they include too many people who don't need to be there, while in Spain the attendees too often don't prepare properly for the meeting.

And there's no point in trying to escape by heading for NZers' two favourite overseas working destinations – Australia and the United Kingdom – because companies there, too, have more pointless talkfests than Kiwi employers.

In Australia, 34.5% of meetings are deemed a waste of time, as are 32% of meetings in the UK. The main reason for the frustration in both countries is the same as in NZ – lack of focus.

Instead, you could try heading for Luxembourg or Dubai, where only 13.7% and 16.9%, respectively, of meetings really should not have been called at all.

Robert Half says that in these straitened times, when many companies are operating on reduced staff numbers, managers

need to think carefully about why they are calling meetings and what they want to achieve.

Money Matters

Light at End of Recessionary Tunnel?

Recently, there have been comments that we may be seeing "light at the end of the tunnel" in terms of the recession (unless, of course, swine flu turns really nasty or there's some other major overseas shock). Here is a breakdown of some of these:

RBNZ: Early Signs of Economic Recovery...

The Reserve Bank has projected the current recession to be the second-longest for 50 years (after the one in the mid-1970s) and expects it to be no "deeper than average". Early signs of global recovery have now emerged.

The RBNZ believes the financial crisis played little role in the early part of NZ's recession, which was driven by drought, falling house prices and high petrol prices. The effects of global events only really became apparent in late 2008. However, the Governor notes that world growth will probably be subdued for the next one or two years, and the current low international interest rates, expansion of liquidity and central bank balance sheets, and fiscal stimuli* will be necessary for some time.

The Governor also sees "a clear risk" over the medium term being that households could resume their "borrow and spend" habits before they have paid off some of their existing debt. This could be triggered by renewed moderate house price inflation, and "needs to be avoided."

*"Fiscal stimulus" as defined by Deardorff's Glossary of International Economics is "a tax cut and/or an increase in government spending. It is called that because it tends to increase "aggregate demand" and therefore the level of economic activity in the short run. "Aggregate demand" is the total demand for a country's output - or production - including demands for consumption, investment, government purchases, and net exports. Deardorff's glossary is at <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~alandear/glossary/f.html>

These and other points were made in a recent speech by Allan Ballard. The full speech transcript can be read at <http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/speeches/3698349.html>

...Employers Hiring in Certain Areas

In the latest Hays Quarterly Report, the recruiter says employers have started to take a more positive approach towards their staffing needs. "The caution seems to be lifting somewhat in NZ, with many companies planning for additional headcount this quarter".

The full Hays Quarterly Report into hiring intentions and hotspots of demand can be viewed at www.hays.net.nz/forecast

...Redundancy Enquiries from Employers Decline...

A further sign we may be through the worst of the recession, barring another shock from offshore, is employers have been making far fewer calls seeking advice and assistance on redundancies over the past month or so, says the Northern Employers and Manufacturers Association.

But, the Association notes that the number of unemployed is still likely to rise since it can take two to three months from the time a business contemplates redundancy to when a person is out of work and seeking help from Work and Income.

... & Westpac: If it wasn't for Swine Flu ...

Westpac's chief economist recently said if it weren't for swine flu, "we would say the recession has already ended." However, there's a warning that rising unemployment and weak exports will keep the recovery modest initially.

Swine Flu's Economic Impact

The economic impact of swine flu will probably be smaller than the SARS epidemic in Hong Kong or the 1918 Spanish influenza outbreak in the US, according to Reserve Bank research. (RBNZ's prediction is based on current Ministry of Health assumptions.)

The report says the influenza H1N1 pandemic will probably slow the economy by 0.6% and "the impact of swine flu on the NZ macro-economy is unlikely to be large." It predicts the labour force may shrink 2.3% as a result of the outbreak, with a 1.2% decline in consumer spending in the third quarter, followed by a 0.8% growth in spending the following quarter as the economy bounces back. The bank notes that things could get worse if much more aggressive strains of the virus develop in the future.

You can access the research paper off the RBNZ website at <http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/research/3698971.pdf>

Salaries/Wages: June Quarter

According to Statistics NZ figures derived from the labour cost index (LCI), salary and wage rates (including overtime) were 2.8% higher in the June 2009 quarter than in the June 2008 quarter, following a 3.3% increase in the year to the March 2009 quarter. The latest annual increase is the lowest since a 2.7% increase in the year to the June 2005 quarter.

In the June 2009 quarter, salary and wage rates (including overtime) increased 0.3%, the lowest since an identical increase in the June 1999 quarter.

Salary and wage rates (including overtime) for the private sector increased 2.7% in the year to the June 2009 quarter, and 0.3% in the June 2009 quarter. Public sector salary and wage rates (including overtime) rose 3.6% in the year to the June 2009 quarter, and 0.4% in the June 2009 quarter.

Exports & Imports: June Quarter

The value of seasonally adjusted exports and imports both fell in the June 2009 quarter, down 5.4% and 3.4%, respectively, Statistics NZ said recently. These falls followed decreases of 5.0% for exports and 13.7% for imports in the March 2009 quarter.

Food Price Index June 2009

The June Food Price Index shows that in June 2009 compared with May 2009: food prices rose 2.8%; fruit and vegetable prices rose 15.0%; grocery food prices rose 1.1%; meat, poultry and fish prices rose 2.1%. Non-alcoholic beverage prices rose 0.3%; and restaurant meals and ready-to-eat food prices rose 0.1%.

All up, from June 2008 to June 2009 food prices increased 8.4%.

CPI Annual Increase: 1.9%

According to Statistics NZ, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased 1.9% from the June 2008 quarter to the June 2009 quarter, which included a rise of 0.6% for the June 2009 quarter. This annual increase is the smallest since a 1.8% rise recorded in the year to the September 2007 quarter.

Looking at the big movers in the quarter, the food group again made the biggest contribution to the quarterly increase in the CPI – rising 0.9%. This was largely due to a big 2.8% increase in food prices in June, driven by cool weather pushing up vegetable prices. Other groups to make reasonable contributions to the increase were the transport group (up 0.6%) driven by a 3.2% increase in petrol prices, which more than offset a 14.4% fall in international airfares. The housing and household utilities group recorded a 0.4% increase.

Revised Credit Outlook for NZ

Credit rating company Fitch reaffirmed NZ's current at AA plus credit rating, but changed the outlook to negative from stable, saying a continuing deterioration in NZ's net external debt and liability position would likely lead to a downgrade. Why? According to Fitch, NZ is living beyond its means and householders, in particular, need to start saving.

The country retained its AA plus rating because of the country's strong fundamentals, including a commitment to low inflation, strong public finances, and track record of policy and structural adjustment. Also, the strength of the banking sector had helped NZ navigate turmoil in global financial markets without a crisis.

We Need to Save

It's well known that kiwis are lousy savers. And what might happen if we don't save for a rainy day? A recent consumer credit expectations survey from Dun & Bradstreet provides some insight. According to the survey almost half of working kiwis have only enough savings to survive for a month if they lost their jobs. These results may mean that more people in NZ could get into financial difficulties as the jobless rate grows.

More details can be found at http://dnb.co.nz/Header/News/Forty_five_percent_of_working_Kiwis_can_last_ju_st_one_month_on_savings/indexd1_5061.aspx

Wealthy Migrants: Bar Lowered...

The bar has been lowered for wealthy foreigners and entrepreneurs wanting to live and invest in NZ. As of now, there are two categories for investors. The only requirement to get residency for someone investing \$10 million over three years is that they spend at least 20% of their time in NZ; while

an investor committing \$1.5 million for four years must stay here for 40% of the time, be aged under 65, have three years' business experience and need only a general understanding of English. (Under the old policy, only those investing \$20 million with four years business experience were exempted from the other tests, and the English test for lesser investors demanded at least basic competence.) For those seeking entry under the entrepreneur category, there will be a new option from November to go on a faster application track provided they create at least three jobs and invest \$500,000.

...& Overseas Investment Act Amendments

Regulation 33 of the Overseas Investment Regulations 2005 provides that certain specified transactions are exempt from the requirements in the Overseas Investment Act 2005 to obtain consent for overseas investment in sensitive land, significant business assets, or fishing quota. The amendments change one of the existing exemptions and create three new exemptions (subject to specified conditions).

View the amendments at www.legislation.govt.nz

Lottery Grants Funding: Update

The NZ Lottery Grants Board has announced that over \$163 million will this year be pumped back into the community from lottery profits. Funding allocations to national and regional community committees have been boosted by \$2.4 million to \$40.9 million from the total fund allocation of \$163.9 million for the 2009/10 financial year.

The statutory bodies – Creative NZ, NZ Film Commission, NZ Film Archive, and Sport and Recreation NZ will receive \$64.7 million - up \$1.4 million on last year while a further \$58.3 million will go to national, specialist and facilities committees.

Kiwi-Oz Retirement Savings Transfers

Australia and NZ have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a trans-Tasman retirement savings portability scheme. This will enable Ozzies and Kiwis to transfer their retirement savings across the Tasman when they move, make it easier for people to move freely between the two countries, and help to return people's "lost" retirement savings.

Tax Information Exchange Agreements

The Government has signed tax information exchange agreements with Jersey and the Isle of Man. These agreements enable authorities to ask for records, business books, accounts and other tax-related information. The aim is to help prevent tax evasion and avoidance. Similar agreements have already been signed with Guernsey and the Cook Islands.

Internet/ICT

Dealing with Text Bullying

Telecom has processes in place to respond to customers who raise TXT bullying concerns. If bullying persists or it is especially concerning to the person then the company suggests they free call Telecom on *123 and they will be able to swap the person to a new number, send a warning to the bully, or block the bully from the telecom network by terminating their service. Telecom has its own Call Investigation Centre (0800 809 806) where some text bullying calls can be referred to be investigated. This number is open to callers from Monday to Friday 9am-4pm with a mailbox for after hours, which is checked daily.

Vodafone also offers a free TXT service to help any of its customers who are being targeted by a TXT bully. People suffering from bullying can TXT the word "bully" to 4001 and Vodafone will be in touch to get info and investigate. If necessary there are a number of things Vodafone can do to help, such as warning the bully, stopping TXTing from their account, temporarily barring their account, or even permanently deactivating their account. Vodafone customers can also get assistance by calling 777.

NetGuide Web Awards Winners

The results of the People's Choice NetGuide Web Awards 2009 are, as follows:

- *Site Of The Year:* Winner Trademe.co.nz;
- *Best Blog Site:* Winner Blogs.nzherald.co.nz/blog/blogger-bites-back;
- *Best Real Estate Site:* Winner Trademe.co.nz;
- *Best Employment Site:* Winner Seek.co.nz;
- *Best Entertainment Site:* Winner Biggie.co.nz;
- *Best Financial Site:* Winner Raboplus.co.nz;
- *Best Game Related Site:* Winner Gameplanet.co.nz;
- *Best Homepage:* Winner Stuff.co.nz;
- *Best Mobi Site:* Winner m.nzherald.co.nz;
- *Best ISP:* Winner TelstraClear.co.nz;
- *Best Lifestyle Site:* Winner Nzdating.com;
- *Best Online Shopping Site:* Winner Mightyape.co.nz;
- *Best Media Site:* Winner Stuff.co.nz;
- *Best Education Site* Winner Studyit.org.nz;
- *Best New Site, Relaunch, Innovation:* Winner Mightyape.co.nz;
- *Best Community Sites:* Winner Move2nz.com;
- *Best Government Site:* Winner Ird.govt.nz;
- *Best Social Networking Site:* Winner Facebook.co.nz;
- *Best Travel Site:* Winner Houseoftravel.co.nz;
- *Best Sports And Recreation Site:* Winner Vorb.org.nz;
- *Best Trading Site:* Winner Trademe.co.nz;
- *Best Youth Site:* Winner Whatnow.tv;

- *Best Search Engine:* Winner Google.co.nz; and
- *Best Web Ad Campaign:* Winner Testdrive.co.nz.

More is at <http://www.netguide.co.nz/200907231088/people-s-choice-netguide-web-awards-2009-winners-announced.php>

A Handful of Websites

- *Information on Clean Up Week NZ (from 4-11 September)* is at <http://www.knzbcleanupweek.co.nz/> ... and *more about recycling NZ's e-waste (on 12 September)* is at <http://www.community.net.nz/communitycentre/events/national/eday.htm?region=default> Recycling electronic waste (e-waste) enables the recovery and reuse of valuable materials and ensures toxic materials are not buried in our landfills
- *If you want the latest news from the world of physics, space, technology, nanotechnology, chemistry, medicine and biology* go to www.Physorg.com. There are stories here to cater to every taste, from news about the refurbishment of the Hubble Telescope to information about the latest developments in the world of consumer technology. There is also video content
- *You can reach Maori Television's new Maori language application for mobile phones* at <http://www.maoritelevision.com/Default.aspx?tabid=444&id=3017>. The initiative – m.MAORI – enables people to download fun reo Maori audio phrases to their mobile phone. Follow instructions to install. Everyone who downloads m.Maori goes into the draw to win a NOKIA N95 mobile phone. Downloading is as easy as tahi-ruatoru: you just text "REO" to 3553 (TXTs cost 20c). You'll receive a reply TXT with a link to download the application, then follow the instructions...
- *Unmask the photographic touch-ups* at www.DeTouch.org. Here you can lay bare the tricks and cheats used in photographic publishing and see what those picture perfect models looked like before the touch-up artist got involved.
- *A smart system for evaluating non-profit organisations' communications systems* is at <http://ow.ly/b5Xl>: The system - which is quite straightforward to use - was created by Asibey for the Communications Network, ad it is aimed at philanthropic organisations and non-profits that want to keep their communications on track using limited resources.
- *A new web-based management tool to help businesses take steps towards understanding and improving their environmental and economic performance* is at www.eco-verification.med.govt.nz/envirostep. Envirostep was developed to help small businesses and it is free

Treaty Matters

Port Nicholson Block Settlement

The Port Nicholson Block (Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika) Claims Settlement Bill has been passed in Parliament, in final settlement of Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika's historical Treaty of Waitangi claims. These related to breaches by the Crown of its obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi, particularly the Crown's dealings over, and acquisition of, the Port Nicholson Block, and its long delays in ensuring there was appropriate administration of the lands reserved for Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika.

The settlement provides for commercial and cultural redress, a financial package of around \$25 million, and the vesting of various culturally significant sites around the Port Nicholson area. It also provides for a formal apology from the Crown, and for a formal statement of forgiveness to the Crown. This allows the closure of historical grievances and the beginning of a new relationship between the two parties.

A summary of the settlement is at <http://nz01.terabyte.co.nz/ots/LiveArticle.asp?ArtID=1219027573#general>

Terms of Negotiation Signed

Nga Punawai o te Tokotoru

The Crown and the Nga Puunawai o te Tokotoru collective have signed amended Joint Terms of Negotiation that include Ngati Rangiteaorere. These set out the scope and nature of Te Tokotoru's upcoming negotiations for final settlement of its historical Treaty of Waitangi claims. The member iwi of Te Tokotoru are the remaining groups within the Te Arawa Confederation to enter into settlement negotiations with the Crown. Ngati Rangiteaorere joined Tapuika and Ngati Rangiwewehi to form Te Tokotoru in early 2009. Tapuika's area of interest includes the coastal Bay of Plenty north of Rotorua. Ngati Rangiwewehi's area of interest lies mainly to the west of Lake Rotorua. Ngati Rangiteaorere's area of interest lies mainly to the east of Lake Rotorua, with additional areas to the west of Lake Rotorua and a coastal section between Maketu and Papamoa Beach.

NgaiTakoto

The Crown and the NgaiTakoto-a-iwi Research Unit Trust have also signed Terms of Negotiation. The parties will now work together with other Te Hiku iwi to reach agreement on a redress package. NgaiTakoto is a Far North/Te Hiku iwi whose rohe is based around Kaitaia and the Aupouri Peninsula. It is one of five iwi participating in Te Hiku Forum – a body established to enable Te Hiku iwi to work through their shared interests.

Arts & Culture

Culture and National Identity

A new report from the Ministry of Culture and Heritage shows that almost three quarters of those surveyed think that culture and cultural activities are very, extremely or critically important to our sense of national identity.

There is also the contribution of the cultural sector to the economy. The arts and cultural sector employs about 126,000 people, and the overall percentage of people employed in cultural occupations has increased from 6% in the 2006 report to almost 7% in the 2009 report.

Other findings include:

- median (mid-point) incomes for those in creative occupations (\$36,800) remain slightly above the national median for all occupations (\$33,700);
- NZ households spent \$2.84 billion on cultural items in 2006-07 (3.6% of all household expenditure), a slight decline from 2003-04;
- hours of local content on television have increased substantially in the last five years, though this is the result of additional new channels being available, and the proportion (26%) is the same as five years ago; and
- the income of the cultural industries has remained largely stable at just above \$12 billion.

The report, "Cultural Indicators Report for NZ 2009", can be downloaded from <http://www.mch.govt.nz/publications/cultural-indicators/index.html>

Health of Te Reo Maori

Te Puni Kokiri (TPK) has published number of reports on the health of te reo Maori in 2006. A national report provides national data; four reports cover broadcasting, education, the arts, and archives; and regional information is presented in eight reports that have also been summarised as fact sheets.

In 2006, 27% of Maori said they can speak the language very well, well or fairly well, compared with 130,000, or 25% in 2001. Around 40% can understand or read it. Attitudes towards the Maori language amongst both Maori and non-Maori are said to be improving. An Attitudes, Values and Beliefs survey found that the Maori language currently enjoys a high status in Maori society, and also positive acceptance by the majority of non-Maori NZers.

The reports can be viewed and downloaded from <http://www.tpk.govt.nz/en/in-focus/te-reo/>

Weta-TechNZ Research Partnership

TechNZ (the business investment programme of the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology - FoRST) and Weta Digital are to work in partnership to help accelerate the growth of NZ's digital industry by developing new products and processes. TechNZ will be investing \$5.8 million over three years and Weta's contribution will be at least "two-for-one". This is the first time FoRST has partnered a company in a long-term R&D programme.

Fishing

NZ Fisheries Rock!

Scientists have rated NZ one of the two healthiest fisheries on the planet. They were given the top "Green" rating along with Alaska in the comprehensive international scientific research paper Rebuilding Global Fisheries, which has just been published in the respected journal Science. The researchers evaluated 31 marine areas, mainly in the US, Canada, Australia, Europe and NZ. Fish stocks selected for coverage were those for which full scientific assessments have been carried out. Nineteen NZ stocks featured in the paper, mostly hoki, hake, ling, oreo, and paua. The paper also highlighted the progress that had been made in many other parts of the world in reducing fishing pressure and rebuilding depleted stocks.

More is at <http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Press/NZ+FISHERIES+GET+GREEN+LIGHT.htm>

Oyster Plan Approved

The Foveaux Strait Dredge Oyster Fisheries Plan was recently by the Minister of Fisheries. In addition, fisheries plans covering hoki, orange roughy, northwest inshore finfish, Challenger inshore finfish, and southern shellfish are nearing completion.

Since late 2005, the Ministry of Fisheries has worked with tangata whenua and fisheries stakeholders to prepare objectives-based fisheries plans. They describe current management of the fishery; decide how to get best value from the fishery within environmental limits; and then design management measures and services (like research and compliance) to achieve that value.

Hoki Research Results

Latest research into the hoki population shows that the western hoki stock - off the South Island's west coast - is recovering well after a period of few young fish surviving to adulthood and entering the fishery. That fishery is now within sustainable target levels. (The eastern stock remains strong and has always been comfortably above target levels.)

Hoki fisheries were worth \$151 million in export earnings in 2008 and were NZ's third most valuable seafood export.

More information is at <http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/SOF/Species.htm?code=HOK&list=name>

General

National Climate Summary – July 2009

According to NIWA:

- *Temperature:* Below average temperatures over much of the country, except for near average temperatures in the southwest of the South Island, and the north of the North Island;
- *Sunshine:* Well above average sunshine totals across the northern South Island; gloomy in and around the Capital (Wellington, the Kapiti Coast and the southern Wairarapa);
- *Rainfall:* Well above normal rainfall in the far south; very dry in Taranaki, the Kapiti Coast, Wellington, southern Wairarapa, Marlborough, Canterbury and Otago. Near normal elsewhere; and
- *Main centres:* Auckland was the warmest and sunniest of the main centres, Tauranga was the wettest, and Christchurch was the coldest and driest.

How Trusting are We?

A narrow majority of NZers say most people can be trusted with those on higher incomes saying they are more trusting of others generally and Maori and Pacific Island people less trusting. The findings are from UMR Research's latest survey of public opinion among people aged 18 years and over, who were asked the question: "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you cannot be too careful in dealing with people?"

The results show that 56% of people say "most people can be trusted" though a large minority (39%) say "you cannot be too careful in dealing with people".

The results swing around when you look at them by ethnicity. Most Maori and Pacific Island people (54%) said "you cannot be too careful in dealing with people" and only 41% said "most people can be trusted".

When it comes to income and occupation, 69% of those earning more than \$50,000 a year said "most people can be trusted", but only a minority of blue collar workers (45%) and 52% of those earning less than \$30,000 a year said the same.

2011 Census

Statistics NZ (SNZ) has announced Tuesday, 8 March 2011 as the date for the next NZ census. The census gives a snapshot of our society at a point in time. It is taken every five years and counts everyone in NZ on census night.

Over-65's Are Tribal Too

It's well-known the younger generation and even certain cities have their own "tribal" groups but now it turns out the over-65s do too. Research released by the HOPE Foundation for Research on Ageing shows the half a million seniors in NZ – the experienced generation, (nickname: GEN E) - can't be lumped together in one group.

Their report, called "New Insights into the Experienced Generations", says the five groups making up NZ's 512,000 over-65s are:

- *Kiwi Battlers* - the largest segment containing an estimated 127,000 people. Predominantly female, one in three is aged over 80, 75% own their own home, their income is the lowest and many are widowed. They find it hard to make ends meet, are often isolated and lonely, think things are changing too fast and are the most stressed of all the groups.
- *Traditionalists* - predominantly male at the younger end of the age group, they're the second largest with 115,000 people. Two-thirds are married and one in five is widowed. More likely to own a home with a mortgage and have the highest level of employment. They're meat eaters, like a drink, don't exercise much and think environmental threats are exaggerated. They're also the heaviest internet users.
- *Affluent Investors* - split evenly between male and female, with about 100,000 people in total. Home ownership is highest in this segment and they also have the highest income levels. A fifth still work and although slightly younger overall, 20% are in the 80+ age group. They're financially comfortable, optimistic, upbeat, and open-minded. They enjoy home improvement, exercise regularly, like to volunteer, give to charity and enjoy the cinema and magazines.
- *Active and Aware* - the 96,000 people in this group are 60% female, likely to be aged 75 to 79 and are more likely to own their own homes. While most are married, there is a skew towards being separated and divorced. Strongly health focused, they exercise regularly, buy organics and take care of their appearance. They're financially healthy but budget carefully, see continuous learning as important and have high levels of volunteering and giving to charity.
- *Paradoxical Pensioners* – the smallest group, with 75,000 people, they have slightly lower incomes than the average 65+. They are mostly retired, more likely to be renting and have the highest proportion of divorced or separated people. They're health-conscious but conflicted - they like the good things in life but money is tight, they aim for a low fat diet but eat what they like, they constantly worry about their weight but don't feel stressed, they care for the environment though think threats are over-stated. They also read junk mail.

Find out more at <http://www.hopefoundation.org.nz/>

Most Migrants Happy in NZ

Information from the first and second parts of a three-part "Longitudinal Immigration Survey: NZ (LisNZ)" is now available. The LisNZ survey covers the views of migrants when they have been here for six months, for 18 months and for 36 months.

The information shows that:

- 93.3% were satisfied or very satisfied with life in NZ six months after they arrived, compared with 91.3% being satisfied or very satisfied at 18 months;
- 85.9% of migrants felt safe or very safe in NZ% six months after they arrived, compared with 81.3% 18 months later;

- 71.2% were employed after six months compared with 74.3% after 18 months;
- 80.9% were satisfied or very satisfied with their main job at six months, and 81.8% at 18 months;
- more than two-thirds (68.4%) of employed migrants were working in a skilled job after 18 months, and of these 6% had moved from having a lower skilled job at six months.
- the overall median hourly wage for migrants was \$18.00 at six months compared with \$20.00 at 18 months; and
- 29.9% owned or partly owned the dwelling they were living in after six months, compared to 42.9% at 18 months.

More is at <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/general/generalinformation/research/lisnz/>

Survey: Indian Diaspora in NZ

Research on the Indian Diaspora* in NZ is being conducted by a University of Waikato researcher. Results from the 2006 NZ Census show that the Indian ethnic community is now the fastest growing Asian ethnic group in NZ. However, it remains one of the least studied of the many ethnic communities in NZ.

This survey forms part of a larger study that discusses issues of religious diversity, ethnicity and identity, language use, discrimination, and immigration policy.

* The term diaspora, in Greek, literally meaning "a scattering - of seeds", refers to the movement of any population sharing common ethnic identity away from their homeland to live in another location (usually quite a long way away from the homeland).

To take the survey, or to learn more about the research visit http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=3tw9c1sAw68bc_2fvTarDUrw_3d_3d

Some Conferences/Events

2009 Small Business Summit

Registrations are now open for the 2nd Small Business Summit to be held on the 11 September 2009, in Auckland. This year's theme is "profitable business growth with the right support".

For more information go to: <http://www.smallbusinesssummit.org.nz> or <http://www.ibf.org.nz>

Cooperatives: Don't Waste a Recession!

The NZ Cooperatives Association is holding two 2-day "Don't Waste a Recession!" seminars in August. The first - for cooperative directors - is on 13 and 14 August, and the second - for cooperative executives - is on 27 and 28 August.

More is on the Cooperatives Association's website at <http://nz.coop/news/>, or you can email nzca@nz.coop, or tel 04 384 4595

ASENZ Conference

The conference of the Association for Supported Employment is being held in Wellington on 14-15 September. Theme is "If the tough get going, when the going gets tough! Where do they go? And what do they do when they get there?"

More is at <http://www.community.net.nz/communitycentre/events/national/asenzconf.htm?region=default>

NZ Diversity Forum

The Human Right's Commission's NZ Diversity Forum will be held at a number of different venues in Wellington (including Te Papa and the Wellington Museum of City and Sea) from 23-25 August 2009. The focus of the 2009 forum will be on Neighbourhood and Asian Peoples in NZ. Over 30 different organisations will be hosting forums and events reflecting indigenous issues, cultural diversity, migrant settlement, employment, health, languages, disability, religion, families, media, sport, racial discrimination, diversity research and government accountability to the United Nations. There will also be multi-cultural entertainment, exhibitions, debate, keynote speakers, a youth forum, and the annual diversity awards.

More, including registration details, is at <http://www.hrc.co.nz/home/hrc/racerelations/newzealanddiversityforum/newzealanddiversityforum.php>

Making Inclusive Education Happen Conference

This Standards Plus conference, is being held from 28-30 September 2009 at Te Papa in Wellington. Standards Plus is an independent organisation promoting leadership and outcome-based quality in services for people with disabilities, the mentally unwell and older people.

For more information/registration go to www.imaginebetter.co.nz

Social Service Providers' Conference

The Sowing Seeds of Change – Te Puawaitanga O Te Kakano/Social Service Providers Aotearoa conference is being held from 17-18 September at Flames International Hotel in Whangarei.

Find out more online at <http://www.theorganisation.org.nz/conference/index.htm>

NZ Assn for the Study of Intellectual Disability

This is being held in Hamilton on 26-27 August. The theme this year is "From Theory to Practice - Knowledge and Practices".

More is at <http://www.community.net.nz/communitycentre/events/national/nzasidconference.htm?region=default>

Public Health Association Annual Conference

The Association is holding its 2009 conference in Dunedin from 1-4 September. It will bring together public health researchers and practitioners, people who work in strategic management roles, academics, service providers, those in advocacy organisations, government and non-government organisations, and District Health Boards.

More is at <http://www.community.net.nz/communitycentre/events/national/phaconference.htm?region=defaultDate>

SPINZ National Symposium

This symposium, covering Culture and Suicide Prevention in Aotearoa is being held in Wellington from 10-11 September.

More is at <http://www.community.net.nz/communitycentre/events/national/spinzsymposium.htm?region=default>

National Maori Cancer Forum

The National Maori Coalition of Cancer Services and Forum Steering Group is holding this conference from 12-14 August in Rotorua.

More information including registration details, is at <http://www.conference.co.nz/index.cfm/MaoriCancer>

Funding/Awards

Lottery National Community

Lottery Community considers applications for developmental or preventative projects, welfare and support services, or projects that help to improve the wellbeing of people in the community. The grant can cover: activity, resource and programme costs; administration costs; care and support; domestic travel; projects encouraging people to participate in their communities; salaries (up to \$30,000); training and supervision; feasibility studies; one-off projects and new initiatives; regional and national gatherings; volunteer costs and expenses; community awareness; and minor capital works (up to \$30,000).

Applications close on 28 August 2009. Register on the Grants Online website at www.cdgo.govt.nz. For more information email: grantsonline@dia.govt.nz, or tel freephone 0800 824 824

Lottery Significant Projects

The Lottery Significant Projects Fund allocates grants to complete large scale, community based, capital expenditure projects costing at least \$1 million. Applicants need to have raised 60% of the actual project cost. A total of \$9.8 million is available for this year

Applications close on 17 September 2009. More information is at http://www.cdgo.govt.nz/available-grants/downloads.aspx#ApplicationType_23, or you can freephone 0800 824 824, or email grantsonline@dia.govt.nz

Lottery Health Research

The Lottery Health Research committee funds research projects that will improve the health status of NZers. It distributes grants to fund: research into the cause, prevention and treatment of disorders affecting the health of NZers; research that will lead to advances in health and bio-medical science for the ultimate benefit of all NZers; and the development, maintenance and retention of a highly skilled workforce of health and bio-medical researchers in NZ.

There are two applications you can make: Research Projects and Shared Equipment, and PhD Scholarships.

Applications close on 28 August 2009. Register on the [Grants Online](http://www.cdgo.govt.nz) website at www.cdgo.govt.nz. For more information email: grantsonline@dia.govt.nz, or tel freephone 0800 824 824

Supporting Drought-affected Families

Although it may have rained, the effects of drought are still being felt in parts of the country and Rural Women NZ has funding to run neighbourhood events to support families affected by the drought. During the 2008 drought, Rural Women NZ members organised gatherings with speakers, dinners, barbeques, coffee mornings, and potluck dinners to bring people together to share lessons learned.

Requests for funding go to the Executive Officer at Rural Women NZ (please include the date the event is to be held). Email noeline.holt@ruralwomen.org.nz or tel (04) 473 5524

Asia:NZ Business Grants Programme

The Asia:NZ Action Asia Business Grants programme supports organisations involved in projects aimed at increasing NZers' capacity to do business in Asia. Grants of up to \$10,000 are available for a wide range of business projects including research, internships, and support for conferences and seminars.

There is no set deadline. Proposals should reach Asia:NZ at least 60 calendar days before the grant is required. More is at <http://www.asianz.org.nz/opportunities/action-asia-business>

Maori Language Awards 2009

The Maori Language Awards celebrate and recognise commitment to Maori language regeneration, with categories for business, local government, community, radio, television, print, schools, tertiary education, and Maori Language Week. For initiatives to be eligible they must be current.

Entries close on 10 August 2009. They go to Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Maori, Level 14, PSIS Building, Corner Ballance & Featherston Streets, Wellington 6011, attn: Maori Language Awards. For more go to www.koreromaori.co.nz

Marine Energy Deployment Fund

The Marine Energy Deployment Fund (\$8 million) was set up by the government to encourage generation of electricity from waves and tides. The fund is administered by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA).

Applications for round three of this fund close on 23 November 2009. Send three copies to EECA, PO Box 388, Wellington 6140, Attn: G Jessep. More (including an application form) is at <http://www.eeca.govt.nz/marine-energy-fund>

National Excellence in Teaching and Leadership Awards

Great teachers who are making a positive change in the development and knowledge of today's students can be nominated for the 2009-10 round of the National Excellence in Teaching and Leadership Awards.

Nominations are open until 31 August and forms can be completed online or downloaded at www.neita.co.nz, or are available from schools, early childhood education centres and libraries

Asthma Achievers Awards 2009

If you know someone who has asthma or another respiratory illness, has a great attitude to life and achieves things you can nominate them for an Achievers Award. A group of supreme achievers will gather in Wellington in November to be presented with awards by the Governor-General.

Nominations close 31 August 2009. Go to: <http://www.asthmanz.co.nz/>

Community Internship Programme

The Community Internship Programme grants pay the salaries of skilled people from the public, private or community sector to work as "interns" with community groups with development needs, to help them become more effective.

Applications close on 14 September 2009. They go to Community Internship Programme Applications, Crown Funding & Trusts Team, Local Government & Community Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, PO Box 805, Wellington 6140. More is at http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Services-Community-Internship-Programme-Index?OpenDocument&ExpandView#five, or tel freephone 0800 824 824

Housing Innovation Fund

The Housing Innovation Fund (HIF) has a fund of \$20 million for 2009/10. Of this, \$15 million will be available under a general fund, while up to \$5 million will be used for innovative housing solutions for Maori.

Applications to the fund close on 21 August 2009. They go to Housing NZ Project managers. More, including contact details for the project managers, is at http://www.hnzc.co.nz/hnzc/web/councils-&community-organisations/councils/housing-innovation-fund/housing-innovation-fund_home.htm

World YWCA internship programme

Applications for the World YWCA Internship Programme 2010 are now open. This programme includes coordination of an international young women's forum; evaluating young women's participation in the YWCA movement; work to eliminate violence against women and promotion of women's security; HIV and AIDS and sexual reproductive health; assisting with regional training institutes in Latin America, Middle East and European HIV and AIDS Conference in Vienna, Austria; and World YWCA representation at the UN.

Applications close on 31 August 2009. More, including application forms, is at <http://www.worldywca.org/World-YWCA/YWCA-News/World-YWCA-News/World-YWCA-Internship-programme-2010>

William Wallace Awards

Nominations are now open for the 2009 William Wallace Awards (for scholarships for tertiary and vocational study and leadership programmes), which honour outstanding young people in foster care. Anyone who knows a great young person who is, or has been, in foster care can make a nomination.

Forms can be downloaded at www.cyf.govt.nz or Child Youth and Family can be contacted on 0508 FAMILY

Sign Language Scholarships

The Ministry of Economic Development (MED) is funding scholarships to support students who want to become qualified NZ Sign Language (NZSL) interpreters, and to contribute to building a qualified national NZSL interpreter workforce to staff a potential future Video Relay Service. The scholarships are worth \$5,625 (including GST) of which \$3,750 will be paid on award and the remaining \$1,875 on successful completion of the Diploma in Sign Language Interpreting.

Applications close on 14 November 2008. More is at http://www.aut.ac.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/26030/2009_nzsl_scholarship.pdf

Chinese Poll Tax Heritage Trust Funding

The aim of Chinese Poll Tax Heritage Trust is to strengthen the unique identity of Chinese NZers and their communities in NZ in recognition of poll tax payers. The Trust is intended as a gesture of goodwill to poll-tax payers, their descendants and future generations, in recognition of the hardship caused by the poll tax and other discriminatory legislation. The Trust also seeks to create understanding in the wider Chinese community and NZ society as a whole.

The Trust holds two funding rounds each year: the next round closes on 30 September 2009

More information is at http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Services-Trust-&Fellowship-Grants-Chinese-Poll-Tax-Heritage-Trust?OpenDocument

Appointments

Dr Peter Spiller has been appointed a *District Court judge*. David Gascoigne has been appointed as *Judicial Conduct Commissioner*. Judge Mark Perkins has been appointed a *temporary Judge of the Employment Court* for two years.

Don Brash has been appointed to *chair the 2025 Taskforce* (created to look for ways to close the productivity gap between NZ and Australia by that date). NZ's new *poet laureate* is Cilla McQueen. Marion Guy, has been elected onto the *board of directors of the International Council of Nurses (ICN)*. Patsy Reddy (*chair*), Rhiannon Evans, and Charles Finny have been appointed to the *board of the NZ Film Commission*. Andrew Fenton and Brian Gargiulo have been re-elected to the *board of Horticulture NZ*. Nandor Tanczos, Anne Rush and Jimmy Wallace have been appointed to the *Creative NZ Arts Board*, and Pele Walker and Michael Prentice have been reappointed to the *CNZ Board*. John Judge has been reappointed as *chair of the Te Papa board* for one year, and new appointments to this board include Sir Wira Gardiner, Miria Pomare, Michael Bassett, and Christopher Parkin. Dr Virginia Williams has been appointed *chair of the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC)* for three years. She will also be an *ex officio member of the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC)*. Dr John Hellström has been appointed *chair of NAWAC* for three years. Cliff Tipler has been elected

chair of the Agriculture ITO (AgITO). Two new *AgITO board members* are Barbara Kuriger and Peter Langford. Laila Harre, Rob Fisher, Andy Coupe, and Colin Dale have been appointed to the *Auckland "supercity" Transition Agency*. An *Aquaculture Technical Advisory Group (TAG)* has been to provide expert input to the Government's aquaculture reform process; and its members are: Doug Kidd (*chair*), Dennis Bush-King, Mike Burrell, Kirsty Woods, Nici Gibbs, Mark Farnsworth, and Keir Volkerling. Mark Neeson has been appointed as the first *chief executive of the NZ Walking Access Commission*. Tom Rowley is the new *chair of Merino Inc*. Professor Susy Frankel and Paul Sumpter have been reappointed to the *Copyright Tribunal* for a further five years. Dr Andrew Hamer has been appointed to head the *National Cardiac Clinical Network*.

A 10-member *committee* has been appointed to develop *competence standards for financial advisers*: Sue Brown, Pip Dunphy, Liz Koh, Patrick Middleton, David Russell, Michael Staal, Ross Butler, David Ireland, and Gary Young. New appointment and re-appointments to the boards of the seven Crown research institutes include: *Industrial Research Ltd*: Michael Ahie (*deputy chair*) and Raymond Thomson; *Institute of Environmental Science and Research Ltd*: Susan Macken (*chair*), Liz Hickey and Eric Ross Peat; *Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences Ltd*: Ross Butler (*deputy chair*) and Tom Campbell; *Landcare Research NZ Ltd*: Jo Brosnahan (*chair*), John Luxton and Tania Simpson; *National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research Ltd*: Chris Mace (*chair*), Jason Shoebridge and Wendy Lawson; *NZ Forest Research Institute Ltd (Scion)*: Alison Andrew, Brian Rhodes and Peter Berg; and *The Plant and Food research Institute of NZ Ltd*: Mark Bayly and Jim Scotland. *AgResearch* has appointed Professor Warren McNabb as *Science and Technology General Manager* of its Food & Textiles Group.

Rural Bulletin is a free publication produced by Rural Women New Zealand. Its aim is to build community capacity by circulating relevant information, so people in rural and other communities have an opportunity to make informed decisions about, and have their say on, issues and changes that may affect them.

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If you would like more information about Rural Bulletin or its contents, please contact:

Craig Matthews/Paddy Twist

Editors Rural Bulletin

Tel: 04 473 5524

Fax: 04 472 8946

Email ruralbulletin@ruralwomen.org.nz

Noeline Holt

Executive Officer

Rural Women New Zealand

Tel: 04 473 5524

Fax: 04 472 8946

Email enquiries@ruralwomen.org.nz

Jackie Edkins

Communications Officer

Rural Women New Zealand

Tel: 04 473 5524

Fax: 04 472 8946

Email: enquiries@ruralwomen.org.nz

Website: www.ruralwomen.org.nz