

Rural Bulletin

February 2008



Rural Women
NEW ZEALAND

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Consultation

Dog Control & Public Safety: Have Your Say

A discussion paper on dog control called "Improving Public Safety Under the Dog Control Act 1996" is available for public comment. The paper seeks your views on ways to further improve dog control and public safety around dogs after a recent review of dog control identified that:

- some dog owners are imposing high risks on others through their unwitting or deliberate non-compliance with the existing law;

- some of the general population are accepting high levels of risk, unwittingly or consciously through their behaviour;
- there is inconsistent enforcement; and
- there are inconsistent educational messages.

This paper considers options such as:

- adding more dog breeds to the list of dogs that are banned from import into NZ;
- destroying all dogs classified as dangerous in the future;
- increasing the controls on dogs classified as menacing so they are the same as controls for dogs classified as dangerous;
- neutering dogs classified as menacing;
- licensing owners - in addition to registering their dog/s;

- councils requiring proof of the breed of a dog; and
- probationary owners (those who have breached the rules relating to their ownership of dogs) surrendering dogs classified as dangerous or menacing.

There are 484,358 dogs recorded in the National Dog Database (NDD) in NZ: 4,966 of these are classified as menacing and 481 are classified as dangerous.

Submissions close 31 March 2008. For more information/the discussion paper go to www.dia.govt.nz/dogcontrol. You can email your submission to dogcontrol@dia.govt.nz, or post your comments to: Improving Public Safety Under the Dog Control Act 1996: Options for Discussion, Department of Internal Affairs, PO Box 805, Wellington

New Zealand's Tribunals: In Need of a Spring Clean?

Your views are sought on a NZ Law Commission paper called "Tribunals in New Zealand". This paper outlines issues around the current arrangements for NZ's tribunals, summarises the way in which other countries have dealt with similar problems, and sets out various options for ways of dealing with them here. Issues include:

- we have a large number of tribunals, and they have been randomly set up over a long period of time. Some, like the Disputes Tribunal and Tenancy Tribunal, hear a lot of cases, others do not, and some may not even be needed anymore;
- there is inconsistency in the way the tribunals operate, and this can be confusing for people who bring cases before them;
- the amount of information available to the public varies greatly between tribunals. The public sometimes do not even know that a tribunal which might help them exists;
- some tribunals are too closely linked to the agency from which they hear appeals. It is important that tribunals are perceived as being independent, with justice not only being done, but also being clearly seen to be done; and
- there are variations in the way tribunal members are appointed and trained.

Submissions close 20 February 2008. They go to the General Manager, Law Commission, PO Box 2590, Wellington 6140, or by email to tribunals@lawcom.govt.nz. The paper is available from the Law Commission in hard copy, and is also on its website at <http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/ProjectIssuesPaper.aspx?ProjectID=131>

Sustainable Transport: Discussion Paper

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) says there is growing evidence that transport policies which offer "more of the same" will not enable us to achieve our sustainable transport objectives. As an example, it notes that despite heavy investment in Auckland's roads and public transport, traffic congestion is expected to remain a major problem. It also warns that transport's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is growing unsustainably.

The Ministry recently released a discussion paper on the subject for public comment, as a first step toward updating the 2002 NZ Transport Strategy. The paper proposes: halving (per capita) greenhouse gas emissions from 2007 levels, improving

vehicle safety standards, increasing public transport, increasing rail and shipping's share of freight movement, wide use of electric vehicles, and reducing carbon dioxide emissions from the vehicle fleet.

Submissions close on 15 February 2008. The document can be downloaded from <http://www.transport.govt.nz/assets/NewPDFs/MOT13188-UNZTS-Doc-v6a.pdf> and there's an online submission form at <http://www.transport.govt.nz/assets/NewPDFs/UNZTSform.pdf>

Restrictions on Display of Tobacco Products?

Further restrictions on the display of tobacco products are being canvassed by the Ministry of Health with a possibility they will be banned entirely from public areas.

Three countries (Iceland, Thailand and Ireland) have already introduced legislation banning tobacco displays. Canada is in the process of implementing nationwide regulations to ban tobacco displays in areas which are accessible to people under 18 years of age, with many provinces having already completed the change.

The Ministry is now seeking submissions on how display issues should be managed in retail settings, such as dairies, convenience stores, supermarkets and service stations.

Submissions close on 15 February. You can find out more at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/review-tobacco-displays-nz-consultation>

Protecting Seabirds

Tougher proposed new standards are on the way to protect seabirds from longline fishing. They follow recent government concern at the high number of seabird deaths, particularly of the critically endangered Chatham Albatross. There are two parts to the protection proposal:

- a seabird standard, which sets out the point at which the Minister considers it necessary to take steps to avoid, remedy or mitigate the effects of fishing-related mortality on seabirds; and
- a revised management system for allocating the limits set by the seabird standard between fisheries. This part also includes a risk assessment process to find out what needs to be done in each fishery to make sure that the limit for the fishery is not exceeded.

Submissions close on 18 February. "Proposals for managing the fishing-related mortality of seabirds" can be downloaded from <http://www.fish.govt.nz/NR/rdonlyres/E931CAE6-0083-4365-8303-EC965D4F9D90/0/Proposalsformanagingthefishingrelatedmortalityofseabirds.pdf>

Assigning/Changing NZ Place Names: Proposals

The NZ Geographic Board Nga Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa has given notice of its intention to assign some new place names in

NZ, and to change others. Some of the new names are not on current maps, and many of the changes relate to spelling alterations. You are invited to have your say on the Board's proposals.

Submissions close on 13 March 2008. More is at <http://www.linz.govt.nz/core/placenames/placenamesdecisions/9nov2007/index.html> Objections (include the grounds for objection) go to: Secretary, NZ Geographic Board, c/- Land Information NZ, Private Box 5501, Wellington

Digital Broadcasting Regulation & Content Standards

Your views are sought on the future of broadcasting regulation via two recently released discussion papers.

"Digital Broadcasting: Review of Regulation", includes a research report and a discussion paper. It covers competition, standards and copyright in the areas of content, distribution and networks.

"Broadcasting and New Digital Media: Future of Content Regulation" looks in more detail at the broadcasting standards system, and how that might change to accommodate developments in broadcasting. At the moment content regulation currently only applies to traditional broadcasting media, and different rules apply when the same content is shown via more recently developed media systems.

Submissions on both papers close on 4 April 2008. If any regulatory changes are proposed, there will be further public consultation. The two discussion papers, the Review of Regulation research report and the related cabinet papers are at <http://www.mch.govt.nz/publications/digital-tv/index.html#views>

Ministry of Fisheries Consultations

Proposed Fisheries Services for 2008-09

Iwi and stakeholders are invited to comment on the fisheries services and research projects proposed for the 2008/09 financial year.

Submissions close 22 February 2008. They go to Business Planning, Reporting and Cost Recovery Manager, Ministry of Fisheries, PO Box 1020, Wellington, email brian.ashton@fish.govt.nz

Harvest Strategy Standard

The Harvest Strategy Standard (HSS) represents the minimum performance level that is acceptable. The HSS, which applies to all fish stocks in the Quota Management System (QMS), requires that targets and limit points be set for all fish stocks. This is the second consultation on the HSS - the first draft was released in November 2006.

Submissions close 29 February 2008. They go to T Steel, Ministry of Fisheries, at the address above, email tracey.steel@fish.govt.nz

Review of Deemed Value Rates for Selected Fishstocks

Each year MFish reviews the deemed value rates for some of NZ's fishstocks. A position paper outlines MFish's initial position on the deemed value rates being reviewed for 1 April 2008.

Submissions close 15 February 2008. They also go to T Steel at the above postal and email address. The three MFish consultation papers are at <http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Consultations/default.htm?WBCMODE=PresentationUnpublished>

Gas/Electricity Safety Regulations Papers

The Ministry of Economic Development (MED) has published two discussion papers covering the regulations governing safety standards in the gas and the electricity industries.

The gas safety regulations paper proposes that the Gas Regulations 1993 be replaced with new regulations, which take into account new safety requirements for gas distribution networks, and new offence provisions and penalties.

Likewise, the paper covering electrical safety regulations proposes that the Electricity Regulations 1997 be replaced with new user-friendly electricity safety regulations, which take into account the new safety requirements in the Electricity Act.

Submissions on both papers close on 29 February 2008. Submissions on the Electricity Regulation Discussion Paper go to Ministry of Economic Development, 33 Bowen Street, PO Box 1473, Wellington, tel 04-474 2750, fax: 04-473 9400, email: electricity.safety.regulations@med.govt.nz. Submissions on the Gas Regulations go to Gas Regulation Discussion Paper at the same address, email: gas.safety.regulations@med.govt.nz. The papers are at http://www.med.govt.nz/templates/StandardSummary___15398.aspx

Lake Wakatipu Landscapes to be Protected?

Lakeside landscapes, public access and biodiversity values on two pastoral lease properties at the south-western end of Lake Wakatipu are recommended for permanent protection in a tenure review proposal being advertised for public comment. Under the proposal, about 7000 of 8709 hectares under review would be permanently protected. A 6505 hectare conservation area would be managed by the Department of Conservation: this would link Lake Wakatipu with the Eyre Mountains (Taka Ra Haka) Conservation Park, and open up public access. A further 549 hectares of conservation covenants is proposed for land to be freeholded, protecting Maori archaeological sites, significant landscapes and threatened native fish habitat.

Submissions close on 26 February 2008. More is at <http://www.linz.govt.nz/core/crownproperty/highcountry/leaseslist/allandale/index.html>, and <http://www.linz.govt.nz/core/crownproperty/highcountry/leaseslist/greenvale/index.html>

Crayfish Management - Have Your Say

The Ministry of Fisheries (MFish) describes its current system for managing crayfish in Otago and Southland as being "demonstrably unsuitable". MFish proposes to set up separate systems for the two areas. It also wants to increase the total allowable catch (TAC) for 2008, because stocks have recovered since the system was set up in 2002.

Submissions close on 11 February, however, late submissions from Rural Bulletin readers will be accepted. You can access the consultation paper at <http://www.fish.govt.nz/NR/rdonlyres/CE83AE4F-2B98-4924-9A99-D8B61645B027/0/NRLMGAdviceonMgtInterventionsforCRA7CRA8for200809FY.pdf>
Email comments to tracey.steel@fish.govt.nz, or send them to: T Steel, Ministry of Fisheries, PO Box 1020, Wellington

Submissions on Bills with Select Committees

Dog Control Amendment Bill (No 2)

The purpose of the Bill is to help improve dog control and public safety around dogs. It provides flexibility for the government to prescribe dog policy matters for councils to consider and address; makes it mandatory for dogs classified as menacing to be neutered; and amends the process for classifying a breed or type of dog as menacing. (see also related consultation on dog control above.)

Closing date for submissions is Friday, 29 February 2008. The Bill is at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Legislation/Bills/3/7/7/00DBHOH_BILL8345_1-Dog-Control-Amendment-Bill-No-2.htm

Real Estate Bill

This Bill:

- removes regulatory functions from the Real Estate Institute of NZ (REINZ). This means there will no longer be a compulsory requirement for agents to be members of REINZ;
- creates an independent Real Estate Agents Authority to oversee licensing, complaints, disciplinary and enforcement processes and provide information for consumers. The Authority will have wide investigative powers and will be able to order a wide range of penalties and remedies;
- creates an independent Disciplinary Tribunal to deal with serious cases, which will have the ability to order the cancellation of licences and award compensation. Complainants will not be required to hire lawyers because the Authority - through its Complaints Assessment Committee (CAC) - will represent their case if it is referred to the Disciplinary Tribunal;
- establishes a public register of real estate agents and salespeople that records any breaches of the industry standards against the names of those involved;
- requires licensees to undergo ongoing professional development training; and

- makes changes to the conduct required in the day-to-day running of a real estate agency business, including compulsory disclosure requirements (including possible conflict of interest), requirements to provide information to buyers and sellers in certain situations, and new auction requirements.

Submissions close 29 February 2008. Two copies go to the Justice and Electoral Committee, Parliament House, Wellington. More is at <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/SC/SubmCalled/8/a/6/48SCMAmaoripurposes200802151-M-ori-Purposes-Bill-No-2.htm>

Affordable Housing

The Affordable Housing: Enabling Territorial Authorities Bill will enable city and district councils to assess the level of affordable housing in their districts, and to set up affordable-housing policies based on their assessment. The Bill also prevents the use of any title covenant that has the purpose of excluding social or affordable housing, including supported accommodation. Under it councils will be able to require developers to either: include affordable housing in their developments, make payments towards the cost of providing affordable housing elsewhere, or provide land on which affordable housing can be constructed. However, they will only be able to do this if they've first established evidence of affordable housing need in their area, and developed a plan to deal with it that they have consulted on.

They will also be able to offer developers incentives to provide affordable housing.

Submissions close on 29 February 2008. Two copies go to the Local Government and Environment Committee, Parliament House, Wellington (no stamp required) More information is at <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/SC/SubmCalled/4/7/3/48SCLGEaffordablehousing200802291-Affordable-Housing-Enabling-Territorial.htm>

Public Health Bill

The purpose of this Bill is to update existing public health legislation in order to improve, promote and protect public health, and to help attain the best and fairest health outcomes for all the population groups in NZ. The Bill covers a wide range of health issues, including environmental health, non-communicable diseases and communicable diseases. The Bill will also enable NZ to comply with its obligations under the International Health Regulations 2005.

Submissions close on 7 March 2008. Two copies go to the Health Committee, Parliament House, Wellington. More is at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Legislation/Bills/c/d/3/00DBHOH_BILL8346_1-Public-Health-Bill.htm

Injury Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Compensation Amendment Bill (No 2)

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the cover for work-related injuries, make changes in weekly compensation eligibility and entitlement, and also make changes in entitlement and processes around vocational rehabilitation and independence. For example, employees who develop a mental injury after being exposed to a

sudden traumatic event during the course of their work could in future be entitled to ACC.

Submissions close on 15 February 2008. Two copies go to the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee, Parliament House, Wellington. More is at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Legislation/Bills/a/b/7/00DBHOH_BILL8351_1-Injury-Prevention-Rehabilitation-and-Compensation.htm

Electricity Industry Reform Amendment Bill

This Bill amends the Electricity Industry Reform Act 1998 to encourage lines companies to invest in permitted generation, especially from renewable energy sources.

Its purpose is to put in place three changes in policy. They are to:

- make it easier for owners of lines businesses to sell the output of the generation they were permitted to own under the 2001 and 2004 amendments to the Electricity Industry reform Act 1998;
- narrow the scope of ownership separation requirements to areas where lines and supply are co-located; and
- amend the definition of renewables to encourage the development of renewable energy.

Submissions close on 29 February 2008. Two copies go to the Commerce Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. More is at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Legislation/Bills/6/4/9/00DBHOH_BILL8370_1-Electricity-Industry-Reform-Amendment-Bill.htm

Maori Purposes Bill 2007

Included in this Bill are a number of proposals for change to several statutes. Among these is a proposal for changes to the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975. This would increase the statutory cap on the ordinary membership of the Waitangi Tribunal from 16 to 20, in order to help the Tribunal meet its anticipated increase in workload.

Submissions close 15 February 2008. Two copies go to the Maori Affairs Committee, Parliament House, Wellington. More is at <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/SC/SubmCalled/8/a/6/48SCMAmaoripurposes200802151-M-ori-Purposes-Bill-No-2.htm>

Financial Service Providers (Registration & Dispute Resolution) Bill

This Bill sets up a compulsory registration system for financial service providers. A Registrar of Financial Service Providers will carry out enforcement functions where registration requirements are breached. This will have the power to share information with certain agencies that carry out supervision and enforcement functions relating to money laundering or terrorist financing. The Bill also proposes the establishment of a dispute resolution system for the finance industry to provide consumers with access to redress when things go wrong.

Submissions close on 28 February 2008. Two copies go to the Finance and Expenditure Committee Parliament Buildings, Wellington. More is at <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/SC/SubmCalled/0/8/c/48SCFfinancialserviceproviders200802281-Financial-Service-Providers.htm>

Customs and Excise Amendment Bill (No 3)

The Bill amends the Customs and Excise Act 1996 to:

- strengthen appeal and review rights when goods have been forfeited or seized;
- make it easier for Customs to deal with ad hoc arrivals and departures; and
- fix inconsistencies relating to the illegal manufacture of tobacco.

Submissions close on 18 February 2008. Two copies go to the foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, Parliament House, Wellington. More is at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Legislation/Bills/0/a/3/00DBHOH_BILL8375_1-Customs-and-Excise-Amendment-Bill-No-3.htm

Climate Change (Emissions Trading and Renewable Preference) Bill

Amends the Climate Change Response Act 2002 to introduce a greenhouse gas emissions trading scheme in NZ. Also amends the Electricity Act 1992 to create a preference for renewable electricity generation by putting in place a freeze on new fossil-fuelled thermal electricity generation, except for when it is needed to ensure the security of NZ's electricity supply.

Submissions close on 29 February 2008. Two copies go to the Finance and Expenditure Committee. Parliament House, Wellington. More is at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Legislation/Bills/c/0/4/00DBHOH_BILL8368_1-Climate-Change-Emissions-Trading-and-Renewable.htm

Companies (Minority Buy-out Rights) Amendment Bill

Under this Bill minor shareholders who have unsuccessfully opposed a fundamental change in a company's structure will have the power to require the company to purchase their shares at fair price. The provisions of the Companies Act 1993 currently require that the company offer a "fair and reasonable price" to the shareholder for their shares, but provide no guidance as to how a fair and reasonable price is calculated.

Submissions close on 29 February 2008. Two copies go to the Commerce Committee, Parliament House, Wellington. More is at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Legislation/Bills/9/f/a/00DBHOH_BILL8338_1-Companies-Minority-Buy-out-Rights-Amendment-Bill.htm

Rural

Summer: A Risky Time for Agriculture & Forestry Workers

According to recent research agriculture and forestry workers are most at risk of dying on the job over summertime. There is an increase every summer in workplace fatalities, with one third of

the 45 deaths between June 2006 and May 2007 happening in December, January and February. Of the 15 workplace deaths over summer, five were farmers and seven of the accidents involved off-road vehicle use.

In terms of seasonal trends in workplace fatalities the research shows:

- during 2000-2005 the rate of workplace fatalities was higher in summer (December-February) and autumn (March-May) than throughout the rest of the year;
- the increase in summertime work-related fatalities, and to a large extent the increase in autumn work related fatalities, can essentially be explained by the seasonal variation in fatalities in the agriculture industry;
- within the agriculture sector, January has the highest workplace fatality rate, followed by April and October;
- male workers aged between 55 and 64 years have the highest incidence of work-related summertime fatalities (particularly in the agriculture sector);
- male workers between 35 and 44 years of age are most likely to have a work-related fatal incident in the autumn (particularly in the agriculture industry);
- the mid-north region and the southern region are most affected by seasonal variations in the occurrence of work-related fatal incidents. In the northern part of NZ (northern and mid north regions), work-related fatal incidents involving employees tend to occur more in the summer; and in the southern part of the country (central and southern regions), work-related fatal incidents tend to occur more in the autumn;
- there are two peak times when work-related fatal incidents are most likely to occur. One is late morning (between 10:30 and 12:30), and the other is mid afternoon (between 2:30 and 3:30). This trend is particularly relevant to the agriculture sector;
- when time of day data are examined by season, work-related fatal incidents in summer tend to occur in the morning (from sunrise to noon); and work-related fatal incidents in autumn; and
- 52% of work related fatalities involved a vehicle. Vehicle rollovers accounted for 23% of total workplace fatalities investigated and nearly 40% of workplace fatalities in the agriculture sector.

The summer months bring special challenges - it's hotter, there are often fewer staff because other workers take leave, and the working day is often longer and harder. The research shows that the combination of fatigue, dehydration and momentary lapses of concentration can lead to tragic consequences particularly when people are working with machinery.

Employers need to make sure that workers have regular breaks and access to water to avoid dehydration. If workplaces are hot, staff should be encouraged to take their breaks outside.

The research can be downloaded at www.dol.govt.nz/publications/research/summerfatalities/index.asp

"Future Focus": Challenges for the Primary Sectors

MAF's new publication "Future Focus" identifies six global issues likely to impact on NZ's primary sectors over the next 10 to 15 years:

- global warming, climate change, and extreme weather;
- energy cost and supply;
- geopolitical power shifts, and international trade and investment;
- ecosystem degradation, and water quality and availability;
- demographic shifts; and
- technological advances.

Among the future threats identified are: increased bio-security risk due to climate change, the end of cheap oil, and emerging tensions over water supply. Possible opportunities canvassed include sustainability branding, technologies for lessening emissions, and innovative foods.

"Future Focus" is at <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/publications/future-focus/> To request a print copy email policy.publications@maf.govt.nz. Comments on the publication go to micaela.buckley@maf.govt.nz

Farm Employees Pay: FFNZ/Rabobank Report

A recent Federated Farmers of NZ (FFNZ)/Rabobank report called "The Federated Farmers' Remuneration Report 2008" indicates that farmers are paying their employees competitive rates compared with other sectors. The report (which is based on a survey of FFNZ members) includes remuneration rates of farm employees in the dairy, sheep, beef and arable sectors; hourly rates for casual and permanent employees; remuneration trends since 2002; gross salary excluding bonuses; and total remuneration, (including additional benefits such as subsidised accommodation, food or meat, power, telephone, private transport and production/performance bonuses). It indicates that salaries in the sector grew by 5.23% last year and total pay package value rose by 5.04%. It also says farm pay packages are likely to be worth about:

- \$28,259 for 16-year-old trainees;
- \$37,536 for shepherds;
- \$57,728 for manager of a large sheep, beef, arable farm; and
- \$70,529 for manager of a large dairy farm.

The report is at <http://www.fedfarm.org.nz/PDFs/2008%20FFNZ%20Farmers%20Remuneration%20Report.pdf>

Small Winemakers' Compliance Costs Reduced

Winemakers who produce very small amounts of wine for the domestic market are to have their compliance costs reduced, by being exempted from the requirement to register a Wine Standards Management Plan. These plans were developed to assist winemakers to meet food safety requirements and most winemakers must register one from December 2008. Small winemakers will still be required to meet safety, identity and labelling wine standards, and they will also have to make a declaration every two years that their wine production each year over the next two years is expected to be less than 10,000 litres.

Of the approximately 580 winemaking businesses in NZ, between 50 and 100 produce low volumes, and their production amounts to less than 2.5% of all wine sold in NZ.

Tighter Controls on Live Animal Exports

Following a recent review of NZ's live export policies the export of livestock (sheep, cattle, deer and goats) for slaughter is to be prohibited unless the risks to NZ's reputation as a responsible exporter can be adequately managed. Individual consignments may be approved, though, on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Director-General of Agriculture and Forestry.

Review of Risk Assessment of A1/A2 Milk

The risk management decision-making processes adopted by the NZ Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) for the food safety aspects of A1/A2 milk are to be independently reviewed.

A related Cabinet Paper and the terms of reference for the review are on NZFSA's website at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/publications/hot-topics/hot-topic-a1-and-a2-milk.htm>

Environment

The State of NZ's Environment

A report just in from the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) takes a comprehensive look at the state of NZ's environment. Called "Environment NZ 2007", it considers the physical well-being of NZ's land, water, air, plants and animals, by measuring the impact of transport, energy, waste, and our consumption on the environment. The report identifies trends in, and pressures on, the natural resources here that can be used as a basis for decision-making. It also introduces indicators to measure the state of the environment: these will be used to build up a clear picture of trends and pressures over time.

The report is at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/ser/enz07-dec07/html/index.html>

2007: Seventh Warmest Year Since 1850

2007 was the seventh warmest year since 1850, according to the UK's Hadley Centre and University of East Anglia - and the 11 warmest years have all occurred within the last 13 years.

The 10 warmest years have been: 1998 - 0.52°C (above the 1961-1990 average); 2005 - 0.48°C; 2003 - 0.46°C; 2002 - 0.46°C; 2004 - 0.43°C; 2006 - 0.42°C; 2007 (provisional) - 0.41°C; 2001 - 0.40°C; 1997 - 0.36°C; and 1995 - 0.28°C.

Food Miles & Sustainability: Research Report

A recently released report commissioned by NZ Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) looks at consumer and retailer attitudes in the United Kingdom (UK) to food miles and sustainability-related issues.

"Food miles" is a term that has been used to refer to the distance food travels from the time of its production until it reaches the consumer. Some people have tried to assess the environmental impact of food by counting the miles in this way. However, assessing environmental impacts is a complex process: it is not only how far food has travelled that counts, but also the kind of food it is, where it comes from, how it is prepared, how it travels, where it goes to, how it gets there, what happens when it arrives, and how far people who come to buy it travel.

Because the UK and Europe are huge markets for our exports, NZTE wanted clearer evidence about the impact of food miles, which have been talked about more in the UK than in any other country. They also wanted to know more about how consumer and retailer attitudes were influenced by concern about the environmental sustainability of food production.

It's a widely held belief that food miles is part of a wider debate on sourcing and sustainability, and there is also broad agreement that NZ needs a proactive programme to make sure we get our sustainability message "out there".

The report - "Market analysis: Food miles and sustainability trends in the UK" - can be found at: www.nzte.govt.nz/foodmiles

New Zealand Conservation Authority: Nominations Open...

The Minister of Conservation is calling for nominations to the NZ Conservation Authority (NZCA). The Authority is closely involved with conservation planning and with the development of policies affecting management of public conservation areas (these are the areas administered by the Department of Conservation). The next term of office of members of the NZCA begins on 1 June 2008, after four members have been appointed.

Nominations close on 29 February 2008. Nomination forms and more information are at www.conservationauthority.org.nz, or contact C Tudhope, tel 04-471 3211, email ctudhope@doc.govt.nz. Nominations go to the Minister of Conservation, c/- PO Box 10 420, Wellington 6143

...& Nominations Open for Conservation Boards

Nominations for membership of NZ's Conservation Boards are also being sought. When making appointments to each Conservation Board, the Minister of Conservation takes into account the particular features of land administered by the Department of Conservation (DoC) within a Board's area, and also the interests of nature conservation, natural earth and marine sciences, recreation, and tourism groups, and the local community including the tangata whenua. Generally, appointments will take effect from 1 September 2008 and will be for a three year term.

The boards have the following number of vacancies: Northland - 5; Auckland - 4; Waikato - 4; Bay of Plenty - 4; East Coast/Hawke's Bay - 4; Tongariro/Taupo - 4; Taranaki/Whanganui - 4; Wellington - 3; Chatham Islands - 3; Nelson/Marlborough - 3; West Coast Tai Poutini - 3; Canterbury Aoraki - 5; Otago - 4; and Southland - 4.

Nominations close on 10 March 2008. Nomination forms/more information are at www.conservationboards.org.nz. You can also contact any of DoC's Conservancy Offices, email kedwards@doc.govt.nz or telephone 04-471 3289. Nominations go to Minister of Conservation, c/- PO Box 10 420, Wellington 6143

Didymo Found in Kahurangi National Park

Didymo cells have been found in samples taken from the Cobb River in Kahurangi National Park, and DoC intends to carry out more sampling to determine the extent of the spread. The department and MAF Biosecurity NZ are reminding people to check, clean, and dry their gear between waterways to prevent the spread of didymo to other rivers in the national park and elsewhere.

DoC Projects to Reduce Carbon Footprint

The Department of Conservation (DoC) has tendered out six new projects which aim to help reduce NZ's carbon footprint by restoring native land and reducing pests. The projects give the commercial sector the opportunity to earn carbon credits by investing in restoration or pest control on conservation land.

The six projects cover 4670 hectares of land for restoration, and 160,000 hectares for pest control. They include land in Buller, Wanganui, the east coast of the North Island, Canterbury, Nelson/Marlborough/West Coast region, and there are smaller coastal projects throughout the country from Canterbury to Northland.

Applications for these projects close on 31 March 2008, with successful tenders being announced in April in time for next year's planting season. More information is on DoC's website at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/templates/summary.aspx?id=45409>

Finding Out More About Biochar

Biochar is a stable form of carbon that can be incorporated into soil as a permanent carbon store. This can create a major carbon sink that can take out carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through plant growth, and store it as inert carbon in soils. Biochar also has potential to keep nitrous oxide emissions in check and reduce the leaching of nitrate into waterways. As well, it can be used to make a product that can be used to produce heating, electricity generation and other applications.

Biochar applications in soil can also lift agricultural productivity (its effectiveness in this is dependent on matching different types of biochar to specific soil types and plant growth systems).

Two biochar professorships have now been set up at Massey University. One will focus on biochar and its behaviour

in NZ soils, and the other on the processing of biomass feedstock into biochar. This is known as pyrolysis, and it involves combustion in the absence of oxygen (the same process as is used to make charcoal). More research into biochar is needed to:

- find out how long the biochar stays fixed in the soil;
- measure its effects in order to create a reliable product for farmers;
- assess its carbon-fixing capacity for the carbon trading market; and
- evaluate how the use of biochar would work in terms of NZ's commitment to the Kyoto Protocol.

Two Renewable Energy Proposals to be "Called In"

The Minister for the Environment intends to call in two renewable energy development proposals under the Resource Management Act. They are geothermal development, Te Mimi, which will eventually replace Waunakee, and a 34 turbine wind farm at Te Wake, Hawke's Bay.

Under section 141A of the Resource Management Act, the Minister can call in a proposal and direct that the matter is referred to either a Board of Inquiry, or the Environment Court. This means that the matter is decided by either of these two bodies instead of the relevant district, city or regional councils. The Unison Te Wake proposal is to be referred to the Environment Court.

Biofuels Bill

A Biofuels Bill currently before Parliament will require oil companies to sell a proportion of biofuels, starting with 0.53% this year and rising to 3.4% of the fuel sold by 2012, under the Biofuel Sales Obligation. This Bill was originally due to come into effect on 1 April 2008 but the date has been moved to 1 July to allow time for the Bill to pass.

The Bill includes a clause that enables environmental sustainability standards for biofuel to be developed. It would also allow the Government to block certain types, sources, or production processes of biofuels from qualifying towards the Biofuels Sales Obligation. Ethanol produced from sugarcane or cellulose, or biodiesel from algae or waste products are unlikely to raise any concerns. However, it is possible that, for example, ethanol from sources that compete with corn, or biodiesel from palm oil where it has caused deforestation, could be blocked.

Sustainably Managing Indigenous Forests: Guide

The Ministry of Agriculture's (MAF's) Indigenous Forestry Unit has released a new guide explaining the sustainable forest management (SFM) provisions of the Forests Act. This describes how to prepare a draft SFM Plan, an SFM permit application and an annual logging plan.

"A Guide to Preparing Draft Sustainable Forest Management Plans, Sustainable Forest Management Permit Applications and Annual Logging Plans" is at <http://www.maf.govt.nz/forestry/indigenous-forestry/guide/index.htm>

New Reserve in Grey Valley

Some 135 hectares of forest land that contains a mix of beech trees and podocarps at Sahara in the Grey Valley, on the West Coast of the South Island, is to be turned into a reserve. A flat river terrace, it is covered in natural forest, which is quite rare as this type of land is mostly used for farming. The new reserve includes some of NZ's tallest trees, like rimu, totara, matai and kahikatea.

Rangitoto and Motutapu to be Totally Pest Free

Plans for removing all pests from Rangitoto and Motutapu Islands have been released. This will be one of the most complex pest eradication projects the Department of Conservation (DoC) has attempted because of the range of pests being removed: they include two types of rat, mice, stoats, feral cats, rabbits and hedgehogs. The project will include:

- biosecurity measures - educating the public about how to avoid bringing pests to the islands, including new signs for visitors on both islands and the mainland;
- building a network of tracks around the islands to set traps and other control measures;
- bird and reptile monitoring programmes; and
- an aerial bait drop - poison will be dropped to remove rodents within the next 3 years.

New Public Reserve for Yellow-Eyed Penguins

The Department of Conservation (DOC) and the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust have purchased 50 hectares of farmland at Long Point on the Catlins Coast that is home to 10% of the yellow-eyed penguins on mainland NZ. This means that 12 kilometres of this coastline - home to nearly 50 breeding pairs of penguins - are now protected. DoC and the Trust will manage Long Point together.

Favourite Native Plants: Votes Are In

The Willowherb has been named NZ's favourite native plant in an online poll. The small white-flowered herb, found in riverbeds and gravelly coastal areas, snatched victory in the final day of the NZ Plant Conservation Network's annual poll. The last poll was topped by the Chatham Island Christmas tree. This year's 10 most favourite plants also include tawari (also known as whakou - a type of flower), nikau palm, northern rata, kakabeak, coral broom (a South Island upland and subalpine shrub), Poor Knights lily and the water brome (a semi-aquatic grass).

For more information visit <http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/index.asp>

New Zealand Storm Petrel Sightings: Keep Your Eye Out

Boaties are asked to keep an eye out for the NZ storm petrel, a small black and white bird, once presumed extinct. The NZ storm-petrel is about 20 cm long and is black and white with black streaks on the belly. It lives and feeds at sea, only returning to land to breed (its breeding sites are as yet unknown).

Phone sightings to the 24 hour free DOC hotline - 0800 DOCHOT (362468) or send photos and details to "NZ storm petrel sightings", Department of Conservation, PO Box 474, Warkworth

Tourism

New Zealand Wins Best Holiday Destination

New Zealand has been voted the Best Holiday Destination Worldwide by readers of the British Daily Telegraph newspaper. The Telegraph Travel Awards are the result of the biggest annual independent survey of the British travelling public. Some 30,000 readers are questioned on their travel habits. NZ previously won Telegraph reader awards for best destination in 2005 and 2004.

International Tourist Expectations on the Increase

According to the latest The Regional Visitor Monitor (RVM), international visitors have higher expectations of what they will experience in NZ. These increased expectations, for example, include:

- beautiful scenery - up 4% to 65% for the year ending September 2007;
- safety and security - up 4% to 65%;
- friendly people - up 3% to 72%; and
- authentic culture - up 4% to 27% from the previous year.

The RVM is an ongoing survey undertaken in six participating regions. The survey gathers information concerning visitor profiles, visitor motivations and expectations, travel planning and patterns of visitor activity, visitor satisfaction, and visitor expenditure - all at a regional level.

Copies of the report can be found at: www.tourismresearch.govt.nz

Health & Safety

Healthy Living "Can Add 14 Years"

Taking exercise, not drinking too much alcohol, eating enough fruit and vegetables and not smoking can add up to 14 years to your life, a study says. Research involving 20,000 people over a decade found those who failed on all criteria were four times more

likely to have died than those who succeeded. The findings held true regardless of how overweight or poor they were.

The research was carried out by the University of Cambridge and the Medical Research Council in the English county of Norfolk between 1993 and 2006. Participants were aged between 45 and 79. They were socially mixed although overwhelmingly white, and as far as they were aware at the time, did not have cancer or any heart problems.

A point was awarded for each of the following: not currently smoking, consuming between one and 14 units of alcohol per week (the equivalent of between half a glass and seven glasses of wine), eating five servings of fruit and vegetables each day and not being inactive. This last category was defined as either having a sedentary occupation and taking half an hour of exercise a day, or simply having a non-sedentary job like a nurse or plumber.

The research team found that those with four points were significantly less likely to have died over the period than those with none. They also found that a 60-year-old person with a score of zero had the same risk of dying as a 74-year-old with the full four points.

It was in the reduction of deaths attributed to cardiovascular disease where the findings were most pronounced, with those scoring zero five times more likely to succumb than those scoring four.

But there was also a relationship between score and cancer deaths. While the main analysis excluded people with known disease, the researchers found that those with serious conditions fared better the higher they scored.

Attitudes to Road Safety: Survey Results

According to the latest Public Attitudes to Road Safety survey most NZers agree that speed and alcohol are major causes of road crashes and support police efforts to enforce road safety laws. Other findings include:

- 75% of NZers say that compulsory breath testing and speed enforcement help lower the road toll, while 90% support seatbelt enforcement;
- 41% are calling for tougher penalties for people who break road safety laws, compared with 36% last year;
- most people agree that automatic loss of licence is fair punishment for speeding at 140km/h on the open road; and
- 61% agree that the use of speed cameras helps lower the road toll and a similar number believe that speed cameras are operated fairly.

Full details of the survey can be found at: www.transport.govt.nz/2007-survey-2/

Recognising and Dealing with Driver Fatigue

It's reckoned that driver fatigue contributed to more than 40 deaths and nearly 1000 injuries in road crashes in 2006. And, crashes involving driver fatigue are often the most violent on the road as they occur when people have fallen asleep or react too late to brake or avoid an impending crash.

Falling asleep is an extreme form of fatigue. Fatigue itself is tiredness, weariness or exhaustion. You can be fatigued enough for it to impair your driving long before you "nod off" at the wheel. For example, when you are fatigued:

- your reactions are much slower;
- your ability to concentrate is reduced; and
- it takes longer to interpret and understand the traffic situation.

There are several signs that will tell you that you are fatigued when driving, these include:

- blinking or yawning frequently;
- having trouble keeping your head up;
- eyes closing for a moment or going out of focus;
- having wandering or disconnected thoughts;
- finding you've slowed unintentionally;
- braking too late;
- not being able to remember driving the last few kilometres; and
- drifting over the centre line or onto the other side of the road.

There are a wide range of things that drivers can do to manage fatigue before setting off for a trip. It is essential to ensure that drivers get plenty of sleep before a long journey and plan to drive during hours of the day when they are normally awake. Drivers are encouraged to manage fatigue by:

- planning regular rest stops every couple of hours;
- sharing the driving with other passengers;
- eating light meals or fruit throughout the journey and staying hydrated; and/or
- if you find you are feeling tired during a trip then you can take a "powernap" - taking a short nap of between 20 and 40 minutes (this is an effective way to reduce sleepiness).

Disability Mentoring Week: Volunteers Sought

Volunteer mentors and student participants are being sought for Disability Mentoring Week, which will run from 7-11 April.

During the week employees with a disability in state sector organisations around the country host a student with a disability for a day in their workplace. The aim is to give the student an idea of how people with disabilities can fit into government workplaces, and also to hopefully set up a one-on-one mentoring relationship between the employee and the student.

The project organisers at Mainstream want to get in touch with state sector employees with a disability around the country who are willing to volunteer in this way. They are also inviting students with a disability studying in tertiary institutes/secondary schools around the country, to either contact them directly or to get in touch with their institute's disability advisor about participating in Disability Mentoring Week 2008.

Contact Mainstream: C Scott, 04-495 6724, J Koh, 04-439 6323, or email the Mainstream Programme at: mainstream@ssc.govt.nz

Equipment for Disabled People: Roadshow Coming

"Show Your Ability" is a travelling roadshow displaying equipment for disabled people. There are over 30 suppliers at each of the following venues:

- Auckland - Trusts Stadium (26 February);
- Hamilton - Mystery Creek (27 February);
- Palmerston North - Arena Manawatu (28 February);
- Christchurch - Pioneer Stadium (3 March); and
- Dunedin - Edgar Stadium (4 March).

Each roadshow is open from 9.00am-2.30pm, and entry is free.

More information: 3AM Ltd, PO Box 5482, Palmerston North, tel 021-026 24554, email showyourability@3am.net.nz

Women's Health Information Centre: New Freephone

The Women's Health Information Centre (WHIC), a free service operating nationwide, has added an 0800 number to the services it offers. WHIC offers health information, referrals, pregnancy tests, condoms and health talks to groups. There is also a range of health networks throughout the country that WHIC can refer women to. Note that the organisation now receives funding specifically to allow it to assist rural women.

Health information and resources can be posted out to rural women free of charge. For more information about the service, also for health information and health resources call freephone 0800 379 6970

Education

Adjusting to Changes in Decile Ranking: Assistance

The Government has allocated \$5.7 million in government assistance for schools adjusting to changes in decile rankings. Adversely-affected schools will lose half the amount they would otherwise have in 2008, and the full effect of the changes for these schools will not now take effect until the beginning of 2009 (this gives them another year to adjust their budgets). One third of schools got increased funding in the latest rankings, one third had no change and one third lost some money.

What are School Decile Rankings?

A school's decile indicates the number of its students who are from low socio-economic communities. Decile 1 schools are the 10% of schools with the highest proportion of students from low socio-economic communities and decile 10 schools are the 10% of schools with the lowest proportion of these students. The system is used to provide funding to state and state integrated schools to enable them to overcome the barriers to learning faced by students from low socio-economic communities - the lower the school's decile, the more funding they receive. The rankings are re-calculated after each census. The five factors that are measured to allocate deciles are: household income, occupation, household crowding, educational qualifications, and the percentage of parents accessing income support.

Feet First Walk to School Week

Schools from all over NZ are invited to take part in the next Feet First Walk to School Week, being held from 3 to 7 March 2008. During the week students are encouraged to walk to school for at least 10 minutes of the way, with a caregiver, a friend or on a walking school bus, with the aim of getting more children to walk to school every day. Participating schools receive flyers, posters, stickers and progress cards and will have the chance to win great prizes.

More information is available from feetfirst@landtransport.govt.nz

Youth Apprenticeship Programme to be Expanded

The Youth Apprenticeship programme being piloted this year is to be rolled out to all secondary schools by the end of 2011. The programme will involve partnerships with employers, tertiary educators, private training providers, and communities. Almost 30% of NZ students leave school before their seventeenth birthday, and 40% leave with less than an NCEA Level Two qualification, and the programme works well for many of these students.

Parent to Parent: Individual Education Plan Seminars

Parent to Parent NZ is currently offering seminars and practical workshop in locations around the country during February and March to assist parents who are involved or likely to be involved in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process.

Parent to Parent NZ supports families who have a child with a disability, special need or health impairment.

For information on the seminars and workshops/to register your interest please phone National Office at freephone 0508 236 236, or email national@parent2parent.org.nz

Helping Students Stay at School: Case Studies

A report called "Staying at School, Assisting students to reach their full potential: Eight New Zealand case studies" has been released by the Ministry of Education. The schools featured in the case studies range from large urban secondary schools to small, rural schools. They offer a range of programmes designed to keep students learning and to encourage them to identify careers they are interested in that can be explored while they are still at school.

The report is at http://www.minedu.govt.nz/web/downloadable/dl12414_v1/staying-at-school-collection-of-case-studies-web.pdf

Schools: Funding for New Buildings

Fifty-nine schools around the country will get extra funding of \$22 million this year to help them provide enough space for things like libraries and administration areas. The funding comes from the School Property Guide Deficiencies Programme, set up in 2000. The money will allow schools around the country to improve areas where their property has not caught up due to roll increases. The funding is in addition to schools' normal five-year property budgets which are spent on upgrading existing buildings.

Housing

Licensed Building Practitioner Scheme: Brief Update

The Licensed Building Practitioners Scheme aims to improve the quality of homes and buildings by making sure that the people who work on them are competent to do so. The scheme will also provide consumer protection through a complaints system and all licensed practitioners will be listed on an online register.

Applicants applying for licences will be assessed in terms of whether they have the required skills, knowledge and experience for the class of licence they've applied for. A fee system applies.

More than 7000 Licensed Building Practitioner application packs have been requested since the scheme began operating last November when the first licence classes were introduced (Carpentry (Site 1, Site 2, Site 3), Design 1, Design 2, and Design 3). People who will be applying for licences in these classes are carpenters, builders, site supervisors, construction managers, designers and draughtspeople. Other classes are to be introduced later on this year.

From November 2010, it is intended that certain "restricted work" will need to be undertaken by a licensed building practitioner, or supervised by one. The nature of "restricted work" will be clearly defined after consultation with people in the industry.

Anyone wanting to know more about the Licensed Building Practitioner scheme can contact the Department of Building and Housing, tel 0800-60 60 50, email info@dbh.govt.nz, or visit the DBH website at <http://www.dbh.govt.nz/occupational-licensing>. A schedule of fees is at <http://www.dbh.govt.nz/lbp-scheme-fees>

New NZ Wiring Rules in Pipeline

AS/NZS 3000:2007 Electrical Installations, more commonly known as the Australian/NZ Wiring Rules, are expected to be released in the final quarter of this year. Basically, the Wiring Rules have been "the bible" for electrical contractors, design consultants, regulators, electrical industry training bodies, and manufacturers, importers, wholesalers and retailers of electrical equipment and accessories. A seminar series to promote the Standard is scheduled to take place this year.

More information: A Lattey, tel 04-498 3986, email annie.lattey@standards.co.nz

Employment

2008/09 ACC Levy Rates

Most employers will pay less in ACC levies this financial year, while there will be some increases for workers and motorists. In summary:

- the average composite employer levy will decrease from \$1.32 to \$1.26 per \$100 of earnings;
- the earner levy (paid by all earners to cover their non-work, non-motor vehicle injuries) will increase from \$1.16 to \$1.24 per \$100 of earnings; and
- the average composite motor vehicle levy will rise from \$204.78 to \$254.63. It will be split 50/50 between the petrol levy and registration fees;

All levies exclude GST and are average rates. Individual rates for industry groups may be higher or lower. The new rates take effect in April, with the exception of the motor vehicle levy which takes effect in July.

More details are available at www.acc.co.nz

Work Stoppages Decreased Between 2006 & 2007

According to Statistics NZ (SNZ) 29 work stoppages ended in the September 2007 year: 22 complete strikes, six partial strikes and one lockout. This compares with 50 stoppages for the September 2006 year. Stoppages in the September 2007 year involved 6,979 employees, and losses of 16,678 person-days of work and \$2.9 million in wages and salaries. In comparison, the 50 stoppages in the September 2006 year involved 12,585 employees, and losses of 26,462 person-days of work and an estimated \$4.7 million in wages and salaries.

Transport

Tougher Penalties for Young Drivers?

A new Bill proposing to raise the minimum driving age from 15 to 16 is currently before the Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee. The Bill also proposes:

- to extend the minimum period that under 25 year olds have to spend on a learner licence from six months to 12 months;
- to decrease fees for breaches of Graduated Driver Licensing System conditions from \$400 to \$100 and increase demerit points from 25 to 35 points;

- to allow the Police to issue "licence compliance orders" to drivers found in breach of their licence conditions. These would prohibit drivers from driving in breach of their learner and restricted licence conditions while the order is in force, with a second breach resulting in a possible 28-day vehicle impoundment;
- that approved training for which a six-month reduction in the restricted phase is permitted (for example, Defensive Driving Courses) be undertaken during the learner phase, before commencing solo driving; and
- to include questions about the Graduated Driver Licensing System conditions and the sanctions for breaching conditions in the learner licence theory test.

More information is at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/tougher+penalties+focus+road+safety+package+2>

2007 New Vehicle Sales

New vehicle sales for the full year 2007 reached 102,468 (77,454 cars and 25,014 commercial vehicles), 980 units (1.0%) behind the 16-year record set in 2005. Fourth quarter sales of 26,276 new vehicles (4.6% ahead of the same period in the record year 2005) saw full-year 2007 sales grow over 2006 by 2.5%.

Toyota took a commanding lead for 2007 in passenger cars, commercials and total vehicles. Ford finished in second place with Holden taking the bronze for passenger cars and total vehicles (although they were pipped by Nissan for commercials). The Holden Commodore closed out the year as NZ's top selling car model, followed the Toyota Corolla, with the Falcon hanging on for third.

Money Matters

Minimum Wage to Rise

The minimum wage, which applies to people 16 years and over, will increase from 1 April 2008 by 6.7%, from \$11.25 to \$12.00 an hour (\$480 for a 40 hour week). The youth minimum rate of \$9.00 per hour, for employees aged 16 and 17 years, will cease from 1 April 2008 and be replaced by a new entrants' minimum hourly rate of \$9.60, or 80% of the adult minimum wage. The new entrants' rate can be paid to 16 and 17 year olds for the first 200 hours or three months of employment, then the adult minimum wage applies.

For more information, employers and employees can contact the Department of Labour at freephone 0800 20 90 20. Information on current minimum wage rates is available at <http://www.ers.dol.govt.nz>

Reserve Bank to Licence All Insurers...

All insurance providers - including life, health and general insurance - will have to be licensed by the Reserve Bank under a new framework of regulations announced at the end of last year. The purpose of licensing is to ensure that insurers are "fit for business: by demonstrating they can manage the business they undertake, identify and manage their risks effectively, and have sufficient financial strength.

New legislation and associated details of the new regulatory framework will take time to implement. Legislation will be introduced in 2008, and is expected to be brought into force at some point in 2010.

Information on the main features of the new arrangements is on the Reserve Bank's website www.rbnz.govt.nz

...& New Guidelines for Insurers and Consumers

The Human Rights Commission has released revised guidelines on insurance and the Human Rights Act. This Act seeks to balance the right of people not to be unfairly treated when purchasing insurance with the insurance industry's right to charge premiums relevant to risk.

The guidelines were updated following an increase in the reporting of mental illness, developments in the area of human genetics screening and more information about the way the legislation is applied.

The insurance industry has indicated it will be establishing a consultative group made up of consumers, the industry and the Commission this year.

A pdf copy of the revised guidelines is at http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/06-Dec-2007_21-05-40_Insurance_Guidelines.pdf

Investment Advisers Must Disclose Fees

From the end of this month investment advisers will be required to provide up-front disclosure of their fees and remuneration, including commission. Up until now these advisers have been required to make certain disclosures without being asked. However, they have only had to make important disclosures like their commission rate if they were asked for this information - and less experienced investors often didn't know to ask for it.

More is in a press release at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new+financial+disclosure+regulations+start+feb+2008>

Repaying Student Loans: Earning Threshold Rises

The income threshold at which NZ-based borrowers must begin to repay their student loans will rise from \$17,784 to \$18,148 on 1

April this year. The new level is based on the annual movement in the September 2007 Consumer Price Index of 1.79%.

You can download a PDF copy of the revised guidelines from http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/06-Dec-2007_21-05-40_Insurance_Guidelines.pdf or a Word version from http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/14-Dec-2007_12-57-49_Insurance_guidelines_Word_final.doc

Taxing Redundancy Payments

Under current tax law, lower and middle-income people can be over-taxed when their redundancy pay pushes them into a higher tax bracket. Recently introduced legislation proposes introducing a simple tax rebate that will apply to redundancy payments made on or after 1 December 2006.

Calculation of the rebate will be based on the flat rate of six cents per dollar, up to \$60,000 per redundancy. That means, for example, that someone who receives a redundancy payment of \$20,000 will be able to claim a \$1,200 rebate. Someone who receives a \$60,000 payout can claim a rebate of \$3,600. Because the maximum redundancy payout that qualifies for a rebate is \$60,000, the rebate itself is capped at \$3,600, so someone who receives a payout larger than \$60,000 will be eligible for a \$3,600 rebate.

Once the system is in place, from 1 April this year, recipients will be able to claim a rebate immediately after receiving their redundancy payout by completing an Inland Revenue form.

Electronic Card Transactions: December 2007

Statistics NZ says that in December 2007, there were 95 million electronic card transactions totalling \$4.6 billion - the same as November 2007. For the retail industries, the seasonally adjusted value of card transactions was also unchanged in December 2007 compared with November 2007. Seasonally adjusted sales for the motor-vehicle related industry had strong growth in each of the three months from September 2007 to November 2007 and, to a lesser extent, in December. The Electronic Card Transaction series measures the number and value of debit, credit and charge card transactions with NZ-based merchants. It is a census of all card transactions processed within NZ.

Business

New Zealand's Tax System: One of the Simplest in the World

The World Bank has ranked NZ ninth out of 178 nations in a new report on the easiest places for businesses to pay taxes. The report, "Paying Taxes 2008 - The Global Picture" ranks tax systems across a number of indicators including total tax rate, time taken to comply with tax rules, and the number of required tax payments.

New Zealand's ranking in the top ten puts it well ahead of some of its major trading partners including Australia (41), the United Kingdom (12), the United States (76), and Canada (25). The countries that ranked higher than NZ were Maldives, Singapore, Hong Kong, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Ireland, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

The report is available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org/features/taxes2008.aspx>

New Research & Development Tax Credit

A 15% tax credit for businesses doing eligible research and development (R&D) takes effect from the start of the 2008-2009 income tax year. To be eligible for the tax credit, business R&D activities must be systematic, investigative and experimental carried out to acquire new knowledge or to create new or improved materials, products, devices, processes or services. They must also intend to achieve an advance in science or technology by resolving scientific or technological uncertainty. Eligible expenditure must exceed \$20,000 - unless using a listed research provider, or unless the business only started up during the year, in which case the \$20,000 minimum threshold is pro-rated.

The following expenditure on eligible R&D activities may qualify for the tax credit:

- salaries and other remuneration of employees doing R&D;
- depreciation of tangible assets used wholly or mainly in doing R&D;
- costs of staff training, recruitment, relocation and travel incurred as a direct result of R&D;
- the cost of materials used in prototypes;
- overheads for administration, personnel, repairs and maintenance, cleaning and security, rates, utilities, insurance and leasing of buildings, plant and equipment;
- the cost of items used, and the net cost of items processed or transformed, in R&D activities; and
- payments to an entity or person conducting R&D on behalf of the claimant.

For more information about eligible and ineligible expenditure, see the draft R&D tax credit guide at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/rd-tax-credit/rd-tax-credit-index.html#01>

Business Technology Development Grants: Report

A report looking at grants given to small companies under the Technology for Business Growth (TBG) scheme, run by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST), over the past five years shows that:

- average turnover of the firms increased by 29% since the beginning of their TBG contracts, with one in three reporting a more than 200% increase;
- total export revenues of the firms were \$424 million, 35% of turnover, with one in seven reporting an increase of more than 200%;

- average R&D expenditure of the firms increased by 37%;
- 127 new or improved products, processes or services resulted from 45 of the TBG projects; and
- current annual revenue from the technology developed was estimated at \$4.4 million for each \$1 million of TBG grants, with over 70% of the revenue from exports.

The report surveyed 51 firms which had completed TBG contracts worth \$50,000 or more.

You can download the report at http://www.frst.govt.nz/publications/corporate/downloads/index/TBG_Performance_Report.pdf

Update on NZ Trade Agreement Negotiations

Multilateral agreements (agreements negotiated with a number of other countries) are important when it comes development of free trade, but patience is very important. For example, with the World Trade Organisation's Doha Round participating countries, of which NZ is one, have been trying to reach agreement for the past seven years. Not wanting to put all its eggs in one basket, NZ has been also working on a number of bilateral agreements (agreements with another country) and regional agreements. NZ trade agreements under negotiation are:

Doha: World Trade Organisation talks that started in 2001 aimed at removing export incentives and reducing agricultural subsidies and tariff levels as far as possible. The prospects of a deal this year are given a slightly less than even chance;

China Free Trade Agreement: potentially the biggest free trade deal since Closer Economic Relations (CER) signed with Australia in 1983. Studies show potential savings to NZ of about \$100 million in tariffs and export growth of between \$260 million and \$400 million. The fifteenth round of negotiations has been completed and an agreement is on track for signature by April. NZ would be the first developed nation to get a free trade deal with China;

Gulf Agreement: the second round of negotiations with Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar was completed in November, with a possibility of concluding negotiations on the Gulf Co-operation Council Free Trade Agreement this year;

Malaysia Agreement: officials are close to resolutions in some areas including goods, but in services, investment and government procurement Malaysia has been reluctant to move far. Unlikely to see much progress until after Malaysian elections due soon;

ASEAN-Australia and NZ: the combined population for the 12 ASEAN countries is more than half a billion people with an estimated gross domestic product of nearly \$1 trillion. Negotiations are considered important but are moving relatively slowly and will not necessarily produce the most ambitious result;

Hong Kong Partnership: negotiations are on hold over the question of rules of origin. Hong Kong is keen to resume talks with NZ and is open to restarting discussions after it reaches a deal with China, which will resolve many issues about the origin of goods and services;

United States: there is bipartisan support within the US Congress and corporate sector for negotiations but it will be easier

for an Administration to get Trade Promotion Authority to start new negotiations after the presidential election. The authority gives an Administration the ability to negotiate trade deals which Congress can either approve or turn down but not amend;

European Union: annual trade talks have started, with discussions on how to enhance relationships after the Doha round, but the focus is on Doha in the first instance. Lateral thinking is needed to enhance and liberalise trade while working around EU protection of its agricultural industry. Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is gradually changing the landscape with cutbacks in the use of subsidies and a commitment to phase out export incentives by 2013;

Korea: study concluded with Korea into the merits of a free trade agreement with initial discussions held between respective trade ministers. It is hoped that a positive attitude towards working with NZ will continue with a newly elected administration;

Mexico: a study on NZ's largest Latin American trading partner recommended a free trade agreement which has some sympathy with the current Mexican Administration but there is resistance to new free trade deals in that country at the moment;

Japan: discussions are being held with Japan about strengthening the economic relationship but not about free trade at this point. Japan is very protective of its agricultural sector and NZ needs to convince the country it can be complementary rather than simply competitive; and

East Asia: the Closer Economic Partnership for East Asia is a longer-term objective being promoted by Japan with support from NZ to discuss regional trade liberalisation.

NZTE Reports: Agritech Opportunities

Australia: New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) has published an 11-page market profile document on agritech trading opportunities in Australia. The document highlights areas of future potential including animal health, genetics, fencing, dairy and pasture equipment, research and consultancy. It also covers market structure, the competitive environment, a regulatory overview and further sources of information.

Go to <http://www.marketnewzealand.com/Common/Files/Australia%20Agritech%2007.pdf>

South-east Asia: Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam are growing strongly and NZTE has published two reports for food and beverage traders contemplating entering these countries. One report focuses on retailing, the other on hotel, restaurants and institutions. The combined population of these four countries, grouped into NZTE's South, South-east Asia region, totals 180 million but the reports recommend slightly different approaches be taken in each country. Both 13-page reports cover the markets' size and structure, regulations, market entry considerations and sources of further information.

They are at <http://www.marketnewzealand.com/Common/Files/SEA%20F%20and%20B%20Retail%2007.pdf> and <http://www.marketnewzealand.com/Common/Files/SEA%20F%20and%20B%20HRI%2007.pdf>

China: The Chinese food and beverage (F & B) retail industry is forecast to overtake Japan as the most lucrative F & B market in the Asia-Pacific region by 2010. NZTE's 16-page market profile document looks at opportunities in the industry and also features a separate document on its regulations.

The market profile document recommends that companies pitch to the perceptions Chinese consumers have of NZ as a "clean and green" country. NZ's strict food safety supervision and traceability systems also provide a high level of confidence for Chinese consumers concerned with recent food scares.

The profile provides a number of recommended strategies for NZ companies entering the market and also covers market structure, the competitive environment, a regulatory overview and further sources of information.

Go to <http://www.marketnewzealand.com/Common/Files/China%20F%20and%20B%20Retail%2007.pdf> and <http://www.marketnewzealand.com/Common/Files/China%20F%20and%20B%20Regulations%2007.pdf>

United Arab Emirates (UAE): This country's rapid growth is creating opportunities for NZ food and beverage exporters. The hotel and restaurant sector is growing at a rate of 10% a year, for example. NZ companies have a long association in the UAE supplying meat and dairy products and are positively regarded. This allows for pitching based on premium quality and disease-free status. The profile document includes information on UAE's market structure, competitive environment, sub-sectors, regulations and recommended entry strategies.

Go to <http://www.marketnewzealand.com/Common/Files/UAE%20Food%20and%20Beverage%202007.pdf>

Uruguay: NZTE's 5-page market profile document on agritech trading opportunities in Uruguay includes information on Uruguay's market structure, competitive environment, regulations and recommended entry strategies. It also highlights opportunities for NZ companies in the areas of agricultural machinery and irrigation systems and equipment.

Go to http://www.marketnewzealand.com/Common/Files/Uruguay_Agritech_07.pdf

Treaty Matters

Agreement in Principle on Taranaki Whanui

The Crown and Port Nicholson Block Claims Team have signed an Agreement in Principle to settle all outstanding historical Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi claims of Taranaki Whanui (Wellington). Claims covered by the Agreement in Principle in-

clude those relating to the loss of land Taranaki Whanui (Wellington) suffered in the nineteenth century, the way the Crown administered reserves set aside for Taranaki Whanui, and the loss of their connection to the harbour, forests, waterways and natural resources within the Port Nicholson Block.

The Agreement in Principle includes the transfer of property of great cultural significance to Taranaki Whanui (Wellington). They include the three islands in the Wellington Harbour, the lakebeds of Kohangatera and Kohangapiripiri at Parangarahu, and reserve lands such as Wi Tako Scenic Reserve. It has also been agreed to explore the transfer of dendroglyphs (carvings on trees) and esplanade reserves at Pencarrow. The financial redress of the settlement will be \$25 million. Taranaki Whanui (Wellington) will also receive the right to purchase a portfolio of up to \$120 million worth of Crown-owned land around Wellington, including some land that will be leased back to the Crown. The Crown will also be making a contribution to the costs of settling the claims.

Agreement in Principle: Ngatikahu ki Whangaroa

In December 2007 the Crown and Ngatikahu ki Whangaroa Trust Board signed an Agreement in Principle. This includes an account of acts and omissions of the Crown that gave rise to breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi and a Crown apology; the gifting of Stony Creek Station and the Thomson and Clarke blocks- approximately 3000 hectares (some covenants and conditions apply); vesting of ten other sites of cultural and spiritual significance to Ngatikahu ki Whangaroa: (with conservation values be protected and public access continuing); establishment of a joint advisory committee for parts of the Ranfurly Bay Scenic Reserve; acknowledgements by the Crown of Ngatikahu ki Whangaroa values in relation to reserves and rivers; and consideration of seven place name changes.

This year the Crown will consult with other Far North iwi whose interests overlap with those of Ngatikahu ki Whangaroa and it is possible that redress offered in the Agreement in Principle may be revised following the consultation.

Crown/Waikato/Tainui Accord Reached

An agreement in principle in respect of the Waikato River claim has also been signed at a special meeting of the tribal Parliament for Waikato-Tainui, Te Kauhanganui o Waikato.

The Waikato River claim arose from the Crown's raupatu (confiscation) in the 1860s which denied the rights and interests of Waikato-Tainui in the Waikato River. The river claim was excluded from the 1995 land settlement with Waikato-Tainui and was set aside for future negotiation.

The focus of the Agreement in Principle is the health and wellbeing of the Waikato-River, with the agreement reflecting a shared commitment by the Crown and Waikato-Tainui to enter a new era of co-management of the river. A vision for the Waikato River is to be established. together with a plan for ways of achieving the vision. This will focus on restoring and protecting the health and wellbeing of the river for future generations.

Internet/ICT

Kiwi Use of Internet: Survey

The Auckland University of Technology (AUT) has released the findings of a survey looking at how NZers use the internet. The survey is part of the World Internet Project (WIP) - an international collaborative project looking at the social, political and economic impact of the internet and other new technologies.

Some of the key findings include:

- NZers' use the internet heavily to conduct their everyday business, 83% of users access information about products online, and 60% buy things online. 51% pay bills, and 62% make travel reservations or bookings. 68% use their bank's online services;
- 29% of users access the internet through wireless or mobile phone. 68% have broadband at home, while 31% have dialup. Those without broadband at home are more likely to be older, live in rural areas and have lower household incomes than broadband users;
- an important proportion of NZers generate their own content on the web, especially those under 30 years. 13% of all users have their own website;
- 27% have posted messages on discussion/message boards, and 33% have posted pictures, photos or videos on the web. 10% have their own blog, with 21% of bloggers being under 20 years of age;
- respondents rate the internet above all other sources as an important or very important source of information (62%), compared to newspapers and television (both 54%) and radio (46%). The internet even rates above interpersonal sources such as family and friends (58%), despite non-users being included in these responses;
- socialising is a major use of the internet, and 77% of users check their email every day. 10% participate in multi-player online games at least daily, and 16% participate in social networking sites like MySpace or Facebook at least daily;
- 81% of the sample of NZers use the internet;
- internet access, usage, capability and attitudes are all strongly graded by NZers' age, income and area of residence. The younger, wealthier and more urban people are, the more connected and confident they are online; and
- most people believe the internet is considerably enhancing their social contacts rather than diminishing them.

You can access the survey at http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research_institutes/icdc/projects/wip_project_findings.htm

Worldwide Award for Ministry of Transport Intranet

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) has become the first Kiwi organisation to win a spot in the Nielsen Norman Group's (NNG) Ten Best Intranets worldwide. NNG said the MoT intranet makes it effortless to communicate research work and news across the

organisation, and that the design team achieved this by applying sound information architecture and considering user tasks and simplicity. Most of the 2008 winners are big companies, employing an average of 50,000 staff.

The ten best Intranet winners are listed at <http://www.nngroup.com/reports/intranet/design/awards.html>

Briefings to Incoming Ministers

Government agencies brief incoming Ministers so they can familiarise themselves with their new portfolios. These briefings summarise the role of the Ministry, describe the management structure, and give an outline of the main issues and themes of the particular portfolio. The most recent "Briefings to Incoming Ministers" (BIMs) are:

ACC: <http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/general/bim07/acc.asp>

Broadcasting (three briefings):

- *Ministry of Culture and Heritage:* <http://www.mch.govt.nz/publications/bim2007/>
- *Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit (CCMAU):* <http://www.ccm.au.govt.nz/key-documents.html>
- *Radio Spectrum Management:* <http://www.rsm.govt.nz/cms/policy-and-planning>

Building Issues: <http://www.dbh.govt.nz/UserFiles/File/AboutUs/Strategic-Direction/pdf/initial-briefing-oct-2007.pdf>

Careers Service: http://www2.careers.govt.nz/briefing_for_incoming_minister.html

Conservation: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/templates/MultiPageDocumentTOC.aspx?id=45392>

Corrections: <http://www.corrections.govt.nz/public/news/briefing-for-incoming-minister/index.html>

Courts: <http://www.justice.govt.nz/pubs/reports/2007/briefings-to-ministers/vote-courts/index.html>

Economic Development: http://www.med.govt.nz/templates/StandardSummary____32748.aspx

Ministry of Education (three briefings):

- *Education:* <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=12415&indexid=12410&indexparentid=1108>
- *International Education:* <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=12411&data=1>
- *Tertiary Education:* <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=12409&data=1>

Food Safety: <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/about-us/minister/briefing-2007/index.htm>

Foundation for Research Science and Technology: http://www.frst.govt.nz/Publications/corporate/Ministers_Briefing_2007.cfm

Health: <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/briefing-to-incoming-minister07>

Housing NZ Corporation: <http://www.hnzc.co.nz/hnzc/web/about-us/our-publications/briefing-to-the-incoming-minister.htm>

Immigration: <http://dol.govt.nz/publications/general/bim07/immigration.asp>

Department of Internal Affairs (Community and Voluntary Sector and Local Government): http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Resource-material-Briefings-to-Incoming-Ministers-Index?OpenDocument&ExpandView

Justice: <http://www.justice.govt.nz/pubs/reports/2007/briefings-to-ministers/vote-justice/index.html>

Department of Labour has responsibility for the following BIMs:

- **ACC:** <http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/general/bim07/acc.asp>
- **Labour:** <http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/general/bim07/labour.asp>
- **Social Development and Employment:** <http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/general/bim07/social-development.asp>
- **NZ Qualifications Authority:** <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/news/featuresandspeeches/docs/minister-briefing2007.pdf>
- **NZ Trade and Enterprise:** <http://www.nzte.govt.nz/section/14631/18419.aspx>

Pacific Island Affairs: <http://www.minpac.govt.nz/>

Research Science and Technology: <http://www.morst.govt.nz/publications/corporate-reports/bim/>

Rugby World Cup: http://www.med.govt.nz/templates/StandardSummary____32748.aspx

Social Development: <http://www.msd.govt.nz/publications/briefing-papers.html>

Small Business: http://www.med.govt.nz/templates/MultipageDocumentTOC____32749.aspx

Sport and Recreation: <http://www.sparc.org.nz/about-sparc/minister-ministry/overview> and www.drugfreesport.org.nz at <http://www.drugfreesport.org.nz/>

State Services: <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/display/document.asp?docid=6307>

Statistics: The BIM can be accessed from <http://www.stats.govt.nz/about-us/corporate-reports/default.htm>

Teachers Council: <http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/ministers/bim/2007>

Tertiary Education Commission: BIMs can be accessed from <http://www.tec.govt.nz/templates/StandardSummary.aspx?id=1199>

Treaty Negotiations: <http://nz01.terabyte.co.nz/ots/DocumentLibrary/BIM.htm>

Veterans Affairs: <http://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/docs/bim/index.html>

Women's Affairs: The BIM can be accessed from <http://www.mwa.govt.nz/news-and-pubs/publications/az-publications/index.html>

The Securities Commission has launched a new website - <http://newsecuritieslaw.govt.nz/> - to explain the changes to securities law which come into force on 29 February. The changes were made when Parliament passed the Securities Legislation Bill in 2006. Accompanying regulations are at http://www.med.govt.nz/templates/ContentTopicSummary_____32732.aspx

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) has a new website at <http://www.sustainability.govt.nz/>. It includes tips about sustainability issues and has online activities such as competitions, discussions, case studies, films, and blogs. There is also local and central government information on support and grants to help households to become more sustainable.

A new Companies Office voluntary administration website is at <http://www.companies.govt.nz/cms/how-do-i/manage-a-receivership-or-liquidation-online>. This enables administrators of companies in voluntary administration to notify the Registrar of Companies of their appointment and manage their portfolios. Voluntary administration is an alternative to liquidation for companies in financial distress. It is considered to be a short-term measure, freezing the company's financial position while the administrator and the creditors determine the company's future.

A new website at www.legislation.govt.nz is providing free public access to Acts, Bills before Parliament, and regulations. The website will eventually show legislation at its different stages - as a Bill as introduced, at each stage during its passage through Parliament, as an Act as originally passed, and as an amended Act. It will also show repealed Acts. Initially, the legislation will be "unofficial" (this means it cannot be relied on legal purposes). Over time, it will become an official source of NZ legislation in a process expected to take around three years.

Arts and Culture

Six Pack '08 Competition for NZ Writers...

NZ Book Month is seeking entries to the 2008 Six Pack competition, open to all NZ writers (mid-career writers or complete unknowns). Short stories, excerpts from novels and poetry, and this year writers of essays, travel writing and biography are all welcomed.

There are six winners, and each receives \$5000 and has their work published in the NZ Book Month publication "The Six Pack". In the past two years "Six Pack", which sells for \$6, has sold more than 12,000 copies and topped the bestseller list. Each year 30,000 copies are printed and with assistance from Lion Foundation, with half the print run distributed free to schools, libraries and non-profit organisations.

Entries close on 26 March 2008. Entry forms are on the NZ Book month site at <http://nzbookmonth.co.nz/default.aspx>

...& Two Other Writing Opportunities

They are:

- the \$100,000 Creative NZ Michael King Writers' Fellowship is open to writers who have published a significant body of work and wish to work on a major project over two or more years. They can submit fiction, creative non-fiction, poetry, children's writing, plays, biography, autobiography, history, essays, literary criticism or analytical prose.
- a three-month residency involving participation in the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa, which is available to a nationally recognised NZ writer of fiction, poetry, drama, children's fiction, screenplays, biography or cultural commentary, who has previously published at least one

volume of work. This residency runs between August and November. It includes a \$10,000 grant, airfares, accommodation and a daily allowance.

The closing date for both opportunities is 5pm Friday 21 March 2008. For more information contact F Birch, Programme Administrator, Creative NZ, tel 04-478 0735, email felicityb@creativenz.govt.nz

Youth Film Challenge

Budding videographers are invited to enter the Ministry of Youth Development's ID360 short film competition, which is open to young Kiwis aged 12-24 years. There are three sections for competitors (who can compete in teams or as individuals): 12-15 years, 16-18 years and 19-24 years. \$10,000 worth of prizes is offered, and the top 15 short listed films - five from each age category - will be on the ID360 website - www.id360.govt.nz - from 17 March. Online voting for the People's Choice Award will be open until 11 April, and the winners will be announced at a ceremony at the NZ Film Archive on 21 April.

Entries must be in by 29 February 2008. More information, including competition rules, tips on how to make a short film and film ideas, go to the ID360 website: www.ID360.govt.nz

Artists in Schools Programme: 2008 Applications

The Ministry of Education and Ministry for Culture and Heritage are seeking applications for the Artists in Schools programme for Terms 2 and 3 of 2008. This programme funds practising artists in the fields of dance, drama, music, and visual arts to work on arts projects for up to 10 weeks in primary and secondary schools. Funding is also provided to assist schools to cover resources such as materials, costumes, or instrument hire needed for the projects.

Applications close 29 February 2008. Information and application forms can be accessed on the Ministry of Education's arts website at <http://arts.unitec.ac.nz/> (under Artists in Schools on the homepage)

Fishing

Fishing: We're Getting Better at Keeping it Legal

There has been a decrease in the number of infringement notices that fishery officers have had to hand out over the past five years, and the number of prosecutions for more serious offending is also dropping. However, in the past financial year, \$4,628,000 worth of commercial and recreational boats and \$113,150 worth of vehicles, as well as other fishing gear was still seized by fishery officers from people caught breaking the law.

To continue the downward trend, people fishing should:

- know the rules before they go fishing by consulting the area regulations covering the fishing location;
- only take what they need (fish for a feed and not to fill the freezer) and keep to the bag limits;
- stick to the minimum size limits; and
- report poaching by calling 0800 4 POACHER.

High Seas Orange Roughy Fishery Closed

The NZ and Australian Governments have agreed to close the high seas areas of the South Tasman Rise to their respective fleets from fishing orange roughy to give the stock a chance to rebuild. The South Tasman Rise is south of Tasmania and is partly in Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone and partly in the high seas. NZ and Australian vessels have historically fished the high seas areas.

Justice/Legal Matters

Terrorism Suppression Law in NZ: NZLC to Report

The Law Commission (NZLC) is to consider and report on whether NZ's legislation should be amended to cover the conduct of individuals that creates risk to or public concern. The report will concentrate on the state of NZ's existing domestic law, particularly the offences contained in the Crimes Act, Arms Act and Terrorism Suppression Act. It will take into account the need to ensure an appropriate balance between the preservation of public safety and the security and maintenance of individual rights and freedoms.

Terms of reference for this project are at <http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/ProjectGeneral.aspx?ProjectID=152>

Waka Umanga Bill: First Reading...

The Waka Umanga Bill aims to enable the establishment of new, voluntary legal entities tailored to meet the needs of iwi, hapu and other Maori collectives that manage communal assets. The Bill recognises that Maori collectives have a number of unique characteristics and that while they have adapted to using legal forms such as trusts and incorporated societies, these structures are not ideal when it comes to meeting their governance needs.

...and CYPF Amendment Bill Introduced

A Children, Young Persons, and their Families (CYPF) Amendment Bill was recently introduced to Parliament. The Bill is aimed at improving the participation of children and young people in decisions about them, and increasing support for young people moving out of the care and protection system. It would also raise the age of young people covered by the Act to include 17-year-olds (though young people would still be sent to adult court for serious charges). Introduction of the Bill follows consultation involving about 100 submissions from front-line workers, non-government organisations and others from across the care and protection, disability and youth justice sectors. It will be open for public submissions once it goes to select committee.

General

New Zealand Heads Transparency International Listing

New Zealand is perceived as one of the least corrupt countries in the world, Transparency International announced late last year in its 2007 Corruption Perceptions Index. NZ shared top-of-the-list rankings with Denmark and Finland. Singapore and Sweden shared second place. The index looks at perceptions of public sector corruption in 180 countries and territories.

You can access information from http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2007

Beefing Up the Independent Police Conduct Authority

Cabinet has agreed to six proposals to enhance the role of the Authority, which will:

- allow it to undertake its own investigations of complaints about Police misconduct in defined circumstances;
- allow it to conduct "own motion" investigations into serious incidents or incidents of significant public interest;
- amend the current secrecy and privilege provisions so that information gathered during the Authority's investigations can be used in subsequent proceedings;
- give Authority investigators the necessary powers to carry out their enhanced investigatory role;
- enable the Authority to decide whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant a criminal prosecution, where it has investigated a matter itself, or directed and controlled a Police investigation; and
- allow the Official Information Act to apply to the Authority.

The Economic Value of Community Agencies: Report

The NZ Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations (NZFVWO) has released "Counting for More", the second report of the "Value Added by Voluntary Agencies" (VAVA) project. Organisations in the Tangata Whenua, Community and Voluntary sector are often recognised for their "intrinsic" value and important contributions, but the economic value of their activities has largely gone unrecorded.

This report highlights the economic return that funders/investors of voluntary agencies can expect to receive, and it demonstrates the significant cost saving the two pilot agencies involved (Plunket and Literacy Aotearoa) are making across the fields of health, social wellness, justice and education. It also clearly indicates the added economic benefit of investment into voluntary organisations, indirectly through the wider community, directly to clients and through volunteering and volunteers.

NZFVWO is interested in hearing from people who want to: participate in a workshop to consider being part of a further study with larger sample size; share information about other outcome related studies & activities; and/or make suggestions for communication and follow up of the pilot studies. The report is available from www.nzfvwo.org.nz. You can also order a hard copy (\$15) from NZFVWO, PO Box 9517, Wellington, tel 04-385 0981, email: ed@nzfvwo.org.nz, website: www.nzfvwo.org.nz

Older Adults Value Independence: Report

A new study funded by the Families Commission's Blue Skies Fund shows older people (55 to 70 years old) look to friends, partners and family for emotional and practical support as they age. For the study, called "Older Adults' Experience of Family Life - linked lives and independent living", 36 older people were interviewed by Massey University School of Psychology researchers. Some were still working and/or providing back up support for their families.

There was a strong feeling that they didn't want to be dependent in any way and also that any help that was given needed to be balanced out by something they did in return. Most of those who took part felt it was important to stay connected with both their immediate and extended family as they aged. Some said they grew closer to their brothers and sisters as they got older, particularly once their parents died. Some also used the notion of

family to describe the importance of friends who they felt were more like a sister, or a mother.

New Zealand has an aging population with more than 12% now aged over 65: over the next 40 years that number will more than double to 26%.

The report is at <http://www.familiescommission.govt.nz/publications/blueskies>

Transgender Inquiry: HRC Recommendations

The Human Rights Commission (HRC) has published "To Be Who I Am", the report of the Transgender Inquiry. This report highlights four areas for immediate attention which came out of the enquiry:

- increasing participation of trans people in decisions that affect them;
- strengthening the legal protections making discrimination against trans people unlawful;
- improving access to health services, including gender reassignment services; and
- simplifying requirements for change of sex on a birth certificate, passport and other documents.

For more information, including copies of the report, go to <http://www.hrc.co.nz/home/hrc/introduction/transgenderinquiry/transgenderinquiry.php>

New Medal for Customs Officers

The recently instituted NZ Customs Service Medal recognises the special nature and scope of the work of our Customs officers and the significant contribution they make to NZ's border security. The Customs medal also aligns Customs officers, and the importance of their work, with other uniformed services such as Police, Fire and Defence, who all have similar medals.

Communicating with New Zealanders from Asia

- Auckland and Wellington-based newspaper The Dawn, a tabloid fortnightly newspaper in English, was launched in September 2007. The paper is for NZ's Indian, Pakistani and Bangladesh communities and it is distributed nationwide.
- World TV's free-to-air channel CTV8 (UHF 62) is now screening up to four hours a day of Mandarin language programming on TVNZ On Demand at www.tvnzon-demand.co.nz.
- Community Radio Hamilton has recently has launched new Japanese, Sri Lankan and Malaysian programmes. They also have started the new urban Asian music show called Oriental Beatz. For more information, go to www.community-radio.co.nz.
- Chinese Voice is a new Mandarin programme on Access Radio 783 AM that aims to be an up-to-date source of information to primarily help senior members of the

Wellington Chinese community. The fortnightly show is broadcast at 4pm on Saturday.

South Island Population Reaches One Million

According to Statistics NZ the South Island's estimated resident population has exceeded 1,000,000 for the first time. An estimated 1,008,400 people lived in the South Island at 30 June 2007, an increase of 9,600 (1%) from 30 June 2006. At the same date the estimated resident population of the North Island grew by 33,800 (1.1%) to reach 3,219,000. The North Island's fastest growing region was Auckland, which has a population increase of 23,000 (1.7%).

Conferences/ Festivals

National Not-For-Profit Sector Conference

This conference is being held on 13-14 March 2008 at the War Memorial Conference Centre, Marine Parade, Napier. Called "Managing and Governing for the Social Good", it will focus on development of practical skills for managers, boards and leaders within non-government organisations.

More information: Grow Events, 95 Havelock Road, Havelock North, tel 06-878 3456, fax 06-870 3705, email events@grow.co.nz, website www.nfpconference.co.nz

Chinese Lantern Festivals 2008

The Lantern Festival has been part of Chinese New Year celebrations since the Han Dynasty (206 BC-221 AD). Usually held on the 15th day of the first month of the lunar calendar, it marks the end of New Year festivities. This year's Chinese Lantern Festivals, organised by Asia:NZ, will be held in Albert Park, Auckland over three days: from 22-24 February, and in Victoria Square, Christchurch over two days from 1-2 March.

National Interfaith Forum

The Wellington Interfaith Council is hosting a three-part Interfaith Forum. The National Youthfaith Forum is on 8 March (10am-4.30pm) at the Wellington City Council Chambers, Town Hall; the National Women's Interfaith Forum is on 9 March (10am-4.30pm) at Parliament; and the National Inter Faith Forum is on 10 March (all day) also at Parliament

More information: Wellington Interfaith Council, PO Box 20 037, Wellington South 6029, email pushpa.wood@paradise.net.nz

Some Funding/Awards Opportunities

New Lottery Fund Information Released

Criteria and information about how to prepare an application for funding through the Lottery Significant Projects Fund are now available from the Grants Online website. This fund will allocate money to complete projects worth over \$1 million and there will be a total of \$16 million to disburse next year. The fund will help complete large projects which have significance for local communities, the region, or the nation as a whole. Projects must be in the areas of arts, culture and heritage, sport and recreation, or conservation and the environment. They should also provide tourism and economic development benefits. Community groups wishing to access the funding will need to show that they have raised at least 60% of the money needed, and that their project has strong community support."

Applications close on 1 April 2008. Community groups can talk to a Funding Advisor about their project's eligibility by calling 0800 824 824

Rural Innovation Fund Application Round Open

The Rural Innovations Fund has been set up to assist and support innovation in rural health service delivery. It provides one-off funding to develop and pilot projects that will enhance rural health service delivery. The Ministry of Health is particularly interested in receiving innovative proposals aimed at enhancing the recruitment and retention of rural health professionals, for example, rural midwives. The funding limit for each application is \$50,000 (GST excl) and the grant is for 12 months.

Applications close on 31 March 2008. Guidelines for applicants and the application form are now available on the Ministry of Health's website at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/rural-innovations-fund>), or contact M Leerschool, Senior Policy Analyst, Population Health Directorate, Ministry of Health, 04-496 2085, fax: 04-496 2344

Sustainable Farming Fund Targets Climate Change

The end of last year saw the announcing of additional funding of \$2 million a year for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's (MAF's) Sustainable Farming Fund (SFF), to invest in projects specifically relating to climate change. The SFF will be looking for proposals that have the potential to:

- reduce the impact of climate change on the primary industries;
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions and their impact on the environment and improve efficient use of resources; and/or
- capitalise on climate change related business opportunities such as carbon farming.

The closing date for funding applications is 10 March 2008. For more information on the SFF Climate Change portfolio, visit www.maf.govt.nz/sff

Disability Organisations: Disability Award Applications Sought

New Zealand has won the Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award for 2007. This award comes with a cash

prize of US\$50,000 for a NZ non-government disability organisation that has supported disabled people into leadership roles; or promoted and advocated for the rights of disabled people; or worked to make society more responsive to their needs.

Applications close on 15 February 2008. Forms are available from the Office for Disability Issues at www.odi.govt.nz or the Ministry of Social Development at www.msd.govt.nz

Women's Leadership Scholarship

This scholarship provides study, research and leadership training opportunities for women grassroots leaders and organisers from the Global South and/or from indigenous groups. It is aimed at assisting women in their pursuit of solutions to the social, environmental, health and economic problems facing their countries and communities. The recipients enrol in programs of study at accredited institutions worldwide that cover a range of human rights and development issues at the non-doctoral graduate level. They include gender, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, child exploitation, human trafficking, infant and maternal mortality, conflict resolution, environmental justice, global fair trade, agroecology and sustainable development. Up to eight scholarships of \$25,000 per academic year (for a maximum of two years) are awarded to help meet the costs of study in another country.

Pre-applications for the 2008-2009 academic year close on 14 March 2008. More is at the WLS website -www.nativeleaders.org - or by request from info@nativeleaders.org

The Community Irrigation Fund

The Community Irrigation Fund (CIF) aims help agricultural producers and rural communities adapt to climate change by assisting people who promote community water storage and/or irrigation schemes to overcome the high costs of generating investor and/or community support. A total of \$5.7 million (excluding GST) spread over eight years (2008/09 to 2015/16) is available to assist with the cash costs of generating investor and/or community support. The Fund is contestable and will accept applications from 2007/08 to 2011/12. Financial support for up to 50% of valid costs is available to successful applicants, for up to four years.

Applications for 2008/09 close on 21 March 2008. More information is at <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/cif/page.htm>

Eco-Hero Awards for Young People

Action for Nature sponsors the International Young Eco-Hero Awards, which recognise the individual accomplishments of young people (ages 8-16) whose personal actions have significantly improved the environment. Cash prizes of up to US\$500 each will be awarded to young Eco-Heroes for their outstanding accomplishments in environmental advocacy, environmental health, research, or protection of the natural world. Applications will be judged according to originality, difficulty, organisation, length of time devoted to the project, influencing/educating others, use of outside resources (e.g. the library, experts, the media, community leaders), degree of success in reaching goals, and the impact on the environment.

Applications close 28 February 2008. Program information and application guidelines are at www.actionfornature.org/eco-hero/index.html.

Lotteries Environment and Heritage

Environment and Heritage Lottery Environment and Heritage grants are for projects which promote, protect and conserve NZ's natural, physical and cultural heritage. Applications for 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, whare taonga and art galleries; and conservation of historic buildings, structures, rolling stock, archeological sites and waahi tapu sites are eligible.

Applications close on 25 February 2008. Apply to COGS and Lottery Grants Board at www.cdgo.govt.nz You can either register on the Grants Online website, or you can email: grantsonline@dia.govt.nz. For support, ring 0800 824 824

Marae Heritage and Facilities Fund

This funds capital works costs for the conservation, restoration and development of marae facilities, particularly whareniui, wharekai and wharepaku facilities.

Applications close on 28 March 2008. To apply, register on the Grants Online website at www.cdgo.govt.nz. For support, ring 0800 824 824 or email: grantsonline@dia.govt.nz

Pacific Provider Development Fund

The Pacific Provider Development Fund (PPDF) was established by the Lottery Grants Board to strengthen Pacific community groups' ability to operate in an effective and accountable way, and to improve their access to funds from other lottery committees.

Apply to COGS and Lottery Grants Board using Grants Online (www.cdgo.govt.nz). Applications go to: Lottery Pacific Provider Development Fund, Local Government and Community Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, PO Box 805, Wellington. For support, ring 0800 824 824, or email: grantsonline@dia.govt.nz

Lotteries Regional Community Committees

The 11 Lottery Regional Community Committees make grants for projects that enable or encourage community self-reliance, capacity building and stability, opportunities for social, civil or cultural participation and reducing or removing barriers to such participation. Priorities include projects that have a community or social service focus, such as developmental or preventative projects, welfare and support services, and projects that help improve the well-being of people in the community.

Applications close 3 March 2008. For more information, email: grantsonline@dia.govt.nz, or freephone 0800-824 824

NZ on Air: New Money for Digital Content

NZ On Air recently announced the creation of a new contestable fund, the Digital Content Partnership Fund. The fund will support programmes involving the use of new media and is part of NZ On Air's new digital strategy as it prepares for changes to the Broadcasting Act. The fund will exist for four years, with \$1 mil-

lion set aside each year and submissions sought annually. The first application deadline is in March 2008. The preference for the first year is for projects targeting NZ children or youth. Funds may be applied to one or more projects. A minimum total of 10 funded hours is expected - and more is better.

Find out more at <http://www.nzonair.govt.nz/files/news/DCPF.pdf>

Community Internship Programme

The Community Internship Programme offers community organisations an opportunity to improve their capabilities by utilising the skills and experience of someone from another sector or organisation for a period of time. The host organisation can apply for community internships of 3 months, 4.5 months or 6 months, with the agreement of the intern and their home organisation. Each successful host receives funding for the salary of the intern.

Applications close 17 March 2008. More information is at http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Services-Community-Internship-Programme-Information-for-Host-Organisations?OpenDocument

Appointments

Justice William McLeod Wilson has been appointed a *Judge of the Supreme Court*. Justice David Baragwanath has been appointed a *Judge of the Court of Appeal*. Ailsa Duffy QC has been appointed a *Judge of the High Court*, sitting in Auckland. Edwin Peraniko Paul, Richard Russell, Simon Maude, and Allison Anne Sinclair have been appointed as *District Court Judges*. Maree Mackenzie has been appointed a *District Court Judge with a Family Court warrant*. Craig Coxhead and Stephen Clark have been appointed to the bench of the *Maori Land Court*. Mary Winifred Harris is the new *Clerk of the House of Representatives*. David McGee QC, formerly Clerk of the House of Representatives, has become an *Ombudsman*.

Basil Morrison, President of Local Government NZ, has been elected *Chair of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum*. Louise Croot from Dunedin has been elected *President of the International Federation of University Women*. Michele Leggott is NZ's Poet Laureate for 2007/08.

Geoff Thorn, General Manager of the Commerce Commission, has been appointed *General Manager, Parliamentary Services*. Brendan Boyle has been appointed as *Chief Executive and Secretary for Internal Affairs, Department of Internal Affairs*. Howard Fancy has agreed to act as the new *Chief Executive of the Ministry for the Environment and Secretary for the Environment*. Kevin Kelly has agreed to act as *Chief Executive for Land Information NZ (LINZ)*. Pauline Winter has been re-appointed as

the *Deputy Chief Commissioner of the Transport Accident Investigation Commission*, and Bryan Wyness has been re-appointed as a member of the *Commission*. Ron Paterson has been re-appointed as *Health and Disability Commissioner*. Fa'amatuainu Tino Pereira has been appointed as the new chair of the *National Pacific Radio Trust Board*. Marilyn Kohlhase of Auckland is a new appointment to the board, and James Prescott and Brian Chamberlain have been reappointed. Robin Hapi is the new *Commissioner of the Tertiary Education Commission*.

Helen Kelly has been elected *President of the NZ Council of Trade Unions*. Sir John Anderson has been appointed as the new *Chair of the NZ Venture Investment Fund*. Sue McCarty is the new *Chief Executive of the Marketing Association*. Dr Josephine Baddeley, Judy Callingham and Louise Carroll have been appointed to the *Film and Literature Board of Review*. Phil Harington and Margaret Mohi have been reappointed to the *Lottery Grants Board*. Three reappointments to the *Housing NZ Corporation Board* are Board Chair Pat Snedden and Board members Greg Hinton and Tony Paine. David Caygill, Chair of the Electricity Commission, has been appointed to the *Commerce Commission* as an associate member. Mary Wareham has been appointed to the *NZ Public Advisory Committee on Disarmament and Arms Control (PACDAC)*. Deborah Morris-Travers was reappointed. Susie Staley has been reappointed for a two-year term as the *Chair of Maritime NZ* and Adrienne Young Cooper has been reappointed as a member for a second term of three years. Susan Hughes QC has been reappointed as a member of the *Civil Aviation Authority of NZ* for a three-year term. Dr Janet Stephenson has been reappointed as a member of the *Land Transport NZ Board*. The *Ministry of Economic Development* has appointed Doug Martin to lead engagement with the information, communication and technology sector to establish a new representative body. Tony van Horik has also been appointed to support and facilitate the roll-out of community-based broadband network initiatives.

The new *Director of the Auckland War Memorial Museum* is Dr Vanda Vitali. *Otago Settlers Association* has its first woman president, Dr Dorothy Page. Rob ten Heggeler has been appointed to the *Board of Directors of Rabobank Australia & NZ*.

Merino Grower Investments Limited has appointed Sara Lunam as a director of *The NZ Merino Company*. Ex-Vodafone Tim Miles has been appointed the new Chief Executive of rural services provider *PGG Wrightson*.

Craig Matthews and Paddy Twist
Editors
Rural Bulletin

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

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