

Rural Bulletin



October 2009

www.ruralwomen.org.nz

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NEW ZEALANDERS



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Messages from Our Supporters

Consultation

Rural Broadband Proposals

The Government has released two papers on rural telecommunications for public comment, one on rural broadband coverage, and the other on funding and the Telecommunications Service Obligations (TSO) levy.

- The rural broadband programme would connect rural schools to ultra-fast broadband, and use those connections for local rural communities as well. It is aiming to have ultra-fast broadband to 97% of NZ schools (serving 99.7% of NZ students); and
- have 97% of NZ households and enterprises able to access broadband services of 5Mbps or better.

There would be progressive network upgrades over 10 years (beginning in 2009/10), focusing in the first six years on connecting schools to ultra-fast broadband.

Funding of \$300 million for rural broadband would come from a combination of direct government funding of \$48 million, short-term funding of \$52 million, and revenue from a levy replacing the current TSO levy which would contribute around \$50 million per annum over the next six years (about \$20 million less than is currently the case).

The Government says the changes would not affect free local area phone calling.

Submissions on both papers close on 30 October 2009. Email comments on rural broadband to ruralbroadband@med.govt.nz or post them to Rural Broadband, ICT Regulatory Group, Ministry of Economic Development, PO Box 1473, Wellington 6140. Email comments on the TSO review to tsoreview@med.govt.nz or post them to TSO Reform - at the same address. The rural Broadband discussion paper is at www.med.govt.nz/rural-broadband. The TSO review discussion paper is at www.med.govt.nz/tso

Alcohol in Our Lives

The Law Commission has summarised an Issues Paper called "Alcohol In Our Lives" (NZLC IP15) which reviews laws relating to the sale and supply of liquor. It looks at changes that have taken place since 1989, the size and value of the modern alcohol industry, changes in our drinking preferences, and the availability and affordability of alcohol. It also looks at our drinking patterns, the risks and benefits of drinking, and the harms that can result from the misuse of alcohol. It concludes with an examination of some of the social factors that may be influencing our drinking and asks whether the level of harm and, in particular, the risks alcohol poses to young people, are sufficient to justify a new approach to the law.

The Commission is seeking response to a number of questions around the use of alcohol – just three of these are:

- Does the alcohol-related harm we are experiencing justify a new approach to the law?
- Do you think local views should be taken into account in respect of [liquor] licences in that area?
- Do you think there is a case for increasing tax or setting a minimum price for alcohol in order to help reduce the amount of alcohol consumed by young people and heavy drinkers?

Submissions close on 30 October 2009. Email the submission form in the summary to liquor@lawcom.govt.nz, submit online at www.talklaw.co.nz, or post submissions to Law Commission, PO Box 2590, Wellington 6140. The summary is at <http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/ProjectOccassionalPaper.aspx?ProjectID=154>

Emissions Trading Amendment Bill

Public submissions are now being invited on the Climate Change Response (Moderated Emissions Trading) Amendment Bill. This Bill amends the Climate Change Response Act 2002 to: reduce competitiveness impacts of the NZ ETS; make sure the NZ ETS is affordable in today's economic climate; make it flexible enough to respond to possible changes in post-2012 international climate change arrangements; and have it fit with the Australian Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme.

Submissions close on 13 October 2009. You can make your submission online, or send two copies to the Finance and Expenditure Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2009/0085/12.0/versions.aspx>

Tobacco Industry & Maori Inquiry

Submissions are invited on an inquiry into the tobacco industry in Aotearoa and the consequences of tobacco use for Maori. The terms of reference are to inquire into: the historical actions of the tobacco industry to promote tobacco use amongst Maori; the impact of tobacco use on the health, economic, social and cultural wellbeing of Maori; the impact of tobacco use on Maori development aspirations and opportunities; what benefits may have accrued to Maori from tobacco use; and what policy and legislative measures would be necessary to address the findings of the inquiry.

Submissions close on 29 January 2010. Online submissions can be made at <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/SC/MakeSub/>. Terms of reference are at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/SC/About/Media/11/4/2/00SCMA_MediaRelease20090923_1-Inquiry-launched-into-the-tobacco-industry.htm

NZQA's Qualifications System

The NZ Qualifications Authority (NZQA) is seeking feedback on proposed changes to NZ's qualifications system aimed at developing a unified NZ qualifications framework. These would: alter the design rules for National (standards-based) and NZ (course-based) qualifications to allow for more inclusion of local material; involve regular reviews of qualifications to find out whether they are still "fit-for-purpose"; strengthen and standardise qualification outcome statement requirements; introduce a compulsory pre-development assessment stage for qualification developers; strengthen industry involvement in qualification development; and provide the public with clear information about whether a qualification is active, inactive or closed.

Submissions close on 10 November 2009. An online submission form and more information about the review are at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications/review/index.html>

Tertiary Education Strategy

A draft Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-2015 outlines priorities for tertiary education in the next five years. These are to:

- increase the number of young people achieving at Levels Four and above, in particular completing degree-level qualifications;
- assist Maori and Pasifika students to achieve at higher levels;
- increase the number of young people moving successfully from school into tertiary education;
- continue assisting adult learners to gain literacy, language, and numeracy skills that lead to higher level study or skilled employment;
- improve the educational and financial performance of providers; and
- strengthen research outcomes.

Submissions close on 6 November 2009. Email them to tertiary.strategy@minedu.govt.nz. The draft strategy is at: www.minedu.govt.nz/TertiaryEducationStrategyConsultation

Walking Access in NZ

A draft National Strategy on Walking Access, and a draft NZ Outdoor Access Code have been published for comment by the NZ Walking Access Commission (NZWAC). NZWAC was set up to support practical, guaranteed walking access to the outdoors that the public can enjoy at no cost. Its strategy is to promote, encourage and, where appropriate, negotiate public access on foot to rivers, lakes and the coastline, and to forests, mountains and countryside.

NZWAC's Outdoor Access Code sets out the need for people to behave properly and to take responsibility for their actions in the outdoors, and it also asks landholders to continue the traditions of NZ, which have seen it as customary for landholders to give access to people wanting to cross their land.

Submissions close on 18 December 2009. Email them to to contact@walkingaccess.org.nz or post them to NZWAC, PO Box 12-348, Thorndon, Wellington 6144. Copies of the draft documents are at <http://www.walkingaccess.org.nz/page/7/Latestnews.html>, or tel 04 8940549 or contact@walkingaccess.org.nz for copies

NZ/Pacific FTA: PACER Plus

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFA) is consulting on PACER Plus, the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between NZ and Australia and the Pacific Forum Islands. NZ has a special relationship with the Pacific, and the main objectives of the FTA will be to make sure that the agreement promotes sustainable economic growth in the Pacific, and enables Pacific Island countries to capitalise on their potential for trade.

MFA is seeking feedback on (amongst other things):

- potential benefits and risks to NZ of a comprehensive trade agreement with the Pacific;

- particular areas in which PACER Plus can promote sustainable economic development in the Pacific;
- any specific information you can provide that would help to develop NZ's negotiating position; and
- outcomes that you would like to see from the negotiations.

NZ's trade with the region in 2008 was worth over one billion dollars. Of this, Pacific goods exports to NZ were worth just \$200 million, and NZ exports to Pacific nations worth over \$800 million.

Submissions close on 16 November 2009. Email them to pacerplus@mfat.govt.nz, post them to PACER Plus submissions, Pacific Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Private Bag 18901, Wellington 5045. You can also submit online. More is at <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Foreign-Relations/Pacific/Trade/0-call-for-submissions.php>

Consumer Credit Law: Review

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs has released a discussion paper proposing amendments to the Credit Contracts and Consumers Finance Act 2003. This law covers all forms of consumer credit: personal loans - including credit sales, hire purchases, credit cards, long term leases, mortgages (home loans), and housing buy-back schemes. Your feedback is sought on new credit contract rules that would (amongst other things):

- increase the amount of information the lender must disclose;
- give more access to hardship relief (when a borrower has difficulty with loan repayments);
- change credit limit extensions;
- remove unnecessary compliance costs;
- focus on reasonableness of fees and their use; and
- cap interest rates.

Submissions close on 16 November 2009. Email them to cccfa@mca.govt.nz with submission of cccfa in the subject header, or post them to J Ryan, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, PO Box 1473, Wellington. The discussion paper is at <http://www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/policylawresearch/CCCFA/discussion-document/index.html>

Consistent Disaster Safety Information

A paper called "Working from the Same Page: Consistent Messages for CDEM" was recently released for consultation. The paper was produced as an aid for people responsible for delivering disaster safety information for the general public, and to ensure consistency in public messages throughout the country. It was developed by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) in collaboration with GNS Science, NIWA, MetService, NZ Police, and NZ Fire Service.

Submissions close on 4 December 2009. Email the online submission form to consistentmessages@dia.govt.nz [Feedback form \(doc\)](#). The paper is at <http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/memwebsite.NSF/04df99318ceb3080cc256ab60012f890/5f403a6d3695f48ecc25763a00119380!OpenDocument>

Political Party/Election Funding

A discussion paper proposing new rules covering political party funding and electoral campaigning has been published for comment. Political party funding is about how candidates and political parties fund their election campaigns and related activities. Electoral campaigning includes campaigning by candidates and political parties and also campaigning by people who would like to influence the outcome of the election (e.g. special interest or lobby groups).

The paper covers: guiding principles; candidate and political party funding; campaign spending; advertising; parallel campaigning; and monitoring and complying with the rules.

Submissions close on 30 October 2009. Email them to electoralreform@justice.govt.nz, or post them to Freepost Authority No 224498, Electoral Finance Reform, Ministry of Justice, PO Box 180, Wellington 6140. The paper is at www.justice.govt.nz/electoralreform

Creative NZ's Next Plan

Creative NZ/Toi Aotearoa (CNZ) is consulting on its strategic plan for 2010-2013, covering CNZ's long- and short-term arts development outcomes. Questions for response include:

- whether you think the outcomes it proposes are the right ones;
- how you think the organisation can best support artists and arts organisations so there is a flourishing arts environment in NZ; and
- whether it has got the mix right across the different areas of its work – granting, capability building, and advocacy.

Submissions close on 16 October 2009. They go to "Strategic Plan", Creative NZ, PO Box 3806, Wellington 6140, email stratplan@creativnz.govt.nz, fax 04 471 2865. More is at <http://www.creativnz.govt.nz/Home/tabid/36/language/en-NZ/Default.aspx>, then click on "Strategic Plan Public" under "Features"

Financial Reporting Consultation

Two discussion papers - one from the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and one from the Accounting Standards Review Board (ASRB) - cover financial reporting obligations for businesses. Proposals in them are aimed at standardising the reporting system, reducing compliance costs for most small and medium-sized companies, and placing standard-setting and approval processes with one organisation. If they are adopted, NZ's reporting obligations would be similar to Australia's, making it possible to have a single set of reporting standards for businesses operating in both countries.

Submissions on both papers close on 29 January 2010. Submissions on the MED paper go to financialreporting@med.govt.nz, or post them to Review of the Financial Reporting Framework, Competition, Trade and Investment Branch, MED, PO Box 1473, Wellington, fax 04 4991 791. Email ASRB submissions to admin@asrb.co.nz, or post them to General Manager, ASRB, PO Box 12197, Wellington 6144. The MED paper is at http://www.med.govt.nz/templates/StandardSummary_187.aspx. The Accounting Standards Review Board paper is at www.asrb.co.nz

National TB Strategy Review

The National Bovine Tuberculosis (Tb) Pest Management Strategy is currently being reviewed, and your views are sought on amendments proposed by the Animal Health Board. The Tb Strategy is the legal basis for controlling Tb in cattle and deer herds, and also in populations of wild animals that can spread the disease, such as possums. The strategy has an annual budget of \$82 million per year, and it supports beef, dairy, and deer industries to compete in global markets.

The amendments, which will apply until 2025, include new targets to reduce the size of the areas where Tb is found in wild animal populations, and assessing the feasibility of completely eradicating the disease from wild animals.

Submissions close on 30 November 2009. They go to Attn: B Pereira, Minister of Agriculture, c/- MAF Biosecurity NZ, PO Box 2526, Wellington 6140, email: belita.pereira@maf.govt.nz. For hardcopies tel 0800 4 824636. The proposal is at www.tbfree.org.nz

Big Game Hunting Council Proposed

Your comments are sought on a recently released discussion paper proposing the establishment of a Big Game Hunting Council.

This council would represent the interests of hunters and game animal managers, and would manage and regulate the game animal resource, while taking into account the environmental effects of deer, tahr, chamois, and wild pigs. It would also carry out a range of tasks relating to hunting, farming and management of these animals.

Submissions close on 23 November 2009. They go to Big Game Hunting Council, PO Box 12-099, Beckenham, Christchurch 8242, or fill out the contact form at www.gameanimalcouncil.org.nz. The paper is also at www.gameanimalcouncil.org.nz

High Court Rules: Oral Evidence

It's proposed that the Rules relating to written briefs and pre-trial conferences be amended to give a Judge the power to direct that evidence be given orally, when there are disputed questions of fact or credibility issues. It is also proposed that they be amended to provide that at pre-trial conferences (or if there is no pre-trial conference, at the start of the hearing), a Judge may direct evidence to be offered orally.

Submissions close on 20 November 2009. They go to Clerk to the Rules Committee, Auckland High Court, PO Box 60, Auckland, email sophie.klinger@justice.govt.nz. More is at http://www.courtsofnz.govt.nz/about/system/rules_committee/consultation/Consultation-written-briefs-Sep-2009.pdf

Post-Christmas Mail Changes?

NZ Post is proposing to halt delivery of mail on Saturday 26 December 2009 and Saturday 2 January 2010. It says there are processing challenges because these days follow Christmas Day and New Year's Day, and that mail volumes are light at these times. Similar halts in delivery have occurred in the 1998, 1999, 2004, and 2006 Christmas/New Year holiday periods.

Submissions close on 12 October 2009. People objecting to the proposal should email postalpolicy@med.govt.nz, or mail Postal Policy Section, Ministry of Economic Development, PO Box 1473, Wellington 6140

Fisheries Consultations

These include (closing dates for submissions are in brackets):

- **North Island/West Coast Finfish Plan:** the Ministry of Fisheries (MFish) has been working with tangata whenua and stakeholders to develop a number of Fisheries Plans. These identify the benefits different stakeholders get from the fishery, set objectives for the fishery, design the management of the fishery, and make fisheries management more transparent (16 October 2009).
- **Auckland Is Squid Fishery:** MFish is consulting on an Initial Position Paper relating to plans for the squid fishery around the Auckland Islands (SQU6T) (2 November 2009).

Submissions on both go to T Steel, Ministry of Fisheries, PO Box 1020, Wellington, email tracey.steel@fish.govt.nz More on both consultations is at <http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Consultations/default.htm>

MAF Biosecurity NZ Consultation

MAF Biosecurity is currently consulting on a Draft Import Health Standard for Pig Meat and Pig Meat Products from Finland or Sweden.

Submissions close on 9 November 2009. Email them to animalimports@maf.govt.nz, or post them to Animal Imports, MAF Biosecurity NZ, PO Box 2526, Wellington 6140, fax 04 894 0733. More is at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/biosec/consult>

Food Standards Consultation

Food Standards Australia NZ (FSANZ) invites comments on a possible change to the Australia-NZ Food Standards Code, concerning the use of phytosterols in reduced fat cheese (phytosterol esters are used to help consumers reduce blood cholesterol levels).

Submissions close on 4 November 2009. Email them to info@foodstandards.govt.nz, or post them to FSANZ PO Box 10559, The Terrace, Wellington 6036, fax 04 473 9855. More is at www.foodstandards.govt.nz

Food/Nutrition: Older People

A Ministry of Health (MoH) draft paper called "Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Healthy Older People: A background paper" produced for health workers focuses on how healthy older people can improve nutrition, increase physical activity, and reduce obesity.

Submissions close on 6 November 2009. Submissions (using a submission booklet at the end of the paper) go to Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Healthy Older People, Ministry of Health, PO Box 5013, Wellington, email nutritionguidelinesop@moh.govt.nz. More is at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/food-nutrition-guidelines-healthy-older-people-consultation>

Workplaces: Airborne Lead

Changes are proposed to the workplace exposure standard for airborne lead (inorganic dusts and fumes, as lead). The NZ Workplace Exposure Standard (WES) for inorganic airborne lead would be reduced to bring the WES into line with current international best practice.

Submissions close on 23 October 2009. They go to Department of Labour Workplace Services, PO Box 105 146, Auckland 1143, Attention: P Gibson, email philippa.gibson@dol.govt.nz More about inorganic lead is at <http://www.dol.govt.nz/consultation/wes-airborne-lead/more-info.asp>

IRD Consultations:

Current consultations from the Inland Revenue Department (IRD) are:

- **Changes to tax rules relating to the development of a domestic bond market.** A paper, "AIL, NRWT and the bond market", looks at whether AIL - the approved issuer levy - should apply at a zero rate, rather than the usual 2% on interest paid on corporate bonds that meet certain criteria. This would make it marginally cheaper for NZ businesses to issue bonds to non-residents. NZ 's corporate bond market is a very small but growing part of NZ's financial system, with corporate bonds on issue having risen in value from \$12 billion to \$23 billion since 2005. Submissions close on 30 October 2009. They go to NRWT and the bond market, C/- Deputy Commissioner, Policy, Policy Advice Division, Inland Revenue Department, PO Box 2198, Wellington 6140, email policy.webmaster@ird.govt.nz (with "AIL, NRWT and the bond market" in the subject line). The paper is at <http://www.taxpolicy.ird.govt.nz/>
- **Deductibility of break fee paid by a landlord to exit early from a fixed interest rate loan;** and deductibility of break fee paid by a landlord to vary the interest rate of an existing fixed interest rate loan. Submissions close on 6 November 2009. Send comments to public.consultation@ird.govt.nz, with reference number PUB0160. A draft paper covering both is at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/public-consultation/>

- **GST - Apportionment of the cost of bare land for the purposes of a change-in-use adjustment.** Considers the appropriate way of deciding the cost of bare land in situations where a registered person buys land for a taxable purpose and then uses part of that land for private or exempt purposes. Submissions close on 30 October 2009. Email them to public.consultation@ird.govt.nz, or post them to Team Manager, Technical Services, Office of the Chief Tax Counsel, National Office, Inland Revenue Department, PO Box 2198, Wellington. More is at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/resources/c/6/c67ff1004fadaf6b8a7eeb53c1fd2485/pub0153.pdf>

NZFSA Consultations

The NZ Food Safety Authority (NAFSA) is currently consulting on:

- **Changes to the ACVM Regulations 2001:** as a result of the passing of the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines (ACVM) Act 2007, which include requirements for manufacturing, advertising, and own use that will apply to all exempt products; and add four new exemptions from registration. Submissions close on 30 October 2009. They go to Policy Group, NZ Food Safety Authority, PO Box 2835, Wellington, fax: (04) 894 2583, email policy@nzfsa.govt.nz More on the transport and wharf handling of exports is at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consultation/transport-wharf/index.htm>. More is at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consultation/acvm-act-changes/index.htm>
- **Animal products: transport & wharf handling:** proposals cover animal products control schemes for transport, and wharf handling of exported animal products. Submissions close on 16 October 2009. Email them to robyn.scully@nzfsa.govt.nz or post them to R Scully, Coordinator (Administration), Standards NZFSA, PO Box 2835, Wellington. More is at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consultation/transport-wharf/index.htm>

ERMA Consultations

The Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) is currently consulting on (submission closing dates are in brackets):

- **ERMA200066:** modified reassessment for use of chlorpropham (21 October 2009);
- **ERMA200096:** to import Seguris as a fungicide for the control of foliar diseases in wheat and barley (21 October 2009);
- **HSR09049:** to import Equilintex Veterinary Dressing for use as a dressing for horses (21 October 2009); and
- **ERMA200072:** to import and re-pack Jupiter for release to use for the control of various fungal diseases in a range of crops (19 October 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/mansubmission.html>

Electricity Commission Consultations

The Commission is currently consulting on (closing dates are in brackets):

- **Part D – Issues and Proposed Options. Part D of the Electricity Governance Rules.** Sets out participants' obligations in relation to metering standards. More is at <http://www.electricitycommission.govt.nz/consultation/part-d-options/view> (9 November 2009);
- **Proposed amendments to parts E and J of the Rules, and to affected sections of parts A and H.** More is at <http://www.electricitycommission.govt.nz/consultation/amend-e-j/view> (16 October 2009);
- **Four high level dispatchable demand options.** More is at <http://www.electricitycommission.govt.nz/consultation/dispatchable-demand/view> (16 November 2009);
- **Proposed availability and reliability measures - interconnection asset services.** More is at <http://www.electricitycommission.govt.nz/consultation/indexmeasures/view> (16 October 2009);
- **A Revision of the Information System Definition document.** More is at <http://www.electricitycommission.govt.nz/consultation/revision-ISD/view> (16 October 2009); and
- **2009 Grid Planning Assumptions.** More is at <http://www.electricitycommission.govt.nz/consultation/09-gpa/view> (23 October 2009)

Email submissions to submissions@electricitycommission.govt.nz, noting the name of the consultation in the subject header. Alternatively, post them to: K Hudson, Electricity Commission, Level 7, ASB Bank Tower, 2 Hunter Street, P O Box 10041, Wellington

Rural

World Rural Women's Day

World Rural Women's Day (WRWD) (also known as the International Day of Rural Women) is celebrated on 15 October each year. Established by the United Nations General Assembly, WRWD recognises "the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty."

Rural Women NZ is undertaking a number of activities to mark the day, including (amongst many others) seminars on innovation and enterprise, crafts and flax weaving exhibitions, and overviews of rural businesses.

Further information on World Rural Women's Day can be found at http://www.ifap.org/en/issues/documents/WRWD2009_EN.pdf and <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/idrw/> and information on RWNZ activities can be found at <http://www.ruralwomen.org.nz/calendar.htm>

Global Alliance on Ag Emissions?

The Government has appointed an Envoy to promote the idea of a Global Alliance Research Alliance on how to cut world-wide greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture. It says to produce more food without growing emissions need to be found - and it will be agriculture that will have to meet the expected increase in global food demand over the coming decades. International research and investment into new technologies and practices will help reduce agriculture-related emissions.

Almost half of all NZ's emissions come from agriculture.

Milk Pricing Rules Amended

The pricing formula for regulated milk is to be amended to take effect in the 2010/11 season. The amendments apply to the wholesale pricing formula used to decide how much independent milk processors pay for milk that Fonterra has to provide them with under the Dairy Industry Restructuring Act (DIRA). The new formula will price milk at the farm-gate price* plus 10 cents per kilogram of milk solids.

Fonterra's supply requirements are set to lapse by 2013, and the dairy sector will be consulted about the future of regulated milk supply. *The farm-gate price is the net value of the milk when it leaves the farm, after any marketing costs have been subtracted.

Rural Property Market

The latest figures for the rural property market are:

- the median (mid-point) price for farms nationwide dropped slightly in the three months to August 2009 at \$1,000,000 - compared with \$1,200,000 in the three months to July 2009 (although it has risen in five out of 14 regions);
- there were 183 farm sales nationally in the three months to August 2009 compared with 229 in the three months to July 2009 and 516 in the three months to August 2008;
- the biggest number of sales were grazing properties with 99 properties changing hands in the three months to August 2009 compared with 108 in the three months to July 2009; and
- the national median price for lifestyle properties in the three months to August 2009 is \$430,000, exactly the same as the corresponding period in 2007 and up by \$10,000 on the three months to July 2009.

More is at <http://www.reinz.org.nz/>

Wine Exports: Snapshot

The NZ wine industry has achieved \$1 billion in exports a year ahead of schedule. Wine exports represent 2.2% of total goods exports and the industry supports 16,500 full-time jobs. The industry contributes more than \$1.5 billion to NZ's GDP. A 2009 report from NZ Institute of Economic Research showed wine exports have grown at a compound rate of nearly 24% (23.8%) each year for the past 20 years, four times the growth rate for all goods exports.

Kiwi Wine Habits

Kiwis prefer wine produced on home soil says a nationwide "Kiwi Wine Habits" survey commissioned by the Liquorland Top 100. In fact, 91% of the 1,700 survey respondents said they would chose wine made in NZ over wine produced overseas. Also, 37.4% of respondents don't mind what NZ region the wine comes from, as long as it tastes good. Sauvignon Blanc is the most popular wine choice, with 87.1% of NZers saying they have tried it. This was closely followed by 86.8% who have tried Chardonnay. However, it seems Kiwis aren't very adventurous with their wine choices, with only 22.9% having tried Viognier, and only 17.6% of respondents having tried Chenin Blanc.

Environment

Climate Change Industry Grows

Industries involved in responses to climate change now outstrip the global aeronautics or defence industries, according to a new study by HSBC Global Research, which forecasts global revenues from climate-related businesses will surpass US\$2 trillion by 2020. Citing the 2006 Stern Review, which predicted US\$500 billion in climate-related business activity by 2020, HSBC says the world passed that mark in 2008, with a 75% increase in revenues in the sector in one year, to \$US530 billion.

The US, Japan, France, Germany, and Spain account for 76% of global climate revenues, with low-carbon energy production, energy efficiency, control of water, waste and pollution, and climate finance leading the way. Energy efficiency recorded the highest investment returns for the 2008 year, followed by carbon finance at 24%.

More is at <http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-BusinessofGreen/idUSTRE58H2FM20090918>

New Environmental Protection Authority

Major resource consent applicants can now apply directly to the new national Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) rather than submitting their applications to regional and local authorities. Decisions would be made through a single process involving both local and national considerations, with the aim of speeding up decision-making on important projects.

The EPA is a statutory body currently sited within the Ministry for the Environment. However, the Government says it could be the national regulator on environmental issues, with possible briefs of environmental responsibility for NZ 's exclusive economic zone, oversight of hazardous substances and new organisms, and the administrative functions of the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). The Ministry for the Environment would then become a smaller policy agency.

More is at www.epa.govt.nz

Global Carbon Emissions Drop

Global carbon emissions are expected to post their biggest drop in more than 40 years in 2009 as the global recession froze economic activity and slashed energy use around the world.

The main factor behind this year's drop in emissions is the slowdown in industrial activity and trade around the world, according to a study due to be released in November by the International Energy Agency. However, the energy agency, which provides policy advice and research to industrialized nations, found that government actions had also contributed to the drop in emissions. The agency said it expected to see global carbon emissions fall 2.6% this year.

More at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/22/science/earth/22emissions.html?_r=1

Garden Bird Survey Results

Early results from the 2009 Garden Bird Survey show that the house sparrow was again the most common species. The average of 12.2 per garden was higher than last year (11.4) and the year before (9.4) and, as in previous years, house sparrow numbers were higher in the north than in the south.

Another major result was the significant decrease in silver-eye numbers. There is a continuing increase in tui numbers, a large increase in myna numbers, and a decrease in greenfinch numbers.

Final results of the survey will be posted on the Landcare Research website.

More at <http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/biocons/gardenbird/>

Tourism

NZ a Top Destination... Again

For the sixth year in a row, NZ has been ranked in the top five best destinations in the world by readers of the prestigious Condé Nast Traveller magazine. NZ was placed second after Italy, Turkey was third, and Australia was fourth. UK holidaymakers also recognised NZ as their favourite long-haul country, and Air NZ took second-place in the long-haul airlines category.

Tourism Confidence Growing

The Tourism Industry Monitor's (TIM) confidence index shows that confidence is returning to the tourism industry, with optimists now slightly outweighing pessimists for the first time since the monitor began in March this year. Forty-four percent of those surveyed believe that demand for tourism products will increase in the next three months, compared to the same period last year. Forty-one percent believe that demand will fall. The balance thought it would be the same.

For a copy of the Tourism Industry Monitor visit www.tourismresearch.govt.nz/tim

New Cycleway Research Report

According to a new market research report released by the Ministry of Tourism, the country's cycling market has the potential to more than double the amount of money tourists currently spend each year – from \$320 million to \$640 million. The report says this estimate is heavily dependent on NZ getting cycle tourism right, providing safe trails with good support services and amenities - including accommodation and information, and investing strongly in marketing the entire experience.

Other findings include:

- there is much potential in the Australian cycling market (which grew by 21% in Australia last year); and
- after Australia, our next largest cycling markets are the UK and the US.

The NZ Cycleway Market Research Report is available at:
<http://www.tourism.govt.nz/cycleway>

Health and Welfare

Review of Food Act

The Government is reviewing the Food Act. Proposed changes include:

- a shift in responsibility from Government to food business operators (most will be required to have either custom-made food control plans or off-the-peg Food Control Plans depending on the complexity of their operation - unless they are low risk e.g. fundraisers, bed and breakfast businesses);
- clarification of the NZ Standard for all food sold within, and exported from, this country;
- a national restaurant grading system;
- replacement of the Food Hygiene Regulations 1974; and
- improvement of penalty provisions.

Local councils will provide a "one stop shop" advisory service for all new businesses.

The food sector has an estimated annual turnover of \$22 billion and employs more than 20 percent of working NZers. Food accounts for exports of \$18 billion and this is expected to continue to grow over the next 10 years with the support of a new Act.

A copy of the relevant Cabinet paper is at www.nzfsa.govt.nz

Decline in GPs Stalled

GP numbers have been boosted with a record number of doctors completing their specialist training in general practice and receiving admission to fellowship of the Royal NZ College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP) in 2009. The college welcomed 41 GPs of over 160 admitted to fellowship in 2009 at its annual graduation ceremony.

Be Protected Against Measles...

With a potential measles epidemic looming, young people aged 13 to 20 years are urged to get vaccinated if they currently have no protection against measles. The Ministry of Health notes there is more than a 90 percent chance that an unimmunised person will catch measles if they come into contact with someone who is infected and about one in 1000 people who catch it will die from the disease.

For more information talk to your doctor or call the Immunisation Advisory Centre on 0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863). You can go to <http://www.immune.org.nz> or <http://www.moh.govt.nz/immunisation>

...& Whooping Cough on the Up

From January to August there have been 876 notified cases of whooping cough - more than four times higher than the number of notified cases for the same period last year; and a further surge in cases is expected later this year or next year. Infants who have whooping cough may not be able to feed or breathe properly, and may need to be hospitalised.

The best way to protect babies is to make sure they are immunised at six weeks, and three and five months. Health workers who in close contact with newborns and young babies are also being offered free whooping cough immunisations. This is because babies who may not yet have had all their whooping cough immunisations can catch whooping cough from adults.

Rural Health: the Innovators

The six successful applicants of the Health Ministry's 2009/2010 Rural Innovation Fund are:

- a teleradiology project for Fiordland Medical Practice;
- Otaki PHO's GP-led clinics targeting Kohanga Reo and Kindergartens;
- Waiuku Medical Centre's Mauri Ora;
- Tararua PHO's Mobile Service Delivery;
- Waikato Community Pharmacy Group's Counselling and Medication project for patients with mild to moderate depression; and
- Western Bay of Plenty PHO's Flying Doctor Service.

The fund is a one-off grant of up to \$50,000 for each successful applicant for a 12-month project.

Prostate Cancer Testing at 40

The age at which men are recommended to first have a test to help identify prostate cancer has been reduced from 50 to 40 years of age. The recommendation from the Urological Society of Australia and NZ (USANZ), is based on evidence that the earlier diagnosis of prostate cancer will reduce the risk of death from the disease. Each week more than 10 men under the age of 50 will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in Australia and NZ.

Iodised Salt in Breads

The salt used to make bread in NZ (excepting organic and salt-free breads, and some home-bake bread mixes) is to be replaced with iodised salt this month. The iodisation of bread means that people will not have to increase their salt intake in order to improve their iodine intake.

There is a fact-sheet on this topic at http://www.foodstandards.govt.nz/_srcfiles/Fact%20Sheet%20-%20Iodine%20%28July%2009%29.pdf

A Guide for Carers...

From Carers NZ, the NZ Carers Alliance, and the Ministry of Social Development, this guide offers practical help for people caring for family or friends who are older or have ill health, a disability or a mental health, alcohol or other drug issue. It also includes information on government-funded services and supports available for carers, e.g. financial help; needs assessments (NASC); help at home; help if you need a break; help related to children with special education needs; health and disability rights; and equipment and modifications.

The guide is at <http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/our-work/community-development/ngo-study-awards/index.html>, or call 0800 559 009 for a hard copy

... & a Question of Continence

New resources for family carers who manage continence needs at home include: free advice on continence (assessment, treatment and other aids); a national continence helpline; a listen and learn series; and continence advice in each issue of the free quarterly magazine, Family Care NZ.

The national continence helpline is 0800 650 659; to subscribe to Family Care NZ freephone Carers NZ 0800 777 797 or email info@carers.net.nz; the Listen and Learn series is at <http://www.familycareradio.net.nz/>; and the NZCA website is at www.continence.org.nz

Disaster Awareness Week

Disaster Awareness Week is 11-17 Oct 2009. The national theme for the week is "Get Ready Get Thru" and local civil defence and emergency management groups will be focusing on specific aspects such as water, schools, businesses etc.

More is at <http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/memwebsite.nsf>. Note: TV3 will be re-screening the Aftershock doco-drama at 8.30 pm on Saturday 17 October

Cigarette Packet Warnings: Research

A research team from the University of Otago has looked at the placement of cigarette pack warnings after these became mandatory in August 2008 (the law says tobacco companies must distribute evenly the different graphic health warnings over all cigarette packs). However, the research shows the strongest health warning graphics appear to be printed less often than less disturbing images.

Read the press release at <http://www.voxy.co.nz/national/new-cigarette-health-warning-regulations-not-being-followed/5/25387>

Education/Training

Private Schools & the Law

The Law Commission has issued a report on the law relating to private schools. It notes that the private school sector in NZ is generally strong, but says that the sector is governed by legislation which is past its use-by date. Some legislation has not been reviewed since 1921, and its language is outdated and vague.

While the law imposes a number of obligations on private schools, the only action which can be taken against a school which breaks the rules is total deregistration - there is nothing in between.

Some provisions are hard to find and hard to understand and do not give much guidance, either to the schools themselves, or to the government organisations that have to make the decisions.

There are also some gaps in the law. For example, there are currently no restrictions at all on who can set up a private school; and there is no obligation to look after students' welfare.

The report recommends a modernisation of the legislation, and a clarification of its vague language.

Download the report from <http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/ProjectReport.aspx?ProjectID=142>

Special Education Review

The Ministry of Education has published terms of reference for the coming review of special education, together with a set of guiding principles. The review will look at key issues such as access to schools, quality of workforce, accountability, price and volume of services, and how to address these within existing funding. The first phase of the review (currently underway) is considering:

- how special education funding and services are allocated for children with high and very high needs (in respect of fairness, reducing barriers, and the Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes);
- the schooling choices parents have for their children with high and very high needs; and
- how the performance and accountability of providers of services is measured.

Phase two, due to start later on in the year covers:

- the confidence and capability of the workforce of people supporting parents and teachers, and working directly with children with special education needs;
- how young people transitioning from school to life after school are supported;
- improvements to the Ministry of Education's responsiveness, and administrative processes; and
- how different agencies working together can be better coordinated, so children and families can get what they need when they need it.

A consultation paper is to be published in early November. To register your interest in receiving this paper email SE.review@minedu.govt.nz

Tertiary High School Approved

Funding of just over \$1 million has been confirmed for a new tertiary high school at Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT) - the first programme of its kind in NZ.

Tertiary high schools provide an alternative for young people who are motivated to succeed, but for whom school isn't necessarily the best fit. A four-year programme will enable students to achieve NCEA and also get credits toward a tertiary-level qualification offered by MIT. The students will be dual-enrolled at their school and at MIT and they will maintain strong links to their school and to school activities. The school will have 80 Year-11 students enrolling in February next year, and a further 80 Year-11 students will be enrolled each year for the following three years. By 2013, it's expected the school will have reached its full roll of 320.

Jump Start to Youth Guarantee

A "jump-start to the Youth Guarantee" is aimed at young people who are ready to move beyond school, but who still want to study and learn practical skills. They will get the opportunity to participate in a range of free vocational programmes provided by private training establishments, institutes of technology and polytechnics (including courses in tourism and travel, agriculture, building, plumbing, hospitality and catering).

Around 2000 student places are to be allocated across NZ in 2010 and again in 2011. Places have been allocated to regions of high need, based on the number of unemployed young people in the population, and on the quality of proposals.

For more information on the 28 providers that have been approved, and on the Youth Guarantee, go to www.tec.govt.nz

Agriculture ITO: Literacy project

To reduce literacy as a barrier to learning and productive workplace practice, the Agriculture Industry Training Organisation (ITO) is leading a \$455,000 project, funded by the Tertiary Education Commission, aimed at improving training delivery in the shearing and wool handling industries.

A Canadian study has found productivity gains of 2.5% and a 1.5% rise in GDP per head are linked to a 1% rise in literacy, relative to international averages. In NZ, a workplace literacy group estimates four out of ten people in the workforce have literacy and numeracy issues that may impact on their ability to do their jobs, and for agriculture, the rate is estimated to be even higher, at 48%.

More at <http://www.agricultureito.ac.nz/AboutUs/Newspublications/PressReleases/Agriculture-ITO-leads-literacy-project/agricultureitoleadsliteracyproject.jasc>

Tertiary Education & Earnings...

A new study from Statistics NZ, the Ministry of Education, the Department of Labour, Inland Revenue, and the Tertiary Education Commission shows that:

- students who left with a Master's degree in 2003 earned 16% more than those who left with a Bachelor's degree;
- students gaining a Bachelor's degree earned 51% more than those who gained a certificate at level 1 to 3 (upper-secondary level equivalent) three years post-study;
- students who left with level 5 to 7 certificates or diplomas earned 16% more, and those with level 4 certificates earned 4% more, than those with level 1 to 3 qualifications;
- earnings of people who left workplace-based industry training during 2003–05, with a level 4 qualification or higher improved more than the earnings of those with similar characteristics who did not undertake industry training. The improvement was much greater for males who were aged 15–24 years when training started (11%), than for males aged 25 years and over, or females (3% and 2%, respectively);
- gaining a level 3 qualification improved the average earnings of males by 2%, but not those of females; and
- completing a level 1 or 2 qualification did not improve the earnings of trainees compared with those who did not undertake training.

More is at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/Corporate/Corporate/CorporateCommunities_MRSept09.aspx

...& Tertiary Education Benefits Economies

A recently released OECD report "Education at a Glance 2009" indicates that government budgets and the overall economy reap an advantage from having higher numbers of university graduates. According to the report, the average net public return across OECD countries from providing a male student with a university education is almost US\$52,000, nearly twice the average amount of money originally invested (for female

students, the average net public return is lower because of their lower subsequent earnings).

Other findings include:

- the number of people with university degrees or other tertiary qualifications has risen on average in OECD countries by 4.5% each year between 1998 and 2006;
- in 2007, one in three people in OECD countries aged between 25 and 34 had a tertiary level qualification; and
- people who complete a high-school education tend to enjoy better health than those who quit at the minimum leaving age.

Find out more at http://www.oecd.org/document/48/0,3343,en_2649_37455_43626864_1_1_1_1,00.html

Schools: Sun Protection Audit

A survey of 500 schools is being carried out across the country to check how well they are protecting their pupils from sunburn. This survey (along with on-site visits relating to the survey, which will be carried out in Term 1 of 2010) will come four years after the Cancer Society's National SunSmart Schools Accreditation Programme was launched (the Programme now has over 300 schools registered with it).

More about the Programme at <http://www.sunsmartschools.co.nz/ssap.asp>

Teaching Samoan: Guidelines

Guidelines and a new multi-media resource for the teaching and learning of Samoan have been published for use in early childhood services, and primary and secondary schools. They are: Ta'iala mo le Gagana Samoa: The Gagana Samoa Guidelines, and Mua Ō! An Introduction to Gagana Samoa (for years 7-10 students).

More than 130,000 people in NZ identify as Samoan, and the Samoan language is the third most spoken language in NZ.

Transport

Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal Reports

Annual reports (to June 2009) of the two Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal (MVDT) adjudicators have been published, and amongst the recommendations is one that the Consumer Guarantees Act be amended to cover vehicles sales through competitive tender and auction.

The MVDT provides a low-cost option through which consumers can have motor vehicle disputes addressed.

The reports are at www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz

NZ's Most Stolen Cars...

The top 10 are: 1. Nissan Silvia; 2. Subaru Impreza; 3. Nissan Skyline; 4. Subaru Legacy; 5. Mitsubishi Legnum; 6. Honda Integra; 7. Subaru Forester; 8. Mazda Lantis; 9. Honda Prelude; and 10. Mazda Familia. Thieves tend to prefer pre-2000 models, probably because older cars lack the sophisticated security systems of newer models, such as electronic locking, alarms and immobilisers, so are simply easier to steal.

... & Motor Vehicle Crashes: 2008

Statistics from traffic crash reports completed by police officers who attend fatal and injury crashes show that during 2008 there were 331 fatal road crashes; 11,316 injuries as a result of road crashes; 366 casualty deaths; and 15,174 casualty injuries.

Casualty rates for 2008 were: 1.1 deaths per 10,000 vehicles; 47 injuries per 10,000 vehicles; 8.6 deaths per 100,000 population; and 356 injuries per 100,000 population.

More is at
<http://www.transport.govt.nz/research/MotorVehicleCrashesinNewZealand2008/>

Housing

New Regulations: Real Estate Industry

Four sets of new regulations will underpin the Real Estate Agents Act 2008 and the new regulatory regime. The regulations are:

- **The Real Estate Agents (Audit) Regulations 2009** - that deal with the audit and use of trust accounts that agents must operate;
- **Real Estate Agents (Complaints and Discipline) Regulations 2009** - that address procedural aspects of the new complaints and discipline process;
- **Real Estate Agents (Duties of Licensees) Regulations 2009** - that set out the forms that licensees must use to satisfy certain disclosure obligations and to get informed consent before they or a related person can acquire an interest in a client's property or business; and
- **Real Estate Agents (Licensing) Regulations 2009** - that deal with the licensing process, including application forms and the educational prerequisites for each of the three classes of licence (agent, salesperson, and branch manager).

The regulations come into force on 17 November 2009. Copies of the regulations at http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/results.aspx?search=ts_regulation_real+estate_resel&p=1

Recent Property Figures...

REINZ figures show that, in the three months to August, housing prices increased by 1.6%. Compared to 12 months earlier, the

REINZ Housing Price Index increased by 2.6%. Housing prices are 6.2% below their November 2007 peak.

In the Auckland region, housing prices in August were 4.4% above those in August 2008 with housing prices in Wellington (up 7.5%) and in Other North Island (up 0.3%) also up. By contrast, Christchurch housing prices were down from the year earlier levels (down 2.3%) with Other South Island (down 0.4%) suburbs also below year earlier levels.

The REINZ Monthly Residential Section Price Index increased by 2.1% in the August month and by 0.2% in the three months to August, but are still 14.5% lower than the same month last year.

...& Housing Consents

Building consents were authorised for 1,165 new housing units, excluding apartments, in August 2009, according to Statistics NZ. This is the highest monthly number since September 2008, although it remains at a low level. For the August 2009 year, the value of consents issued for residential buildings fell 27%, while the value for non-residential buildings rose 8%, compared with the August 2008 year.

State Houses for Sale

Housing NZ (HNZ) is offering state house tenants living in homes identified for sale the chance to them. Tenants who live in houses not for sale who want to buy one will also be given the option to buy other HNZ properties that are for sale.

There are no government subsidies to assist in buying a state home, but some people may qualify for a Welcome Home Loan (which has a lower deposit requirement than other loans provided by some banks).

Tenants can register their interest by calling 0800 801 601, or by calling into the local Neighbourhood Unit. For more on Welcome Home Loans call 0508 WELCOME (935 266), or visit www.welcomehomeloan.co.nz

Energy

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Update

Total emissions from greenhouse gases has increased over the June 2009 quarter in line with the normal seasonal variation from higher winter demand being largely met from fossil fuels, particularly coal. However, total greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation this quarter were 23% lower.

More at www.med.govt.nz/energyoutlook

Warmer Home Grants Popular

A ShapeNZ survey of 1578 homeowners and landlords (commissioned by the NZ Business Council for Sustainable Development) indicates that 28%, or about 280,000 homeowners, are thinking of applying for new Government insulation grants. Of these, about 106,000 intend applying in the next 12 months. This could push demand well beyond the Governments

four-year target of insulating and improving heating in 180,000 homes through the \$323 million Warm Up NZ: Heat Smart programme.

People on high incomes are the most likely to afford and take up the grants for insulation and heating.

A full report on the survey is available at <http://www.nzbcscd.org.nz/story.asp?StoryID=1024>

Informed Power Switching Easier

Consumer NZ and the Electricity Commission now have gas comparisons and retailer service performance ratings on their updated Powerswitch website. Other new features on the website include historical pricing, which allows visitors to view pricing trends for electricity retailers in their area. They can then see where in the pricing cycle an electricity retailer is, and over time, what their pricing strategies are.

The site, which allows people to compare electricity retailers in their area to find the cheapest price, saw a 72% growth to 200,000 visitors last year. This year it is up another 26%.

More is at <http://www.consumer.org.nz/powerswitch>

Home Energy Use Under Spotlight

BRANZ (Building Research Association of NZ) is conducting a nationwide study titled "Key Energy Uses". This looks at how heat pumps are used, their performance, installation quality, electricity use (summer and winter), and temperatures in homes with heat pumps (an estimated 28% of homes use heat pumps). In particular, BRANZ is interested in how electricity consumption patterns are changing as a result of heat pump use.

The new study will also examine the growing use of entertainment equipment (e.g. LCDs) in homes to find out how they are affecting electricity use.

More about BRANZ is at www.branz.co.nz

Methanol Production Up

Methanol production in NZ leapt 63% in the first half of this 2009 to 397,000 tonnes, from 244,000 tonnes in the corresponding 2008 half, as a result of the Canadian company Methanex re-starting one of the two 900,000 tonne-a year capacity units at the Motunui plant in Taranaki. Methanex believes recent gas discoveries and further expansion of existing fields mean there will be enough gas to meet the methanol industry's needs for at least 8 years.

Justice/the Law

Latest Crime Statistics

The latest statistics for 2008 indicate that:

- there was a 3.7% increase in total recorded crime for the year. Counting in a population increase of just under 1 percent during that time, recorded offences per 10,000 population increased by 2.8%;
- recorded violence rose 7% during the year, driven mainly by recorded family violence which increased 13.5%. In 2008, police responded to 82,692 incidents and offences relating to family violence, and 23 murders were classified as family violence murders;
- there were increases in drugs offences, sexual offences and dishonesty offences;
- there were decreases in homicides and robberies;
- the police recorded 442,540 offences compared with 426,690 last year; and
- police resolved 212,038 offences to increase the resolution rate from 47.0 to 47.9%.

Public Sector/Local Govt

Just One Elections Administrator

NZ's three elections administrators (the Chief Electoral Officer, the Electoral Commission, and the Chief Registrar of Electors through the Electoral Enrolment Centre) are to be replaced with a single independent Electoral Commission.

The functions of the Electoral Commission and the Chief Electoral Office will be amalgamated first (before the 2011 general election), then the functions of the Chief Registrar of Electors will be transferred to the new Electoral Commission in the next parliamentary term.

A Bill is due to be introduced to Parliament later this year to establish the new Crown entity.

Defence Force Annual report

The NZ Defence Force (NZDF) latest annual report shows that as at 30 June 2009, NZDF's Regular Force numbers were at a 10-year high, while attrition – the rate at which people were leaving the organisation – was at a 10-year low. At the end of the reporting period there were a total of 14,612 regular force, reservists and civilians in the Defence Force – up by 723 on 2008. Regular Force numbers were at 9,702, up by 424. Total personnel numbers have increased in all three Services (Navy, Army and Air Force).

Download the report from <http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/public-documents/annual-report/default.htm>

Local Authorities' Operating Costs

Local authorities' spending on operating costs increased 3.2% to \$1.762 billion, while operating revenue rose 0.8% to \$1.661 billion in the June 2009 quarter, Statistics NZ said recently. These rises produced an operating deficit of \$101.0 million.

For the year ended June 2008, compared with the year ended June 2007, local authority operating expenditure increased 10.2% to \$6.209 billion and operating revenue rose 6.9% to \$6.153 billion, to produce an annual operating deficit of \$56.3 million. After allowing for non-operating items such as extraordinary gains or losses and asset revaluations, local authorities recorded a surplus of \$1.303 billion.

More is at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/government_finance/local_government/LocalAuthorityStatistics_MRJun09qtr.aspx

Not-for-Profits

Latest NZCCSS Vulnerability Report

The NZ Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) recently released its latest Vulnerability Report. Among the main findings are:

- the number of people receiving the unemployment benefit has trebled in the year to June 2009;
- community based agencies are reporting significant and ongoing increases in demand for social services; and
- in response to the volume of new work some agencies have introduced waitlists, arranged shorter appointment times, reduced follow up work, and in a couple of cases have reduced the contents of food parcels.

The report says impact of the recession has been uneven. Job losses have been acutely felt in metropolitan centres where the cost of living is high. Pressure points are in the areas of emergency food (parcels and meals), housing (such as night shelters), and budget advisory services. Financial stress has been made worse by mid-winter power bills.

New client groups include formerly high- and middle-income families trying to service mortgages on dramatically reduced incomes. There are also growing numbers of older people approaching food banks for the first time - mortified at having to seek assistance.

Download the report at http://www.nzccss.org.nz/site/page.php?page_id=118

“High Trust” Contracting Model

Under this new Government contracting model, the multiple contract some not-for-profits will be combined into a single contract, with simplified reporting requirements that are results-based. It will initially be trialled with two providers; Waipuna Youth and Community Trust in Christchurch, and Ngati Awa

Social Services in Whakatane. It's aimed to have 20 providers involved by mid-2010.

Not-for-Profit Workers' Wages

This year's Strategic Pay Not-for-Profit Sector Remuneration Survey 2009 was based on an analysis of 6,811 employees representing 225 organisations - an increase of 77 organisations and almost 2,600 participants over last year.

The key finding of the survey is the size of the pay gap between the not-for-profit sector and the broader employment market. At 1 May 2009, the difference in average salary between the not-for-profit and the public sectors was 14.6%, and the difference in average salary between the not-for-profit sector and the general market was 16.8%. The survey also shows that 48.2% of not-for-profit staff work part-time.

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

Govt/Community Consultation

Following consultation on a discussion paper called “It's More Than Talk”, the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (OCVS) and the Building Better Government Engagement Reference Group have published two papers on government-community consultation:

- **Talkback** - a summary of feedback on the discussion paper; and
- **From Talk to Action: Government Engagement with Citizens and Communities** - the final report and recommendations to government.

The papers and a Cabinet paper with the Government's response to the recommendations are at <http://www.ocvs.govt.nz/work-programme/three-key-projects/building-better-government-engagement.html>

The Generosity Project

Philanthropy NZ, Volunteering NZ, and the OCVS have developed a Generosity Project which looks at ways to encourage individuals and businesses to give time, money, in-kind donations, and acts of kindness to local community organisations. Amongst these are:

- using social networking sites to promote generosity;
- promoting the “three money box initiative” for children - one for spending, one for saving, one to give to charity;
- encouraging “giving circles” to encourage people to be involved in giving money and time; and
- establishing a corporate social responsibility network.

More, including contact details for the seven main projects is at <http://www.ocvs.govt.nz/work-programme/promoting-generosity.html#7keyprojectsunderway3>

School Holiday Programme: Tenders

A Break-Away School Holiday Programme is being set up to provide daily holiday activity programmes for young people aged 11-17 years who would not normally have access to them. The Government is funding 15,000 places over the 12-week school holiday period to June 2010 and 30,000 places each year from July 2010. Family and Community Services (within the Ministry of Social Development) will contract community-based providers to run school holiday programmes in certain areas through its usual tender process.

Tenders on www.gets.govt.nz close on 16 October 2009. For more information go to <http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/our-work/strong-families/breakaway/index.html>

Community Response Fund: Round Three

Community groups feeling the effects of the current economic environment are reminded that applications for Round Three of the Community Response Fund are now open. The Fund is for groups delivering critical social services who find their funding impacted by the recession, or who are struggling to cope with increased demand for their services from families who have been affected by the downturn.

More is at <http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/our-work/funding-resources/community-response.html>

Business

Commodity Index's Big Bounce

The ANZ Bank's monthly Commodity Price Index for September 2009 had its strongest upwards bounce in 22 years, with a 6.8% rise in prices, thanks to a 17% increase in dairy prices, which account for almost half the index weighting. The upswing more than cancelled out the fact that the kiwi dollar also rose strongly. However, the index as a whole remains well below highs achieved in 2007 and 2008.

Business Income Increases..

Total income for all NZ businesses increased to \$560.8 billion for the 2008 financial year, Statistics NZ said recently. The 7.1% (\$37.2 billion) rise is higher than the 6.4% rise in total income in 2007. Income from sales of goods and services increased by 7.8%, to \$430.1 billion in 2008, following a 4.2% increase in 2007.

However, total expenditure increased to \$513.3 billion in 2008, up 10.6% (the two largest components being purchases, and salaries and wages paid to employees). Because total expenditure increased more than total income, the surplus before income tax decreased to \$53.5 billion in 2008, down \$11.9 billion (18.3%) from the 2007 financial year.

More is at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/businesses/business_finance/Annual-Enterprise-Survey_MR08provisional.aspx

... & Economic Growth - Just

Business NZ's Economic Conditions Index* (ECI) shows a return to expansion after 18 months of negative growth. However, Business NZ notes that growth is likely to be tentative at least during 2010, and that the unemployment rate may hit 7.5% by 2010.

*The Economic Conditions Index (ECI) is an index of 33 indicators, including GDP, export volumes, commodity prices and inflation, debt and confidence information.

More is at www.businessnz.org.nz

Businesses Delaying Selling

The fourth ASB Succession Planning Monitor shows a continuing trend for businesses to push out selling plans with a net 6.8% increase in businesses planning to sell in the 3+ years. This trend is further supported by a net 5% decrease in anticipated business sales within in the next 2 years.

Full survey data is available at www.asb.co.nz/succession

Doing Business in NZ Easy...

According to the IFC-World Bank "Doing Business 2010" report, Singapore is the top-ranked economy on the ease of doing business for the fourth year in a row - and NZ is runner-up. The report considers regulations that apply to an economy's businesses during their life cycles, including start-up and operations, trading across borders, paying taxes, and closing a business. However, it doesn't measure all the aspects of the business environment that matter to firms and investors. For example, it doesn't measure security, macroeconomic stability, corruption, skill level, or the strength of financial systems.

More is at <http://www.doingbusiness.org/>

... & NZ Competitiveness Improves

NZ has made it into the world's top 20 countries for global competitiveness (up from 24th place last year). The country ranked number one in the world for auditing, corporate ethics, and shareholder protection. Globally, the main findings include:

- Switzerland leads the rankings, with the US falling to second place; with Singapore, Sweden and Denmark rounding out the top five; and
- several Asian economies perform strongly with Japan, Hong Kong SAR, Republic of Korea, and Taiwan, China also in the top 20.

Download the full The Global Competitiveness Report 2009-2010, profiling 133 economies, highlights, rankings and more at <http://www.weforum.org/gcr>

South Korea: Business Opportunity

A new Asia NZ Foundation report – “South Korea: An Opportunity for NZ Business” – identifies business opportunities in the market that could be taken up by kiwi companies. It advises that acknowledging and embracing South Korean business culture is critical to business success.

South Korea is the world's 13th largest economy, and NZ's sixth largest market, importing nearly NZ\$1.4 billion worth of our exports in 2008. South Korea is also NZ's sixth largest source of overseas visitors, as well as our largest source of overseas students.

For a copy of the report, visit www.asianz.org.nz

China's Top 500 Beat US Rivals

China's top 500 companies outperformed their US counterparts for the first time last year. Net profits at the nation's highest-performing Chinese firms totalled \$US171 billion in 2008, compared with \$US99 billion for the US firms. The China Enterprise Confederation (CEC) has compiled a list of China's top 500 companies, similar to the Fortune 500, since 2002.

The top Chinese firms saw their profits fall by 13.2% in 2008 compared with the previous year, still a better performance than the Fortune 500's 85% drop in profits. The company topping the list is state-owned giant Sinopec, the largest oil refiner in Asia.

Money Matters

Economic Snapshot: June Quarter

Economic activity (as measured by Gross Domestic Product - GDP), was up by 0.1% in the June 2009 quarter, according to Statistics NZ (this follows five quarters of contraction in the NZ economy). The main figures for the quarter include:

- activity in the primary industries was up 1.5%, mainly driven by forestry and logging (up 8.0%, mostly due to more logs going to China);
- activity in the goods-producing industries contracted 0.5%;
- activity in the services industries was flat;
- export volumes were up 4.7% in the June 2009 quarter, with exports of dairy and wood products the main contributors; and
- import volumes decreased 3.8% in the same period, with the largest declines in intermediate goods, and machinery and plant equipment.

More is at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/economic_indicators/GDP/GrossDomesticProduct_MRJun09qtr.aspx

Current Account Deficit Falls

The seasonally adjusted current account deficit was \$612 million in the June 2009 quarter, \$1.508 billion smaller than the March 2009 quarter deficit of \$2.120 billion, Statistics NZ said recently.

Income from foreign investment in NZ fell by \$1.186 billion in the June 2009 quarter, to \$2.068 billion. The fall was driven by lower profits earned this quarter by foreign-owned NZ enterprises, particularly in the banking sector.

For the year ended June 2009, the current account deficit was \$10.614 billion (5.9 % of GDP), compared with \$14.569 billion (8.1% of GDP) for the year ended March 2009 (this is the smallest year ended deficit as a percentage of GDP since September 2004).

Finally, as at 30 June 2009, NZ's liabilities exceeded its assets by \$171.6 billion. This net debtor position is 95.2% of GDP, down 1.1% from \$173.5 billion (96.4% of GDP) at 31 March 2009. In dollar terms, this is the first decrease since the March 2006 quarter.

Payroll Giving Now Set Up

The Taxation (International Taxation, Life Insurance, and Remedial Matters) Bill recently passed its third reading in Parliament last week – paving the way for the introduction of payroll giving. Payroll giving enables donations to go directly from a person's pay to a chosen community organisation. Because the scheme is administered through the PAYE tax system, people whose employers sign up for the scheme will receive the tax benefits of their donations each payday, without having to present donation receipts or wait to claim at the end of a tax year.

Note that community organisations who want to receive donations from payroll giving have to register as a donee organisation with Inland Revenue.

More is at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/turia-welcomes-giving-through-payroll>

International Auditing Standards Adopted

NZ has now adopted the new international standards (all 36 of them) for auditing.

For audits of financial statements covering periods beginning on or after 1 October 2009, auditors complying with NZ auditing standards (ISAs (NZ)) will also be able to say they are complying with international standards on auditing (ISAs).

More is at <http://www.nzica.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=News&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=17561>

Changes to Student Loans

The changes, expected to apply from 2011, include:

- loan repayments from students' holiday pay will no longer be deducted if they earn over \$367 a week;
- students earning below \$19,084 a year will not have to make student loan repayments while they are studying;
- borrowers living in NZ whose income is virtually all from salary and wages will have their repayments deducted from their pay, on a weekly or fortnightly basis, rather than having an end-of-year assessment/square-up;
- the late payment penalty, equivalent to 19.56% a year, will be replaced with a late payment interest rate of 10.8% a year for borrowers based overseas, and 6.8% for those living here;
- there will be less focus on minor over-deductions and under-deductions;
- borrowers who receive interest, dividends and Maori authority distributions of less than \$1500 a year will not have to make repayments on that income; and
- student loan penalties will be aligned with income tax penalties.

The Economy and Dinner

A recent www.kidspot.co.nz survey has revealed that one third of families have changed their dinner habits due to the economy. Seven main changes in food purchasing habits in relation to the economic downturn were noted:

- more bulk buying and bulk cooking, especially meat;
- buying home brands over name brands. These products are more likely to be considered for every day staples like tinned tomatoes, flour, rice, butter and bread;
- cutting back on meat or buying lesser cuts of meat;
- using vegetables as a money saving substitute to meat;
- planning purchases to avoid impulse buys;
- greater price awareness and price comparison; and
- eating less takeaway.

Also:

- 98% of respondents felt sitting down as a family to eat their nightly meal was important;
- 94% of kiwis have a home cooked dinner 5+ nights per week; and
- 44% reported that they are eating more home cooked meals now than a year ago, with the reasons being to either save money (77%) or to ensure they eat healthily (42%), with greater emphasis on money saving and healthy eating for families with dependants at home under 18 years (67% and 64%, respectively).

Email info@kidspot.co.nz for more information about this survey

Internet/ICT

Ultra-fast Broadband

Details of the Government's \$1.5 billion ultra-fast broadband investment initiative have been released. The Government will partner with the private sector to roll-out ultra-fast broadband services to 75% of NZers within the next ten years. It will concentrate in the first six years on priority broadband users such as businesses, schools and health services, plus greenfield developments and certain residential areas. Main points include:

- a partner selection process starting this month;
- Government investment directed to an open access, wholesale-only, passive fibre network infrastructure;
- a new Crown-owned investment company ("Crown Fibre Holdings"), which will carry out the government's partner selection process and manage the government's investment in fibre networks; and
- that the tender process will allow for proposals focused on individual candidate regions, proposals focused on any combination or aggregation of candidate regions, and national proposals.

Telecom put up an alternative plan for national broadband coverage. However, this did not get support from the Government (Telecom will have the opportunity to take part in the competitive tendering process).

The Government press release at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/ultra-fast+broadband+investment+proposal+finalised> gives an overview with questions and answers; and further details on the proposal itself are set out in another document available at www.med.govt.nz/ultra-fast-broadband

NZ Broadband Quality: Report

The Commerce Commission's report on NZ broadband quality for the three months to June 2009 shows steady improvement in average broadband performance, primarily driven by increased investment. Performance was generally better the closer the test site was to Auckland, where most web traffic is routed. National browsing speeds for the best ISPs reached 6Mbps in Auckland, but declined with distance from Auckland city (apart from Hamilton), to little more than 3Mbps in Dunedin.

The full report is available on the Commission's website www.comcom.govt.nz under Industry Regulation/Monitoring and Reporting

Television Viewing: Record Levels

AGBNielsen figures show that in August 2009, 3,886,500 NZers 5 years and over watched television, compared to 3,815,600 a year ago, an increase of 70,900 people or 1.9%. Not only were more people watching television, viewers were, on average, watching more hours of television than last year. Average peak time hours viewed daily in August 2009 was 1.48 compared to 1.44 last August, an increase of 3.7%.

What NZers Do Online...

Earlier this year a NetGuide/Telecom survey was carried out to find out what NZers do online. Questions ranged from asking if respondents know someone who is married to someone they met online, to whether they have been a victim of an internet scam. Of the 1628 people who responded*:

- their home internet connection was via: Dial-up (5%), Broadband (92%), Mobile broadband (2%);
- 86% use it at work if they don't have internet at home;
- 50% use a wireless router and 46% used a wired modem to connect to the internet;
- 74% have downloaded a virus by accident, 4% have been the victim of identity theft, 62% have been redirected to an unsavoury site, and 7% have been the victim of an internet scam;
- 90% claim to have internet security software;
- in terms of numbers of spam messages received per week: none (15%), 1-5 (27%), 6-10 (13%), 11-20 (13%), 21-30 (8%), and over 30 (24%);
- of those households with children under 18 years old, 17% set time periods when they can use the internet, 26% have the computer in a busy room in their household, and 13% have parental controls as part of their online security;
- 44% have sought medical advice online rather than visiting the doctor;
- regarding the main social networking sites, 21% have a profile on Twitter, 15% on MySpace, 24% on Bebo, 59% on Facebook, and 18% on LinkedIn;
- 9% have a profile on an internet dating site (which 24% visit daily, and 28% visit either weekly or monthly);
- 28% download movies, 59% download songs, 34% download TV programmes, and 26% music videos;
- 8% claim to have been or know someone who has been cyber-bullied;
- 12% have pretended to be someone else on the internet;
- 15% have met someone in real life after meeting them through an online dating site;
- 34% say they know someone who is married to someone they met online;
- 57% get the majority of their news online (14% for newspaper, and 23% for TV); and
- 21% have created pictures of videos and uploaded them to YouTube.

* Note: 67% of the responders were male; and were categorised (both sexes combined) into the following: under 12 years (0%), 13-18 years (4%), 19-24 years (9%), 25-34 years (22%), 35-44 years (22%), 45-54 years (17%), 55-64 years (14%), 65+ years (11%).

... & Social Networking Time Triples

The Nielsen Company says time spent on social network and blogging sites accounted for 17% of all time spent on the Internet in August 2009, nearly triple the percentage of time spent on the sector a year ago. Meanwhile year-over-year, estimated online advertising spend on the top social network and blogging sites increased 119%, from approximately \$49 million in August 2008 to approximately \$108 million in August 2009.

Facebook - Nielsen Alliance

The Nielsen Company and Facebook have announced an alliance, the aim of which is to help marketers make better use of the Internet to sell new products. The first product of the collaboration, Nielsen BrandLift, is designed to give marketers an effectiveness measurement for Facebook advertising. BrandLift uses opt-in polls on Facebook's homepage to measure consumer attitudes and "purchase intent" from display advertising that has appeared on the site. It has just launched in the US and will roll out to all Facebook advertisers in the coming months.

Print Publishers: a Mobile Future?

According to a study titled "Going Mobile: How Publishers Are Preparing for the Burgeoning Digital Market" print publishers are spending more attention to their mobile offerings. Nearly 70% of study respondents said mobile is receiving more attention at their publication this year than last, and 80% said people will rely more heavily on mobiles as a primary information source in the next three years. Among respondents to the survey, 56% said their publication has plans to develop a smartphone application in the next 24 months, while 17% of respondents already have an app (application) in development.

More than half the respondents believe that the future business model of mobile content will be supported by both advertising and subscriptions, and nearly one-third believe that mobiles will have a significant impact on their publication's revenue in just three years.

However, while 55% believe that digital delivery of their publication is important to their strategic future, about 75% believe that their publication will be available in a print form five years from now.

More is at <http://www.auditbureau.org/about.htm>. You can download parts of the report at <http://www.accessabc.com/gomobile/>

Listed Companies: Website Awards

NZ Oil & Gas (NZOG) is the top communicator among NZ's top 50 listed companies, according to this year's Wired Best Investor Website Awards (BIWA). Second-equal were Auckland International Airport and Port of Tauranga.

A BIWA survey examined how well a website communicates a company's purpose, how well it helps users find content, and the degree to which it enhances interaction between investors and the listed entity.

Interestingly, there was little sign that bigger companies produce better websites: the largest and most liquid listed companies had websites that were rated as just above average, and only three NZX15 companies made the BIWA Top 10.

More is at <http://www.wired.co.nz/Services/BIWA-Clip-09.asp>

A Handful of Sites

- *cast your online vote for NZ's Bird of the year* (voting closes 14 October) at <http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/poll>;
- *Kiwis can now freely download—and store in their pockets—hundreds of well-known books* at <http://www.nzetc.org>. This comes courtesy of Victoria University's NZ Electronic Text Centre (NZETC - a free online archive of NZ and Pacific texts and heritage materials). More than 1000 electronic books (eBooks) are now available for download, including some great NZ works (Katherine Mansfield's *The Garden Party* and *Other Stories*, Bill Pearson's *Coal Flat*, and Robin Hyde's *The Godwits Fly*);
- *if you want to know about roadworks (and other transport related changes) coming up your way over the next three years* visit <http://nzta.govt.nz/publications/nltp/index.html>. There you'll find the NZ Transport Agency's National Land Transport Programme - usefully presented both nationally and via regional lists. It will tell you will be happening to: improve the main transport routes, improve public transport, ease congestion in urban areas, upgrade freight and tourism routes, improve safety, and increase access to NZ markets;
- *all the chapters of the MAF Horticulture and Arable Monitoring Report 2009* are now available at <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/statistics-and-forecasts/farm-monitoring/2009/horticulture/>;
- *Independent information to help farmers better understand carbon farming and carbon trading* is at www.carbonfarming.org.nz. The site, which provides independent information for farmers, agribusiness managers and farm foresters, includes presentations and information leaflets. The majority of sheep and beef farms used as case studies in related research already have enough forestry to offset emissions. However, dairy farms are less likely to have existing forestry and could consider planting to offset the cost of emissions from livestock;
- *if you ever get a song stuck in your head or perhaps heard a snippet of something on a website and want to hear more* then go to <http://www.watzatsong.com/EN/> (once registered, just record a snip of the song that has you stumped and wait for the suggestions to come rolling in);
- *can data be considered a thing of beauty and a joy forever - and fun, too?* If you think so, visit the "Information is

Beautiful" website - <http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/>. Essentially the site is about clever ways to visualize ideas, issues, knowledge, and data;

- *The third Annual Report of the Office of the Director of Mental Health* is at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/mental-health-office-annual-report-2008>. This report comes in three sections: an overview of legislation and service delivery; a description of the work carried out by the Office in 2008; and statistical information. Mental health care, in particular compulsory care, is often the subject of public concern and the annual report also considers issues around this;
- *if the idea of getting streaming video feeds from 70 cameras across five continents appeals to you* go to <http://www.earthtv.com/en> Each destination feed is complimented with information and fascinating facts, maps and local weather reports – and a relaxing music track running throughout;
- *if you want to change your desktop regularly* then go to <http://www.desktopnexus.com/> This site has a huge assortment of styles and images you can download, and it also works out all the dimensions and details for you. There are more than 100,000 images to choose from. When you see an image you like, click the thumbnail to open it up, and then click Enlarge Wallpaper to see how it will look resized for your machine; and
- *You can download a series of information cards about loss-of-hearing and coping with it* from http://www.hearing.org.nz/info_cards.php

Treaty Matters

Waitangi Tribunal Claims: Progress

A progress report on Treaty claims shows that:

- a total of 1,835 new claims were lodged in the final four weeks before the claims submission cut-off date of 1 September 2008 (this was more than the entire total of 1,497 claims registered over the previous 32 years since the Tribunal's foundation in 1976);
- during the year to 31 August 2009, 620 of the pre-deadline claims were registered (this represents most of the claims submitted that met the requirements of section 6 of the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975);
- the Tribunal's registry now holds 2,125 registered claims;
- most of the 1,341 claims still pending did not meet the statutory requirements for registration (the Tribunal has been contacting these submitters);
- 94% of the pre-deadline claims where issues could be reliably identified stated historical grievances (an historical claim is defined as any claim relating to an act or omission of the Crown that occurred before 21 September 1992);
- the Tribunal has completed reports on 15 of the 37 districts. It is well advanced with reports on four more, and is completing hearings in the Whanganui Land inquiry (together, these inquiries cover 81% of NZ's national territory);

- inquiries are being planned and research is underway in 10 further districts in Northland, East Coast, King Country, and from Taihape to Kapiti; and
- more than 1,000 registered claims and another 700 unregistered pending claims (most of the outstanding claims) arise in the 15 districts under Tribunal action.

More is at <http://www.waitangi-tribunal.govt.nz/>

Arts & Culture

Supporting the Arts: Review

A Cultural Philanthropy Taskforce has been set up to look at how to increase charitable giving by private individuals to arts and cultural institutions. It will examine a wide range of areas from best practice in examples of philanthropic giving overseas, to ways to publicise existing tax incentives to benefit the cultural sector (but will not be considering business partnerships or sponsorships).

Note: a Ministry for Culture and Heritage survey called "Charitable Giving and Sponsorship" is also due to be released this month.

WOW Awards 2009

The 2009 Winner of the **Supreme Montana WOW Wearable Arts Award** & Winner Tourism NZ Avant Garde Section was *Lady Of The Wood*, David Walker, Alaska, USA. Other WOW winners this year were:

- **Children's Section:** *The Dandelion Clock*, Tracey Koole, Auckland;
- **Air NZ South Pacific Section:** *Rock On In The Shadowlands*, Janet Bathgate, Nelson;
- **CentrePort Illumination Illusion Section:** *Into Thin Air*, Marie Gant Roxburgh, Christchurch;
- **WOW & Classic Cars Museum Man Unleashed Section:** *Sir Lazyboy*, Cassandra Bowe, Nelson;
- **Wellington International Award & Commended Tourism NZ Avant Garde Section:** *Saddle Up*, Mary Wing To, United Kingdom;
- **Booker Spalding First Time Entrant Award** (& Runner Up American Express Open Section) *Lagarus Ovatus En Masse*, Catherine Anderton, Wellington;
- **Shell Student Design Award:** *Bound*, Gina Digirolamo & Lindsey Eisentraut, United States;
- **Weta Award & Winner American Express Open Section:** *American Dream*, Sarah Thomas, Timaru;
- **Untouched World WOW Factor Award:** *Firebird*, Susan Holmes, Auckland; and
- **2009 Winner Shell Sustainability Award:** *Queen Adelaide*, Emma Whiteside, Wellington.

Fishing

Fishy News

There is generally quite a bit of fishy news in October because 1 October is the start of the new fishing season.

Fisheries 2030 Plan

Ministry of Fisheries has published Fisheries 2030, a 20-year plan for NZ's fisheries, which includes quite detailed objectives. Aquaculture is an important part of this - the Government has set a target for it to become a \$1 billion a year industry by 2025.

More, including a Cabinet paper is on the MFish site at www.fish.govt.nz. More on recent international fisheries research is at www.beehive.govt.nz/release/great+news+nz+latest+fisheries+research

Fish Stocks Update

An update on fish stocks shows that of the 117 fish stocks 79 (68%) are near or above target levels. The 38 stocks known to be below their respective targets include two very migratory species (over which NZ has limited influence), several orange roughy stocks, black cardinalfish, gemfish, Foveaux Strait oysters (due at least in part to disease), two rock lobster stocks, Tasman Bay and Golden Bay scallops, three paua stocks, all bluenose stocks, west coast North Island snapper, several other smaller inshore stocks and longfin eels.

Mfish says it's important to note that just because a stock is below its target, it does not mean that the stock is being fished unsustainably. Fish stocks can and have been fished sustainably for long periods of time in many parts of the world at levels well below the target level. Of more importance is how far the stock is below the target, and how intensely it is being fished.

Catch Increases

The commercial hoki catch was increased by 20,000 tonnes, bringing an estimated \$29 million in extra export earnings to NZ. The total allowable commercial catch (TACC) limit goes from 90,000 tonnes to 110,000 tonnes. The hoki TACC has been as high as 250,000 tonnes but was gradually reduced to its current level of 90,000 tonnes in 2007 to allow the fishery to rebuild. Other catch increases include:

- Marlborough dredge oysters (OYS7C) - up by 20 tonnes, from 43 to 63 tonnes;
- ling on the central west coast of the North and South Islands (LIN7) - up from 2,225 tonnes to 2,474 tonnes;
- elephantfish on the east coast of the South Island (ELE3) - up from 950 to 1000 tonnes;
- elephantfish on the south and southwest coast of the South Island (ELE5) - up from 120 to 140 tonnes;
- red gurnard on the north and west coasts of the South Island (GUR7) - up from 681 to 715 tonnes;
- red gurnard on the south and east coasts of the South Island (GUR3) - up from 800 to 900 tonnes;
- smooth oreo on the South Island's east coast (part of OEO3A) - up from 1400 to 1650 tonnes; and

- john dory on the South Island's north and west coasts (JDO7) - up from 114 to 125 tonnes.; and

Areas open for the commercial harvest of brown and green beachcast seaweed in the North Island are also being expanded.

Reductions

Orange roughy catch in the 3B fishery (ORH3B) off the east and south coast of the South Island has been reduced from 9,420 tonnes to 7,950 tonnes; and black cardinalfish catch off the North Island's east and south coast from 2,223 tonnes to 1,620 tonnes.

Catch Reporting Goes Electronic

New rules now allow commercial fishers to use computerised reporting systems to file their catch information directly with Fish Serve (a fishing industry owned company that administers the catch reporting regime under contract to the Ministry of Fisheries). Until now, each of the compulsory 170,000 annual catch reports had to be filled out by hand, mailed in, entered manually, then scanned for filing – and around 27,000 of these forms have to be returned and resubmitted each year because of various problems. The process has cost the fishing industry over \$2 million a year in levies to administer.

More is at <http://www.fish.govt.nz/NR/rdonlyres/7B36281A-2B26-4148-AF49-6C6A45BB0142/0/Updatedstatusoffishstocks.pdf>

Just 20 Paua in the Freezer

The amount of paua a person can have in their possession on any day in their freezer is now limited to 20 (twice the daily bag limit), or the equivalent meat weight of paua (2.5 kgs). The personal export of paua is also limited to 20 paua or 2.5 kg meat weight accumulation limit. The aim of the limit is to help with compliance activity dealing with storage, transport and export of illegally caught paua. Recreational fishers are asked to label and date their catch to make sure they meet the new rule.

Science/Technology

Potato Genome* Mapped

It has been cultivated for at least 7,000 years, grows on every continent, and now the potato has had its genome sequenced (it's about one quarter of the size of the human genome). The "first draft" of the sequence that is being released will help breeders improve yield, quality, disease resistance and nutritional value.

Potatoes are big business: in 2007, more than 309 million tons of potatoes were produced around the world (China is the top global potato market, consuming about 47.5 million tons of potatoes in 2005). *The genome of an organism is a complete genetic sequence on one set of chromosomes.

The draft sequence, which covers 95% of potato genes, is available at <http://www.potatogenome.net> and will be updated over the next six months

Ooh! What's that Smell!

A professor of biology at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, has found that corpses of animals, from insects to crustaceans, all emit the same smell, which is produced by a blend of specific fatty acids. Live animals avoid areas with the smell. Because fatty acids are essential nutrients rather than pesticides, and because the smell is so strong and widespread, it holds real promise for applications such as plant and stored product protection or exclusion of household pests.

The findings have been published in the journal *Evolutionary Biology*.

Ruling Defines "Quaternary Boundary"

In the 18th Century the earth's prehistoric history was split into four epochs, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary, and Quaternary. Although the first two have been renamed Palaeozoic and Mesozoic, respectively, the second two have remained in use by scientists for more than 150 years. More recently there have been decades of debate over the position and status of the Quaternary Age and the intervals of time it represents.

Now, after four years of investigation an international body of earth scientists has formally agreed to move the boundary dates for the Quaternary Age back by 800,000 years (from 1.8 million years to 2.6 million years).

General

Weather Outlook: October – December

A weak El Niño in the equatorial Pacific Ocean is not expected to unduly affect our rainfall in the coming 3 months, according to the latest outlook from NIWA's National Climate Centre. Regional predictions are:

- **Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty:** Temperatures are likely to be near average. Seasonal (3-month) rainfall totals, soil moisture levels, and stream flows are expected to be in the near normal range.
- **Central North Island, Taranaki, Wanganui, Manawatu and Wellington:** Seasonal temperatures are projected to be near average. Three-month rainfall totals, soil moisture levels, and stream flows are expected to be in the near normal range.
- **Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, Wairarapa:** Three-month temperatures are likely to be near average. Seasonal rainfall totals, soil moisture levels, and stream flows are also expected to be in the near normal range.
- **Nelson, Marlborough, Buller:** Temperatures are equally likely to be either near average or below average. October-December rainfall, soil moisture levels, and stream flows are likely to be in the normal range.

- **West Coast, Alps and Foothills, Inland Otago, Southland:** Temperatures are equally likely to be either near average or below average. Seasonal rainfall, soil moisture levels, and stream flows are projected to be in the normal range.
- **Coastal Canterbury, East Otago:** Temperatures are equally likely to be near average or below average. Seasonal rainfall, soil moisture levels, and stream flows are expected to be in the normal range.

After Auckland, Wellington with nearly 37,000 Asian people has the second-largest number of Asians in NZ, a result of its long-term and unique history of involvement with Asia. While there are increasingly more recent Chinese and Indians migrants in Wellington, the city is unique because it has a substantially higher proportion of NZ-born Chinese and Indian than in the other main centres.

For copy of the report visit go to http://www.asianz.org.nz/files/Outlook_10final.pdf

Morality: Gender Differences

A new poll* shows significant differences between men and women on a selection of morality issues.

Men are more likely than women to see heterosexual sex outside marriage (acceptable for 79% of men and 75% of women), married people having heterosexual affairs (acceptable for 19% of men and 8% of women), and polygamy (acceptable for 17% of men and 5% of women) as morally acceptable. On the other hand, 51% of men see homosexual relations as morally acceptable, compared with 69% of women.

Men are more accepting than women of issues like stem cell research (acceptable for 69% of men and 57% of women) and human cloning (acceptable for 11% of men and 4% of women), although there is no significant gender difference in attitudes towards abortion (acceptable for 54% of men and 56% of women).

Looking at the overall numbers, NZers are most accepting of divorce (81% acceptable) and heterosexual sex outside marriage (77%), and least accepting of human cloning (7% acceptable), and polygamy (11%).

A total of 43% say that the death penalty is morally acceptable, while 50% think that it is morally wrong. Men are more supportive than women of the death penalty (47% to 39%).

*These results came from a survey of 750 kiwis in the UMR Research omnibus survey from 30th July to 2nd August 2009.

More at [http://www.umar.co.nz/Media/MoralityOfNewZealanders_\(Aug-09\).pdf](http://www.umar.co.nz/Media/MoralityOfNewZealanders_(Aug-09).pdf)

Separating Parents: Cooperative Parenting

A Families Commission issues paper discusses the importance of promoting and investing in cooperative parenting arrangements and looks at options for change that would provide more equity, flexibility and information for separating parents.

The paper has been developed to provide a family perspective on a coming review of the NZ child support scheme.

The Issues paper is at <http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz/sites/default/files/downloads/issues-paper-01.pdf>

Asians in Wellington: Report

The Asia NZ report "Asians in Wellington: Changing the Ethnic Profile of the Capital City" is the fifth report in a series looking at Asian populations in Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, and NZ as a whole.

Be a Rugby 2011 Volunteer

You can now register to be a volunteer at the Rugby World Cup 2011 festival through the Rugby NZ 2011 Volunteers Programme. Nearly 5,000 volunteers will be needed across the country in many different roles. They will be the face of the festival at airports and the 13 centres hosting games. Volunteers will also be able to work in specialised roles or volunteer at the venues or in the community, and the organisers will provide volunteer training.

To register your interest to be a host or volunteer visit www.nz2011.govt.nz

Muslim Women Organisations: Directory

Among initiatives launched for Islam Awareness Week is an online Muslim women's directory and the publication of a book, titled "Crescent Moon: The Asian Face of Islam in NZ" by the Asia NZ Foundation. The directory brings together 26 Muslim organisations for women in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch.

Look at the directory at [http://www.dia.govt.nz/oeawebsite.NSF/wpg_url/Resources-Ethnic-Affairs-Publications-Index/\\$file/DirectoryofMuslimWomensOrganisationsinNZ.pdf](http://www.dia.govt.nz/oeawebsite.NSF/wpg_url/Resources-Ethnic-Affairs-Publications-Index/$file/DirectoryofMuslimWomensOrganisationsinNZ.pdf)

Border Collies: the Brightest

A dogs' intelligence is on par with two-year-old human, according to a Canadian canine researcher who puts border collies at the top of the dog smart list (the next on the list, in order, are poodles, German shepherds, golden retrievers, Dobermans, Shetland sheepdogs, Labrador retrievers). Apparently dogs can count and can also understand more than 150 words (the smartest up to 250 words) and intentionally deceive other dogs and people to get treats.

The researcher spoke on the topic "How Dogs Think" at the American Psychological Association's 117th Annual Convention.

Some Conferences/Events

Organics Aotearoa NZ

The Organic Sector's conference will be held at the University of Waikato from 13-15 November. Amongst the presentations will be one on how organics contributes to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

More is at <http://www.oanz.org.nz/events/Innovate-Go-Organic>

8th National Digital Forum

The National Library is holding a conference called "Culture, Creativity and Community" at Te Papa in Wellington on 23-24 November 2009. Conference will explore how creating and accessing NZ digital content benefits everyone - business, education, cultural organisations, and local communities.

Find out more at www.ndf.natlib.govt.nz/about/2009-conference.htm

Community Consultation- Understanding Public Participation

This is being held at the Terrace Conference Centre in Wellington on 27 October. How much is too much say? Can anyone ever have "too much say"? What are you buying into when you promise communities they will be consulted?

More is <http://www.prinz.org.nz/tools/events/details.aspx?SECT=Events&ID=4498>

National Community-Government Forum

This is being held on 11 November 2009 at Westpac Stadium in Wellington. Provides the opportunity for community and government representatives to discuss a number of recent reports on government-community relationships.

More is at <http://www.ocvs.govt.nz/news-and-updates/comm-govt-forum-2009.html>

Tane's Tree Trust Conference

This ten-year anniversary conference is being held at Waikato University on 18-19 November. The trust encourages NZ landowners to plant and sustainably manage native trees for multiple uses.

More is at <http://www.maf.govt.nz/sff/about-projects/search/L09-033/brochure.pdf>

NZ Cycling Conference

The 7th NZ Cycling Conference will be held on 12 & 13 November 2009 in New Plymouth.

More is at <http://can.org.nz/conference/2009>

KANZ Broadband Summit

The KANZ Broadband Summit: Digital Futures will be held at the Sky City Convention Centre in Auckland on 4-5 November 2009. It is an annual opportunity for business and government officials from Korea, Australia and NZ to discuss the latest research and commercial developments in digital applications and broadband.

For further information visit www.kanz2009.co.nz

Maori Language Expo

The Maori Language Expo/He Huia Kaimanawa will be held at Te Rauparaha Arena, Porirua from 15-16 October. Included are: Nga Kupu (Maori Language Symposium); Nga Whetu Koea (a showcase exhibition); and Nga Tohu Reo Maori 2009 (Maori Language Awards 2009).

Admission is free. For more information go to <http://www.korero.maori.nz/news/mlw/awards/BrochureHuiaKaimanawa.pdf>

National Pacific Provider and Workforce Development Fono 2009

This is being held from 16-17 October at the Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre, Auckland.

More is at <http://www.pacificfono.co.nz/venue.html>

2009 Asian Nutrition and Physical Activity Forum

From the Agencies for Nutrition Action, this is being held at Sorrento in the Park, One Tree Hill, Auckland on 12 November.

More is at <http://www.ana.org.nz/asianhealthforum09.php>

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Conference

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Charitable Trust is holding its national conference at the Eilerslie Racecourse in Auckland on 28-29 October.

More on the programme is at www.raisinggrandchildren.org.nz/137799/html/page.html

National Volunteering Conference 2009

Volunteering NZ's conference, called "Volunteering Unleashed" is being held at the Wellington Town Hall on 28-29 October.

More is at <http://www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/news/headlines/090121b.php>

National Squalor Conference

Catholic Community Services is hosting this conference (the first of its kind) at the SMC Conference Centre, 66 Goulburn Street, Sydney, Australia, on 5-6 November.

More is at <http://www.nationalsqualorconference.com.au>

Tonic Conference

This one aims to provide fresh thinking and new tools for ways of running community groups. It is being held in Tauranga on 6-7 November.

More is at <http://www.exult.co.nz/index.php?page=workshops#a111>

20th Asia Pacific Social Work Conference

This is being held at the sky City Convention Centre, Auckland on 11-13 November. The theme is "Many voices, many communities, social justice for all".

Read more at https://secure.hotevents.co.nz/ei/getdemo.ei?id=78&s=_3IW0RAEG1

Funding/Awards

Lottery Regional 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 11 Lottery Regional Community Committees serve West Coast/Nelson-Marlborough; Canterbury-Kaikoura (including Chatham Islands); Otago/Southland; Northland; Auckland; Waikato; Taranaki; Bay of Plenty/Gisborne; Hawkes Bay; and Manawatu-Wanganui.

They will consider: activity, resource and programme costs; administration costs; care and support; domestic travel; projects encouraging people to participate in their communities; salaries; training and supervision; feasibility studies; one-off projects/new initiatives; regional/national gatherings; volunteer costs/expenses; community awareness; and minor capital works.

Applications close on 2 November 2009. For more information, email grantsonline@dia.govt.nz or freephone: 0800 824 824

Lottery Environment and Heritage

Grants from this fund are for projects which promote, protect and conserve NZ 's natural, physical and cultural heritage, e.g., native regeneration projects/establishment of native plant nurseries; captive breeding programmes including animal release to enhance indigenous fauna; pest and predator eradication programmes; historical publications; museums, where taonga and art galleries; and conservation of historic buildings, structures, rolling stock, archaeological sites and waahi tapu sites.

Applications close on 13 November 2009. Apply to COGS and Lottery Grants Board using Grants Online at www.cdgo.govt.nz. For support freephone 0800 824 824 or email grantsonline@dia.govt.nz

Te Ao Auahatanga Hauora Maori Fund

Te Ao Auahatanga Hauora Maori is a new fund set up to support Maori service providers to develop programmes that improve Maori health outcomes. Eligible providers are able to apply for up to \$200,000 per annum, for up to four years (\$800,000 maximum) to design and implement proposed programmes and services.

Registrations of interest close on 23 October. More is at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/maoriinnovation>, or email mhif@moh.govt.nz

Primary Growth Partnership

The Primary Growth Partnership (PGP) is a government-industry partnership investing in research and innovation programmes to boost the sustainability of NZ 's primary, forestry and food sectors. Proposals delivering economic growth and sustainability across the primary sectors from producer to consumer will be considered. They can come from any part of the value chain (i.e., education and skills development, research and development, product development, commercialisation, commercial development, and technology transfer).

Proposals for Round two of the PGP close on 19 November 2009. More information on the Partnership is at <http://www.maf.govt.nz/pgp/>

Fulbright Awards

Fulbright NZ invites applications for Fulbright NZ Travel and Specialist Awards. The travel awards enable NZ academics, artists, or professionals to visit the to present their work to American audiences. The specialist awards enable NZ academic institutions to host US academics, artists or professionals for two- to six-week programmes of lectures, seminars, workshops, conferences or symposiums.

Applications for both close on 1 November 2009. More on the travel awards is at www.fulbright.org.nz/awards/nz-travel.html, and more on the specialist awards is at www.fulbright.org.nz/awards/nzinstit-senspecialists.html

Kellogg Applications Open

Applications are called for the 26th Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme in 2010. This programme is designed for people living and working in a rural community who are interested in developing their leadership skills, and have some experience of leadership in local or national organisations (especially those supporting the rural sector).

Applications close on 19 October 2009. Details and application forms are available on the website www.leaders.ac.nz or from leaders@lincoln.ac.nz

Jumpstart Your Jazz Career

The Queenstown JazzFest is being held from 17-26 October and its Jump Start jazz competition has been extended to include two categories for young musicians: 12-17 years old, and 18-25 years old. Categories include solo vocal, solo instrumental and band, and entries can be a standard or a jazz interpretation of a non - jazz piece.

Entries close on 16 October 2009. To register online go to www.asbjazzfest.co.nz

NZer of the Year Awards

These awards are aimed at thanking achievers for their work and their inspiration. There are five categories: NZer of the Year; Senior NZer of the Year (from 60 years); Young NZer of the Year (15-30 years); Community of the Year; and Local Heroes Awards. The winners receive an NZ-made trophy and \$5,000 cash courtesy of Kiwibank.

Nominations close on 20 November 2009. More is at <http://www.nzawards.org.nz/>

Diversity Reporting: Young Journos

Entries are open for the 2009 Excellence in Reporting Diversity Awards, which aim to recognise and reward top work by young journalists. The ERDA awards, which were launched last year, are open to NZ journalists with fewer than five years' experience.

Entries close on 13 November. Full details at <http://www.newswire.co.nz/2009-erda-awards/>

Water Safety Awards

Entries are being sought for the inaugural Water Safety NZ Awards, which recognise excellence, achievement and innovation in water safety. There are three categories: Education, Awareness and Prevention, and an Outstanding Contribution Award.

Entries close on 31 October 2009. More is at www.watersafety.org.nz

2010 NGO Social Work Study Award

Social workers employed by non-government organisations (NGOs) are invited to apply for this annual study award.

Applications close on 16 October 2009. More is at <http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/our-work/community-development/ngo-study-awards/index.html>

Appointments

Diplomat Darryl Dunn has been named as this country's new *Ambassador to Argentina*. Auckland High Court Judge Hon Justice Helen Winkelmann has been appointed *Chief High Court Judge*. Rebecca Ellis has been appointed as a *Judge of the High Court*.

Garry Evans has been appointed *acting Chief Coroner*. Adam Feeley has been named as *director* of the *Serious Fraud Office*. Steve Vaughan is the new *executive director* of the *NZ Society for Risk Management*. Dr Harry Pert is the new *president* of the *Royal NZ College of General Practitioners*. Nano Tunnicliff is the new *president* of the *NZ Nurses Organisation*. Kevin Bowler is the new *CEO* of *Tourism NZ*. Allan Panting has been appointed *executive director* of *Surgical Affairs for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in NZ*. Wenceslaus Anthony and Raga D'silva have been appointed the *India-NZ Business Council's chair* and *deputy chair*, respectively. Lyn Provost has been appointed as *Auditor-General*. The *Families Commission* has appointed Ruben Wiki as the first *White Ribbon Ambassador* (raising awareness of men's violence against women). Sir Brian Lochore has been reappointed as *chair* of the Board of the *Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust*. David Mayhew has been appointed the new *Commissioner for Financial Advisers*. Simon Botherway and Mark Verbeist have been appointed as new *members* of the *Securities Commission*. Janet Mazenier has been appointed *chief executive* of the *Real Estate Agents Authority*. Dame Margaret Bazley is the *chair* of the *NZ Fire Service Commission* and Hon Wyatt Creech is *deputy chair*. Bob Harvey is the new *president* of *Surf Life Saving NZ*. Simon Upton has been appointed as a *special envoy* to work with other countries to build a *Global Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Mitigation research*.

The *members* of the *Primary Growth Partnership investment advisory panel* are: John Brakenridge, Dr Kevin Marshall, Colin McKenzie, Joanna Perryn Jamie Tuuta, and Bill Falconer (*chair*). The *chair* of the *Cultural Philanthropy Taskforce* is Peter Biggs. Other *members* of *this taskforce* include Margaret Belich, Carolyn Henwood, James S Hill, Dame Jenny Gibbs, and Dayle Mace. Dr Philip Temple (from the NZ Society of Authors) has been nominated *chair* of the *National Library of NZ's new Public Lending Right Advisory Group*. Other *members* of this group are Liz Allen, Allison Dobbie, Kerry Harvey, and Lis Morgan. Michele Embling, Simon Carey, and Graeme Mitchell have been appointed to the *Accounting Standards Review Board*.

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. Rural Bulletin may be copied in full and circulated, and individual items may be reproduced providing the source is acknowledged. If you would like more information about Rural Bulletin or its contents, please contact:

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Together Rural Women NZ, the Lottery Grants Board, and Rural Bulletin's other generous supporters make it possible to provide timely information to people in rural and other communities so they have the opportunity to make informed decisions about, and have their say on, issues and changes that may affect them.

Messages from Our Supporters

Telecom Responds to Broadband Announcements

September saw the Government releasing: firstly, its revised proposal for bringing ultra-fast broadband to 75% of NZers; then, its targets for rural broadband service; and finally, its two discussion papers on reform of the Telecommunications Service Obligation (TSO) and the Rural Broadband Initiative. Our response to each of these is as follows:

- *on ultra-fast broadband:* We welcomed the Government's clarification of its preferred broadband investment model, but were disappointed the benefits of the national approach we had proposed to go faster and further had been overlooked. We emphasised we are already well in to a massive programme to deliver ultra-fast broadband to at least 84% of NZers which will be completed within two years. Our proposals to government were national in scope, could be rolled out quickly, leveraging existing investment and benefiting not just urban customers but also rural schools and hospitals. The Government's model, however, does appear to preclude our involvement in their process; this therefore raises the distinct possibility of duplicating existing privately-funded network infrastructure, even though the Government said this was not their wish.
- *on rural broadband targets:* We welcomed the targets as a great sign of progress and commitment to a future of ubiquitous fast broadband for all NZers who need it. We're already investing and working alongside communities to get faster broadband further than ever before. We believe that in line with the Government's broadband vision it's now time to go further.
- *on TSO reform and the rural broadband initiative:* We were pleased that the rural broadband proposal mirrored a significant component of our proposal to run fibre optics to every school and hospital in the North and South Islands. We continue to believe a national solution is the most effective way of delivering more ultra-fast fibre to more NZers in the quickest and most economically efficient manner. On the TSO we noted that the Commerce Commission, which monitors our performance, has always found we complied with our TSO obligations. We have also continued to invest heavily in the rural sector, with over \$150 million spent on our rural networks in the last financial year. We believe reform of the TSO is long overdue and needs to be based on principles of contestability, transparency, and technology neutrality. It's equally important that any subsidies applied to fund services to uneconomic customers are borne equally by all consumers, and not just Telecom's.

Any comments/queries go to emma.walker@telecom.co.nz

About TaxRefunds.co.nz

We set up the country's first fully automated tax refunds system and in the process became the biggest tax agent in NZ. Already over \$63 million of overpaid taxes resting with the IRD has been returned back to taxpayers through our website.

We have processed over 1 million applications, and initial results for the 2009 tax year indicate that more workers are receiving tax refunds than previous years, and that overall, tax refunds are going up in value every year.

Our online service provides free, no risk estimates of tax refunds owed to salary and wage earners for any of the previous 5 tax years (and anyone employed on casual, part time, shift, seasonal and/or part of a tax year). Claims can be made from anywhere in the world. We will inform you if you are due a tax refund or not. You need only file claims for the years where refunds are owed, meaning there are no unwanted bills. You can also claim family tax credits through the site.

Our services are fast, simple, and risk free. Check out the website at www.taxrefunds.co.nz and for free material for your staff contact M Thompson on 0276663543 or email margot@taxrefunds.co.nz

Access Homehealth

Access Homehealth supports kiwis of all ages with personalised quality healthcare – at home and in the community. Established in 1927 by Rural Women New Zealand, we are now a national provider (Whangarei to Invercargill) of home and community health services - and we pride ourselves on our commitment to New Zealand's rural communities.

Our aim is to help people maintain their independence so that they can live successfully in their own home and within their local community.

Our skilled professional team supports more than 13,000 people nationwide with healthcare services including:

- aged and disability support;
- rehabilitation and recovery;
- long-term condition management;
- clinical and assessment services; and
- respite care.

We specialise in providing personalised care and support that's relevant and based on an individual's particular health needs. This includes short- and long-term assistance with daily living activities such as showering and grooming, household assistance, meal preparation, skilled and qualified nursing, socialisation, and general companionship.

You can find out more by phoning 0800 161 444, emailing us at info@access.org.nz faxing (0)3 366-0344, or by visiting our website, www.access.org.nz