

Rural Bulletin

September 2006



Rural
Women
NEW ZEALAND

<http://www.ruralwomen.org>

Welcome back to the Rural Bulletin!

As all rural New Zealanders know, the application of common sense and initiative feature in our lives on a daily basis. Those of us who live or have lived outside of the main centres frequently make decisions and solve problems that our urban friends are rarely confronted with.

It is in this spirit that I welcome back this valuable resource. Congratulations to Rural Women New Zealand for having the foresight and determination to breathe life into a new, revitalised Rural Bulletin.

It is fitting that Rural Women New Zealand not only recognised the importance of the Rural Bulletin, but also stepped in and took responsibility for its continuation. Readers will be heartened that this “can do”, pragmatic approach is alive and well.

For those in New Zealand’s heartland, this publication brings together a valuable mix of relevant and topical issues, allowing rural people to get the facts without the bias and hype that can often accompany such issues.

I am very aware of the need to ensure there is ongoing engagement with our rural communities. While it is recognised that primary production is the backbone of our economy and remains critical to New Zealand’s well-being there is a perception that rurally based people do not have their voices heard as easily as those in urban centres.

The articles and many web-site links contained in the Rural Bulletin provide a valuable platform to counter this perception. I would encourage all its readers to provide feedback to generate lively, informed debate on all the issues before New Zealand.

Thank you Rural Women New Zealand. This new venture will certainly contribute to your goal of working together for a strong and sustainable rural sector, a goal that I wholeheartedly share.

Damien O’Connor
Minister for Rural Affairs

Earlier this year the unexpected announcement that Rural Bulletin would cease publication generated a huge outcry from communities and individuals across New Zealand. Likewise, many members of Rural Women New Zealand expressed their concerns to us.

In response to this, our Executive Officer suggested we investigate the possibility of re-establishing the Bulletin. The National Council enthusiastically agreed. And now, in a little over 5 months, this aim has been achieved.

Rural Women New Zealand is delighted to welcome the return of the Rural Bulletin. Yes, the Bulletin dovetails in with our vision of strengthening rural communities, and yes it helps RWNZ’s work in being a respected voice for rural New Zealand families and communities. But, we also strongly believe that the Bulletin’s aim of providing objective, relevant information to people who need it, will empower many individuals and communities beyond just the rural sector.

RWNZ offers grateful thanks for the incredible support, both financial and “in kind” which has been offered by many businesses, agencies, and interest groups. We wish to thank all of our sponsors to date and look forward to their continued support. We also acknowledge the willing involvement and support of the two former editors, Craig Matthews and Paddy Twist.

And to our readers; welcome back, enjoy.

Sherrill Dackers
National President
Rural Women New Zealand

We would like to give our thanks to the sponsors to date who have supported Rural Women New Zealand in re-starting Rural Bulletin: Telecom New Zealand, Farmsafe, Mainland Minerals, and Meat & Wool New Zealand



Contents

Consultation: Have Your Say

Adverse Events Recovery	3
New Draft School Curriculum	4
Rural Health: Rural Ranking Scale	4
ACC Consultation: Self-Employed Levies	4
Solar Water Heating Discussion Paper	4
Wildlife Protection: Review	5
Review of New Zealand Standard Setting	5
Mental Health Consumer Self Assessment: Consultation	5
Multiple Sclerosis: New Study	5

Rural

Grants for Rural Broadband Projects	6
The Teeth Win: New Rural Oral Health Plan	6
Farm Incomes: 2006-07 Predictions	6
Farmers Onto It: Phone Rescue Plan	6
The Right Bridge and Culvert: Guidelines	7

Environment

Getting Involved in DoC's Decision-making	7
Eco-Design Homes	7
Hazardous Substances Sites: Guidelines	7
Waste Management: Environment Commissioner	7
Protecting the Kereru	8
"Forest Sink Credits" for New Forests	8
BoP Councils' Submissions Agreement	8
RMA Guide for Small Business	8
New "Made in New Zealand" Windfarm	8

Tourism

International Visitor Predictions	8
---	---

Housing

Government Home Loan Scheme Widened	9
How Not to Have a Leaky Home	9
Leaky Homes Tribunal	9
Independent Inquiry into Rates	9
Rates Rebate Scheme: Increases	9

Education

New Web-Based System Keeping Kids in School	10
Fruit in Schools: Evaluation	10
Students' Record of Learning: New Design	10

Health

Primary Health Care Plan	10
Ten Year Mental Health/Addiction Plan	10
UN Convention: Rights of Disabled	11
CYF Report: Children at Risk	11
Injury Prevention	11
Cancer Death Rates Reducing	11
Priorities for Action on Family Violence	11
Dealing with Gambling Harm	12
New Weapon in Battle against HIV/Aids	12
GPs: Top-up for Low Fees	12
Health Research Council Funding Round	12

Employment

The Work-Life Balance	12
-----------------------------	----

Justice

Accessing Court Records: Law Commission	13
The Cost of Crime: Treasury Report	13

Business

Overcoming Barriers to Exporting	13
Trusts: Tax Review?	13

Government services

Accessing Government Services	14
Checking I.D.: New Standard	14
New Government Directory	15

Internet

New Zealand Internet Rankings	15
Some Education IT Updates	15
Internet Sites	15

Treaty Settlement Process

Fisheries Settlements	16
Ngati Mutunga Claims Settlement Bill	16
Te Arawa Treaty Settlement Bill	16

New Zealand Profile

New Zealand's Social Wellbeing	16
New Zealanders: Making the World a Better Place	17
Happy? Apparently We Are... ..	17

Arts and Culture

Publishing Pioneer Receives Award	18
Film Industry: Major Export Earner	18
Montana Book Awards	18

Funding Opportunities

Community Internship Programme	18
Community Funding: Some Closing Dates	18

General

New Maori King	19
Kiwisaver Voluntary Super Scheme	19
NZ Superannuation Fund: 2006 Return	19
Retirement Villages: Compulsory Complaints Procedures	20
Beating Graffiti	20
Choke the Smoke: New Vehicle Warrant Test	20
Results of 2006 Maori Electoral Option	20
Kiwi TV Content Up	20
Maori TV Wins Free-To-Air League	20
Electricity: "Too Many Monopolies"	21
Easier For Kiwis to Bring Families Home	21
Life Insurance Tax Rules Review	21
National Climate Summary - Winter 2006	21
Upcoming Conferences	21

Appointments

Consultation: Have Your Say

Adverse Events Recovery

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) has completed a draft review of the On-farm Adverse Events Recovery Framework. The aim of the review is to promote a shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of central government, local government and the primary production sector in preparing for, and recovering from, adverse events.

Industry groups and local government have been consulted on the draft review, and a discussion paper has now been produced so you can have your say. MAF wants to hear from people who are “hands-on” in the primary, productive industries about how the current recovery measures are working. They also want to know if they can be improved in any way.

Submissions close 31 October 2006. You can access the discussion paper from: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/assistance/adverse-events/index.htm>, and/or you can attend public consultancy meetings in October, as follows:

Adverse Events Consultancy Meetings

Monday 9	Whangarei	A'fare Function and Reception Lounge ----- 1 to 3pm 197 Lower Dent Street
Tuesday 10	Hamilton	Kingsgate Hotel ----- 1 to 3pm 100 Garnett Avenue, Te Rapa
Wednesday 11	Whakatane	REAP Building ----- 1 to 3pm 21 Pyne Street
Thursday 12	Hastings	Angus Inn ----- 1 to 3pm Railway Road
	New Plymouth	The Devon Hotel ----- 1 to 3pm 390 Devon Street East
Friday 13	Palmerston North	Palmerston North Convention Centre ----- 1 to 3pm 400 Main Street West
Monday 16	Blenheim	Scenic Circle Blenheim Country Hotel ----- 9 to 11am Cnr Alfred and Henry Street
	Nelson	Kingsgate Hotel ----- 1 to 3pm Beachcomber Conference Room 23 Beach Road Tahunanui
Tuesday 17	Christchurch	Sudima Grand Chancellor Hotel ----- 10am to 12noon Christchurch Airport Cnr Memorial Ave and Orchard Rd
	Greymouth	West Coast Regional Council Building ----- 10am to 12noon 388 Main South Road
	Timaru	Greyway Lounge ----- 3 to 5pm Timaru Racecourse, Washdyke Racecourse Road
Wednesday 18	Dunedin	Invermay ----- 1 to 3pm Cullen Conference Room Mosgiel
	Gisborne	Cosmopolitan Club ----- 10am to 12noon The Watson Room Grey Street
Thursday 19	Invercargill	Invercargill Workingmen's Club Inc ----- 12.30 to 2.30pm 154 Esk Street

New Draft School Curriculum

In September 2007 a new school curriculum is due out – the first time the curriculum has been reviewed and revised in more than a decade. The Ministry of Education (MoE) is now consulting on a draft of the curriculum, which is built around five “key competencies” developed over three years of earlier consultation. They are:

- managing self;
- relating to others;
- participating and contributing;
- thinking; and
- using language symbols and texts.

In terms of what children will learn at school, the Ministry proposes that there are eight “learning areas”, where previously there were seven. The learning areas are:

- English;
- Mathematics and Statistics;
- Science;
- Social sciences;
- Technology;
- the Arts;
- Health and Physical Education; and
- Learning Languages.

The new learning area is Learning Languages, which has been separated out. While it would not be compulsory for students to learn a second language, it is anticipated that all schools with Year 7-10 students would be required to offer students an opportunity to do so.

Public feedback is due by 30 November 2006. Copies of the draft curriculum are available at: www.tki.org.nz/r/curriculum. MoE will also be using a research company to conduct focus groups and hold a survey to obtain feedback on the draft curriculum.

Rural Health: Rural Ranking Scale Review

The “Rural Ranking Scale” (RRS) is a scale used by the Ministry of Health (MoH) to assess eligibility for payments to rural GPs. Its aim is to make sure that people in more remote areas can access health services.

The RRS asks GPs questions about:

- travelling time from the GP's surgery to a major hospital;
- rate of on-call duty for the GP;
- travelling time to the nearest GP colleague at their place of work;
- travel time to the most distant boundary of the practice; and
- the number of regular peripheral clinics that they run.

It is being reviewed because of:

- changes in the way rural primary health care is delivered;
- technological advances in the sector; and
- changes in rural populations.

The Ministry wants to know what makes “rural” different from “urban”, and whether there are better ways to measure what “rural” is.

At the moment the RRS does not take into account the ability and willingness of patients to pay fees for services delivered by GPs. Some people think the MoH should use Statistics New Zealand's definition of “rural” i.e. communities of people living outside concentrated settlements of 1000 or more. Some have wondered whether mobile phone coverage areas could be used. Some have suggested that the New Zealand “Index of Deprivation” be included as part of the Rural Ranking Scale.

Submissions closed 29 September 2006. However, MoH is accepting late submissions from Rural Bulletin readers over the next week. Send your submission to Ministry of Health, PO Box 5013, Wellington, Email: Anne_Duncan@moh.govt.nz

ACC Consultation: Self-Employed Levies

ACC is consulting on proposed new ACC levy rates that are planned for 1 April 2007 (1 July 2007 for motor vehicle levy rates).

At the moment levy payers are allocated either to the Self-Employed Work Account or Employers' Account on the basis of their business structure (this is done using tax information). This has resulted in different levy rates for businesses carrying out similar activities with similar risks. For example, a self-employed plumber currently pays a different levy rate to a sole-trading plumber who has set up as a company, even though they face the same risk of workplace injury

Legislation amending the Injury Prevention, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2001 to merge the ACC Self-Employed Work Account and ACC Employers' Account is to be introduced shortly. The effect of the amendment would be to:

- place more focus on reducing the risk of injury based on industry and occupational type rather than on business structure; and
- encourage industries to better co-ordinate health and safety across their workplaces; so
- self-employed and employers are treated the same.

As well as commenting on the proposed levy changes for the 2007/8 year, you can also have your say on all aspects of the ACC Scheme.

Submissions close on 11 October. More information <http://www.acc.co.nz/>, or freephone 0800 222 72837. Submissions go to Levy Consultations, ACC, PO Box 242, Wellington, fax 04 918 4395, email: consultation@acc.co.nz

Solar Water Heating: Discussion Paper

An efficient solar water heating system can come close to halving water heating costs for an average family, and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) is looking for

ways to increase uptake of these systems in New Zealand households. EECA has published a discussion paper which looks at information needs, quality issues, installation capacity, and possible ways of addressing the up-front cost of solar water heating systems.

Submissions closed 29 September. More information about solar water heating: www.eeca.govt.nz

Wildlife Protection Review

The Department of Conservation has released a discussion paper on possible changes to the amount of protection the law provides on certain animal species in New Zealand. (The Wildlife Act 1953 is the Act that determines the legal protection given to non-domesticated introduced animals in New Zealand, and some native species, such as native game birds.)

One example given of the need for review is the Canada Goose. This is an introduced game species which enjoys some protection but it can cause significant damage to crops if it gets too numerous.

On the other side of the ledger, many threatened native insects receive no protection at all under the law, even though there is a developing international trade in them. The review will consider whether some limited legal protection should be extended to these insects.

Submissions close 3 November 2006. Copies of the discussion paper can be obtained from www.doc.govt.nz and a PDF copy of the document can be found at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/pdfs/wildlife-protection-review.pdf>

Review of New Zealand Standard Setting

The organisations responsible for setting and maintaining standards and “conformance” throughout the economy are under review. The Ministry of Economic Development (MED) is looking for feedback on the structure, roles and performance of the five standard-setting bodies in the country:

- *Standards New Zealand*, the operating arm of the Standards Council;
- *International Accreditation New Zealand*, an operating arm of the Testing Laboratory Registration Council;
- *The Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand*, an international organisation set up by Treaty, which provides independent third-party accreditation of the competence of certification bodies and inspection bodies;
- *Measurement Standards Laboratory*, a unit of the Industrial Research Ltd (a Crown Research Institute) which provides for the use of uniform units of measurement of physical quantities and for the establishment and maintenance of Standards for physical quantities; and
- *Measurement and Product Safety Service*, a unit of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, which has responsibility for

legal trade measurement and enforces the Weights and Measures Act 1987.

Submissions close on 24 November. The paper can be downloaded from: <http://www.med.govt.nz/upload/38114/s-c-infrastructure-review-discussion-document.pdf>

Mental Health Consumer Self Assessment: Consultation

Case Consulting, a consumer-based consulting group is currently consulting mental health consumers on a “measure of outcome” that has been developed as a self assessment tool for people who use mental health services.

Once the measure has been developed it will be available for routine use by consumers/tangata whaiora of mental health services in New Zealand. The measure will then be set up through the national mental health outcomes initiative (MH-SMART).

Mental health consumers/tangata whaiora aged between 18 and 65 are invited to take part in the pilot by completing the preliminary measure. This involves answering some general questions, then selecting statements that reflect how they have been over the past week. People will have the opportunity to participate in the pilot at a number of conferences, including the Building Bridges conference (31 October-2 November) and Valuing Madness conference (21-24 November).

More information from admin.caseconsulting@paradise.net.nz

Multiple Sclerosis (MS): New Study

MS is one of the most common debilitating neurological diseases in young people. Its causes are unknown and as yet there is no cure. It usually strikes without warning and affects people in a variety of ways.

A study is now underway which measures the number of people living with MS around the country. Researchers will look at why MS seems to increase the further people live from the equator, and why there may be lesser rates of the disease amongst Maori. It will also investigate the degree of disability of people with MS in New Zealand.

The study is being conducted by the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences and jointly funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) and the Multiple Sclerosis Society of New Zealand.

People with MS who would like to participate in the study can contact 0800 677 839 (0800 MS STUDY) or email msstudy@chmeds.ac.nz

Rural

Grants for Rural Broadband Projects

The Government has approved five grants to extend broadband into isolated rural areas. More than \$1.2 million in grants come from the \$24 million set aside under the Broadband Challenge policy initiative to improve the availability and quality of broadband internet access. The Government is spending the money to set up 15 urban fibre networks by 2009 and develop access in isolated areas.

The five are in the “rural and under-served community category” of the Broadband Challenge.

The \$24 million Broadband Challenge aims to provide seed funding to improve the availability and quality of broadband internet access. It aims to establish up to 15 urban fibre networks by 2009, and to develop broadband internet access solutions for rural and poorly served communities.

The five applicants approved and asked to finalise funding agreements are: Tuhoe Education Authority (\$500,000), Waikato 2020 Communications Trust (\$47,000), Waitakere City Council (\$175,000 in West Auckland (\$5000) and the West Coast Development Trust (\$600,000).

The Teeth Win! New Rural Oral Health Plan

A new \$80.4 million plan for children’s oral health called “Good Oral Health for All, for Life” is now in place. It includes seven areas for action in oral health services, including the creation of Community Oral Health Services and urgent work to address inequalities faced by Maori, Pacific and rural New Zealanders. Under the four-year plan oral health services will be spread further around rural communities, and out into community centres and marae (though there will still be links to schools).

The first graduate therapists in re-introduced dental therapy courses are starting work in clinics.

District Health Boards are now working on ways of extending dental services, and the Ministry of Health will consider the first round of funding applications in November.

Farm Incomes: 2006-07 Predictions

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) is predicting just modest growth in farmers’ incomes between April 2006 and March 2007. The July 2006 SONZAF update predicts revenue from dairy, meat and wool, forestry, kiwifruit, apples and wine will grow from \$15.7 billion to \$17.9 billion by March

2007. By 2010, exports are forecast to reach \$20.5 billion, up \$4.8 billion on 2006.

However, costs are predicted to affect profitability, so income growth would be “modest”. Energy costs, at about 20% of farm production costs, are likely to remain high.

Highlights from the report:

- **Dairy:** the dairy industry will continue to expand in the next five years, but at a slower rate than in the past few years. Production of milksolids in the year ended May 2006 is estimated to be up 4% on the previous year; weaker international dairy prices are likely to be reflected in relatively static milk payouts over the next two years; by 2010, milksolids production will increase to 1358 million kilograms. A moderate 80,000-cow expansion of the dairy herd by between 2006 and 2010 will drive this increase in production;
- **Lamb:** international lamb and mutton prices in New Zealand’s key markets are expected to fall during the next year but then recover;
- **Wool:** international prices will continue to be depressed. Production will fall as sheep numbers decline;
- **Beef:** international beef prices will remain relatively high in the short term because of short supply. Beef cattle numbers will fall by 100,000 in the next four years but export production is expected to remain static around 440,000 tonnes;
- **Venison:** European prices are expected to remain low this year as large volumes of New Zealand venison continue to enter Europe. However, a falling dollar should translate this into a weak recovery;
- **Horticulture:** apple production is expected to fall by 15% in the year to next March as a result of tree removals and lower yields. International prices for kiwifruit are expected to rise slowly as standards are further enhanced and exports of the higher-priced gold variety increase. Wine production will be 20% higher in the year to next March then rise 10% a year as plantings mature;
- **Forestry:** planting last autumn and winter was about 6000 hectares – down from 45,000 hectares a year average from 1990 till 2004. Export prices are expected to fall 6% between 2005 and 2010 and volumes to rise 10% a year. Values are expected to rise 44% from \$3.1 billion to \$4.6 billion by 2010.

The full SONZAF report is available on the MAF website at www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/statistics-and-forecasts/sonzaf/2006/index.htm

Farmers Onto It: Phone Rescue Plan

The fact that in recent extreme weather events some farmers have been out in the weather restoring power to cell sites when power lines have come down has not gone un-noticed. Federated Farmers New Zealand (FFNZ) presidents from Mid and South Canterbury recently led a Telecom workshop looking at ways farmers can help power Telecom sites in civil emergencies. This included discussion on technical, access and security

issues that would allow farmers to use their own generators to help Telecom restore power to roadside cabinets and radio huts if Telecom couldn't do so within a specified timeframe. Telecom and FFNZ are now working together to find places in both the North and South Islands where pilot projects can be set up.

The Right Bridge and Culvert: Guidelines

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) recently published culvert and bridge design guidelines, which provide farmers with best practice advice for culvert planning and construction. The information includes rainfall data covering New Zealand to enable culverts of the correct sizing to be installed.

The guidelines are only available in electronic format. They can be downloaded from the Ministry's website at: <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/land/culvert-bridge-oct04/>

Environment

Getting Involved in DoC's Decision Making

Sometimes, when you're dealing with plans and statutory processes, it may seem like the Department of Conservation (DOC) speaks another language! By the time you've waded through policies, plans and strategies, you might be left feeling like you're out of your depth before you've really begun.

A new booklet, "Department of Conservation's Statutory Planning Processes – what they mean for you and how you can have your say", aims to unveil some of the mysteries of the statutory planning processes relating to conservation, as well as providing some guidance on how to have your say – and how to make your say count. Once you know how to be involved in DOC processes, it's easier to work your way through the various procedures.

You can download this document from: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/About-DOC/Policies-Plans-and-Reports/DOCs-Statutory-Planning-Processes/index.asp> or you can request it from the New Zealand Conservation Authority at PO Box 10420, Wellington

Eco-Design Homes

Three territorial authorities – the Hamilton and Waitakere city councils and the Kapiti Coast DC – have joined the Building Research Association (BRANZ) in a national pilot scheme to

make information on eco-friendly home design more accessible. It involves three Eco Design Advisers working at the councils and giving technical information to homeowners and tradesmen on sustainability issues in home design. The advisers will also be able to connect people to local specialists.

The pilot will run for ten months in Waitakere, Hamilton and the Kapiti Coast. It is jointly funded by the Ministry for the Environment, Building Research and the participating councils, and is being closely monitored by the Foundation for Research, Science & Technology (FRST). If it is a success other territorial authorities will be invited to participate.

More information: A Stoecklein, Business Developer, Science and Technology, BRANZ Ltd, tel 04 237 1170, email AlbrechtStoecklein@branz.co.nz

Hazardous Substances Sites: Guidelines

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) has published its fourth guideline in a series on best practice for contaminated land management. It aims to help local authorities manage information about sites associated with hazardous substances and provide the best available information to landowners and property buyers.

You can access the guideline at: <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/hazardous/contaminated-land-mgmt-guidelines-no4/contaminated-land-mgmt-guidelines-no4.pdf>

Waste Management: Environment Commissioner

In a report on waste management the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) urges the use of "economic tools" (or "economic instruments") be considered in waste management in New Zealand, as they are in other OECD countries.

In waste management economic tools are things like having a refundable deposit on drink bottles, charging a tax at the landfill, or paying a fee for waste disposal on the basis of its weight.

The report also notes that:

- there are a number of barriers to better waste management;
- although local authorities are able to set in place user charges for waste disposal they have been challenged in the courts whenever they have attempted to use other financial tools; and
- there is also an absence of reliable national data on waste.

The PCE's report made six main points:

- evidence shows that economic instruments can be effective in reducing waste;

- economic instruments for managing waste have not been used to their full potential in New Zealand;
- information on waste remains poor;
- legislative barriers to the use of economic instruments need to be addressed;
- Central Government needs to provide more guidance on the design and implementation of a wider range of economic instruments for minimising waste; and
- progress on meeting the key actions and targets set out in the New Zealand Waste Strategy needs to be independently reviewed.

More information: <http://www.pce.govt.nz/>

Protecting the Kereru

Dame Kiri Te Kanawa has launched a nationwide project, the Kereru Discovery Project, in a move to protect New Zealand's native wood pigeon, the Kereru. Kereru numbers have been declining, and the project aims to encourage people to make their own gardens places where the birds can thrive. Urban areas are now safer habitats for kereru than forests.

Organisations behind the kereru project are Te Papa, Wellington Zoo, the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, the Department of Conservation's Mt Bruce National Wildlife Centre, and Victoria University. The project is being rolled out in Wellington initially, but there are plans for it to go nation-wide.

“Forest Sink Credits” for New Forests

The ratifying of the Kyoto Protocol has opened up an opportunity for landowners, particularly of largely marginal land, to establish permanent forests and gain Kyoto emission units through the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI).

The PFSI is based on the principle that forests contain more carbon for a given area than bare land. It allows landowners to get the economic value of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and sequestering (storing) it in the form of new forests. Under the Kyoto Protocol, this process generates so-called forest sink credits, which can be sold on the international market. In return, landowners need to meet the costs associated with generating emission units and to agree to “replace” any units should there be a decrease in the carbon stored in the forest.

More information: the website of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment at <http://www.pce.govt.nz/>

BoP Councils: Submissions Agreement

In a possible model for other councils, local authorities in the Bay of Plenty, including the regional authority, Environment

BoP, are signing up to a protocol to reduce the chances of costly inter-council battles in the Environment Court.

The protocol sets down a process for making comments and submissions on each other's policies and plans to make sure that councils know what others councils want to do before they do it. It also includes protocols for council hearings and appeals to the Environment Court.

More information Contact: 0800 368 267. The Environment BOP website is: <http://www.envbop.govt.nz/>

RMA Guide for Small Business

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) has published a four-part guide for small business and the general public about working with the Resource Management Act (RMA). It includes step-by-step timelines and guides, and offers advice on how to make a submission or carry out consultation. The guide will be available from local and regional councils, Biz Information Centres, public libraries, Citizens Advice Bureaux, Community Law Centres, Environment Centres, and MfE.

More information: freephone 0800 RMA INFO (0800 762 4636), or go to www.rma.govt.nz

New “Made in New Zealand” Windfarm

New Zealand Windfarms is to build almost 100 turbines in New Zealand for its new Tararua windfarm. Windflow Technology will make the turbines in New Zealand, and will also contract for windfarm parts and maintenance.

Tourism

International Visitor Predictions

A new forecast released by the Ministry of Tourism indicates that international visitor arrivals are expected to grow by an average 4% per year over the next seven years. By 2012, international visitor numbers are expected to reach 3.1 million, up from 2.4 million in 2005. The amount they spend is forecast to grow at 6.5% per annum over the same period, to reach \$10.1 billion in 2012.

Other points in the forecast:

- of the expected three-quarters of a million more visitors, the biggest numbers are expected to come from Australia (up

229,000 or 26%), China (up 138,000 or 157%) and the UK (up 114,000 or 37%). Together, these countries are expected to account for two-thirds of the total increase;

- the China visitor market is expected to overtake the Japan and South Korea markets within the next four years to become New Zealand's fourth largest market behind Australia, the United Kingdom and the US. Chinese visitors are expected to increase to 226,000 by 2012, with an annual average growth of 14.5%;
- total tourism expenditure is forecast to grow by 37.5% from \$13.3 billion in 2005 to \$18.3 billion in 2012. Of this \$5 billion expected increase, \$3.6 billion is expected from international (to \$10.1 billion) and \$1.4 billion from domestic tourism (to \$8.2 billion); and
- international tourism expenditure is likely to surpass domestic tourism expenditure by 2007, reaching 55% of all tourism expenditure by 2012.

A summary report: Tourism Forecasts 2006-2012, and detailed forecast tables are available on the Ministry of Tourism research website: www.tourismresearch.govt.nz

Housing

Government Home Loans Scheme Widened

The Welcome Home Loan scheme has been widened to increase the number of people able to use it to buy homes. As a result of this, the proportion of the national housing market accessible to people without a deposit under the scheme is to double.

Under the changes, which came into effect on 8 September, a household can now borrow \$200,000 without a deposit, and can borrow up to \$280,000 in total under the scheme. But for anything borrowed over \$200,000, a deposit must be paid. For example, if a loan were sought for \$250,000, then a deposit of \$7,500 would be required, being 15% of \$50,000.

The Welcome Home Loan Scheme underwrites private lenders, such as banks and building societies, to give home loans to people on the margins of traditional mortgage criteria (basically, people who could service a loan but do not have a sufficiently large deposit). So far, the scheme has helped about 1800 of these households into their own homes.

For more details on the Welcome Home Loan visit: www.hnzc.govt.nz or www.welcomelohome.co.nz

How Not to Have a Leaky Home...

The Department of Building and Housing has published a Weathertight Homes Guide to help home builders and renovators design and build homes that are weathertight. The 44-page

booklet outlines the main effects that wind, rain, earthquakes, sea air and ultraviolet light can have on buildings. The guide also explains techniques that can be used during the building or renovating process, to prevent homes becoming leaky later on.

The publication can be downloaded from the website of the Department of Building and Housing <http://www.dbh.govt.nz/> and it will be also be available through local authorities

...and Leaky Homes Tribunal

A new Weathertight Homes Tribunal, administered by the Ministry of Justice, is being established to tighten consumer protection for leaky homes. It is one of a number of initiatives to hold building industry professionals 'to account, and get leaky homes disputes settled faster through mediation and adjudication'.

Among these initiatives are:

- a requirement for councils to place notices on affected property files, and to make that information available on Land Information Memorandum (LIM) reports;
- changing the system to make it easier for a class action approach to be taken by owners of units within apartment blocks;
- setting time limits on mediation; and
- increasing the power and authority of adjudicators (and including new offence provisions for failure to comply with a witness summons, and for intentionally disrupting proceedings).

More from <http://www.dbh.govt.nz/>

Independent Inquiry into Rates...

The Government is to establish an independent inquiry into issues around local government rates funding and will develop the inquiry's terms of reference in consultation with other parties. The terms of reference and other details of the inquiry will be released shortly.

...and Rates Rebate Scheme: Increases

The Government is also increasing the rates rebates that provide a subsidy to low-income homeowners on the cost of their rates. The following changes came into effect on 1 July 2006:

- the maximum rebate increased from \$200 to \$500;
- the income threshold increased from \$7,400 to \$20,000; and
- additional income allowance for dependents increased from \$156 to \$500 per dependent.

More information info@ratesrebates.govt.nz or call 04 460 2200

Education

Web-based System Keeping Kids in School

A new electronic enrolment system will make it easier for schools and the Ministry of Education to keep track of students and make sure they don't "fall through the cracks" when they leave a school. The web-based ENROL system went live in 124 Auckland schools recently, and is currently being rolled out to a further 339 secondary and intermediate schools nationwide.

ENROL is a central electronic student enrolment register for all school students, that will be updated and used by schools when students enrol, change schools or leave the school system. The register automatically identifies students who have not enrolled in another school within 20 days of leaving their previous school.

Fruit in Schools Programme: Evaluation

A recent evaluation of the Fruit in Schools programme evaluation indicates that this programme has enjoyed an 85% support rate from students and a 70% support rate from staff. Importantly, around two thirds of schools reported medium to high effects on learning outcomes.

Fruit in Schools is funded by the Ministry of Health and has been developed by a group with representatives from Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) the Principal's Federation, New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA), Health Promoting Schools, School Support Services, National Heart Foundation, the Cancer Society and a District Health Board.

It is part of a health programme which includes emphasis on healthy eating, physical activity, sun protection and a smokefree environment. So far around 27,000 children in 114 low decile schools are taking part in the programme.

More information on this programme can be found on the Ministry of Health website at: <http://www.moh.govt.nz/fruitinschools>

Students' Record of Learning: New Design

The NCEA Record of Learning issued by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority to secondary school students is to get a new design aimed at making it more useful to employers, who have reportedly found the current document confusing.

The new document, to be known as a Qualification and Achievement Summary has three grades – A for Achievement, M

for Achieved with Merit and E for Achieved with Excellence. The layout has also been changed to make it more logical.

There is no grade to indicate that a student failed to achieve a satisfactory result on any one NCEA standard. To know that, an employer would have to ask the student for a Result Notice: this contains a complete record of a student's academic studies.

The new design has gone to the education sector for online consultation. After that there will be more discussion with industry, tertiary and secondary providers.

More information: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/>

Health

Primary Health Care Plan

Following extensive consultation, The Ministry of Health has published its primary health care strategy (with a comment that participation by Maori is critical to its success).

The "Primary Health Care Strategy Implementation Work Programme – 2006 to 2010 – The Next Steps" will focus on:

- action on chronic disease management and prevention;
- involvement of medical centres and Primary Health Organisations (PHOs) in health promotion;
- awareness that public investment in PHOs is not tied to how many times patients get seen by a doctor;
- adequate information to encourage personal responsibility for health;
- take-up of screening programmes; improved access to screening and check ups; and
- Implementation of a true "population health focus" for the primary care sector – including DHBs and PHOs.

The document can be downloaded from: [http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/4994/\\$File/phcs-implementation-the-next-steps-0706.pdf](http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/4994/$File/phcs-implementation-the-next-steps-0706.pdf)

Ten Year Mental Health/ Addiction Plan

The Health Ministry has also released a ten-year action plan for the improved delivery of mental health and addiction services. Called "Te Kokiri", it is aimed at providing earlier access to mental health and addiction services, and building stronger links between primary and specialist health services.

Recently released figures on the mental health workforce show that:

- the number of mental health nurses working in the public health system has grown from 3,194 to 4,064 since 2000 – a 27% increase;
- in 2004 (most recent data available) the number of specialist psychiatrists reached 318 – an increase of 16%; and
- the overall mental health workforce is much wider, and includes social workers, counsellors, psychologists, psychotherapists, consumer advisors, peer support workers, dual diagnosis workers, support workers, family/whanau support and health promoters.

Te Kokiri is available at: <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/by+unid/06296245E407C4A4CC2571B80080E327?Open>

UN Convention: Rights of Disabled

The United Nations (UN) has agreed on a new treaty to protect the rights of people with disabilities. It is estimated that 10 per cent of the world's population, or about 650 million people, suffer from disabilities. The disabled represent one of the most marginalized groups: their rights have been routinely ignored or denied throughout much of the world.

The convention does not create any new rights, but it specifically prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in all areas of life, including civil rights, access to justice and the right to education, health services and access to transportation. Some of the issues that need to be addressed include:

- action on public transport;
- greater participation in decision making by disabled people;
- support for New Zealand Sign Language and Braille; and
- fully inclusive education with resources.

The UN General Assembly is expected to formally adopt the Convention later this year.

More information www.un.org/disabilities/convention/

CYF Report: Children at Risk

Child, Youth and Family (CYF) recently published a report called "Children at Increased Risk of Death from Maltreatment and Strategies for Prevention". The report summarises the most up-to-date research both here and overseas.

The research shows that there is a need for our systems to give more attention to younger children at risk. Rates of death from maltreatment are higher for children under five years of age than for older children, and are highest for children aged under one.

The report states that child homicide in New Zealand is relatively rare.

It also clearly outlines the difficulties in predicting risk of child death by maltreatment. Acts of violence toward children cannot always be anticipated.

The research indicates that to identify gaps in these services we need a good understanding of individual and family needs. It also indicates that addressing the widely varying needs of families has the greatest potential to break cycles and produce good long term outcomes for children.

The document can be downloaded as a PDF file from: http://www.cyf.govt.nz/documents/Child_death_from_maltreatment.pdf

Injury Prevention

The Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) is offering the first in a series of online interactive programmes which aim to help people prevent and manage discomfort, pain and/or injury in the workplace.

Claiming to be a world-first, the HabitAtWork program (also available on a CD) is initially aimed at people who have computers, but it will be expanded in the future, when an assessment section is added. This will enable it to be used for general workplace health and safety training. ACC also plans to offer an industrial version, and customised versions for specific industries.

Find out more at: <http://www.habitatwork.co.nz/>

Cancer Death Rates Reducing

Latest New Zealand Health Information Service (NZHIS) official figures show that overall cancer death rates are declining. The figures show cancer mortality rates reduced from 125.9 deaths per 100,000 population in 2001 to 120.9 deaths per 100,000 population in 2002.

Patient survival data, published by NZHIS for the first time, shows that breast, prostate and skin cancer are among those with the highest survival rates over five years (five years is a milestone that in many cases means that the cancer may have been cured).

Among New Zealanders who died of cancer in 2002, the most common cancers for women were breast cancer, throat and lung cancer, and bowel cancer. In men, the most common cause of death due to cancer was throat and lung cancer, followed by prostate and bowel cancer. The figures also show that Maori were more likely than non-Maori to die from cancer, often because Maori were more likely to be diagnosed at a more advanced stage when the cancer had spread.

This information comes from reports available at <http://www.nzhis.govt.nz/publications/index.html>

Priorities for Action on Family Violence

The Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families was established in June 2005 to provide a forum for the Government, non-

government organisations, the judiciary, the Children's Commissioner and the Families Commission to set the direction for family violence prevention in New Zealand. The first report from this Taskforce has identified four action areas for reducing family violence. They are: leadership, changing attitudes and behaviours, ensuring safety and accountability and support services.

A copy of the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families First Report is available at www.msd.govt.nz

Dealing with Gambling Harm

The Ministry of Health has issued a draft paper which includes a Service Plan, Needs Assessment and Levy Calculations for preventing and minimising gambling harm over 2007-2010. The service plan outlines the way the Ministry is proposing to fund intervention and public health services to reduce gambling harm. It also includes information on workforce development and research.

Contact: problemgambling@moh.govt.nz.

New Weapon for Battle against HIV/AIDS

The first of a new type of drugs to treat HIV/AIDS will be funded for New Zealand from next month. Enfuvirtide (Fuzeon) is a new type of drug used to treat people with the most advanced stages of HIV/AIDS. It is the first in a class of anti-HIV medicines known as fusion inhibitors. Other HIV medicines treat the virus once it has invaded cells – enfuvirtide blocks the virus and fights it outside the cells. Its action is most useful in combination with other anti-HIV medicines, for people whose disease has become resistant to some other anti-HIV medicines.

GPs: Top-Up for Low Fees

General Practices that charge very low fees are to receive extra government funding to make sure they can continue to provide services for their often high need communities. \$43 million over four years will be invested in GP practices that voluntarily agree to maintain their fees within a very low threshold – zero fees for children 0-5 years, \$10 for 6-17 year olds, and \$15 for adults. The funding will be available to any practice that is willing to charge very low fees. It is expected that 15% of practices covering some 615,000 people will be the most likely to take up the new funding.

Health Research Council Funding Round

The HRC are calling for expressions of interest and project registrations for its funding round for 2006-2007. Forms and guidelines will be posted on the HRC website before the closing date on 2 October 2006. Full applications for both contract types are due on 1 November 2006.

Go to: <http://www.hrc.govt.nz/>

Employment

The Work-Life Balance

Forty percent of New Zealand workers say they need and want more flexible work options according to a new report called "Work-Life Balance in New Zealand: A Snapshot of Employee and Employer Attitudes and Experiences".

Work-life balance is about managing the juggling act between paid work and other activities that are important – including spending time with family, taking part in sport and recreation, volunteering or undertaking further study.

Long hours and working at night are identified as making work-life balance harder for some people. Workplace culture is also a factor – with 60% of employees saying aspects of their workplace culture made work-life balance harder, particularly the expectations of workmates and managers.

A shift in the New Zealand labour market over the past six years means that unemployment levels are expected to remain under 5% for the foreseeable future. With record high numbers of people taking part in the labour force and continuing skill shortages, the days of readily available labour are over, probably forever. This means workplaces need to become even more flexible to continue to attract and retain the people they need, in an increasingly competitive local and global labour market.

Many employees report that work makes it hard to participate fully in family life. Forty-one percent say work sometimes or often makes it difficult to enjoy or spend quality time with family, and 46% sometimes or often find it hard to get home on time.

Thirty-nine percent of employees say they work extra hours in their own time every week to get the job done; 19% work more than 50 hours a week and 43% have some kind of care responsibility.

The report finds that many employers recognise that their staff face work-life balance issues, and the majority have taken some steps to offer some work-life initiatives. But a number are grappling with how they deliver flexible arrangements.

Other findings:

- a little over half of New Zealand workers rate their work-life balance as good to excellent;
- but 40% of workers said they have some or a lot of difficulty getting the balance they want;
- 55% of employers said there were no barriers that could "put them off" having flexible working arrangements;
- but 40% of employers said they needed to have everyone in the workplace at the same time; and
- 33% of employers said flexible working arrangements were too complicated. Seventeen percent said they were too expensive.

The report outlines some simple and effective ways to make a difference to employees' work-life balance – such as more flexible start and finish times, more input into rosters and shifts, flexible break provisions and study leave.

The report is available on the Department of Labour website www.dol.govt.nz/worklife/ or by calling 0800 20 90 20 during business hours

The Cost of Crime: Treasury Report

Treasury estimates that during 2003/04 the total costs of crime in New Zealand amounted to \$9.1 billion. Of this, the private sector incurred \$7 billion in costs and the public sector \$2.1 billion. Offences against private property are the most common crimes but offences against the person are the most costly, accounting for 45% of the total estimated costs of crime.

A copy of the report can be downloaded from the Treasury site at: <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/workingpapers/2006/twp06-04.pdf>

Justice

Accessing Court Records: Law Commission

A Law Commission report, "Access to Court Records" has recommended a more open and clear system for access to court records. The Commission considers that in places "the current access rules resemble a dog's breakfast," (Comment; Commission President, Sir Geoffrey Palmer). In addition, "They are often unclear, vary from one jurisdiction to another, and some courts have no access rules at all."

The Commission's report recommends a new Court Information Act based on a presumption of open access to court records, limited only by principled reasons for denying access. Such reasons would include the protection of sensitive information, (particularly in cases involving children or vulnerable people), court orders or statutory prohibitions on the release of information. The report's recommendations include:

- a presumption that court records will be accessible unless there is good reason to withhold them;
- greater public access at the time of a court hearing to material that is before the court, to ensure accuracy of reporting and improve public understanding and scrutiny of court proceedings;
- increased public access to court records after the hearing (and the end of any appeal period);
- greater availability of information about future hearings by way of on-line access to court calendars; and
- a separate procedure for researchers requiring access to records.

The Commission also recommends that fees charged for access to and copying of court records should be reasonable, and should not undermine any access provisions.

The report can be downloaded as a PDF file from the Commission's website at: http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/UploadFiles/Publications/Publication_119_330_R93.pdf Hard copies are also available (cost: \$15.00). Contact: publications@lawcom.govt.nz, Tel, (04) 473 3453; fax (04) 471 0959

Business

Overcoming Barriers to Exporting

A booklet from New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) called "This Way Up: Facing the Challenges and Thinking like an Exporter" offers advice and tips for would-be exporters.

It is based on a study which found that the personality and mindset of business owners is a major factor in companies taking the plunge of selling offshore.

Getting into exporting tends to be a gradual process. If two companies are identical in terms of products, resources and stage of development, the one with a confident, decisive risk-taker at the helm is more likely to become an exporter. The authors say that export mentors can be one of the most valuable assets when it comes to helping firms start to export.

The booklet can be downloaded off the NZTE website at: <http://www.nzte.govt.nz/section/14454/15777.aspx>

Trusts: Tax Review?

People who shelter their income through trusts because of a lower marginal tax rate might find the advantage has disappeared if the government cuts company tax by 3% (to 30%) and correspondingly reduces the top income tax by rate by 3% (36%).

In briefing papers to the government in support of the Business Tax Review (BTR), officials have suggested that under such a scenario the top tax on trusts should be raised from 33% to 36%.

Although officials note that such changes to the system of personal income taxation, or to the taxation of trusts, are outside the scope of the BTR, there is already general acceptance that personal tax cuts are likely to accompany a reduction in company tax.

The document can be downloaded from: <http://www.taxpolicy.ird.govt.nz/publications/files/BTR2006.DOC>

The research paper can be downloaded in a number of ways from: <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/display/document.asp?NavID=121&DocID=5427>.

Note: This research is part of a wider initiative which has its own recently released report called "State of the Development Goals Report 2006". This report is a first attempt to establish a platform for understanding performance across the State Services in relation to the Development Goals, and it can be downloaded from: <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/display/document.asp?NavID=121&DocID=5432>

Government Services

Accessing Government Services

Nearly 200,000 people work in the State Services, in a wide range of Government departments and Ministries that provide essential services to New Zealanders. We depend on the health, education, welfare, justice and transport systems working well, and on people working in them having New Zealanders' interests at heart.

The environment in which the State Services operates is a challenging one. There are national changes that government servants need to understand and respond to. They also need to adapt, so they are able to respond to the changing needs of New Zealanders, and provide a better service for the government.

The State Services Commission (SSC) has just released "Accessible State Services – Rotorua Research Pilot Report".

This report takes a close look at how easily people can access the services that government organisations in Rotorua offer. It was carried out in March and April 2006, and is part of a bigger project (see box below for more details).

The Rotorua pilot was set up to check out whether barriers to access existed for communities in Rotorua, and also to learn about what might improve their access. The researchers held interviews with 19 Ministries/departments, intermediaries or community organisations, and three focus groups.

In the report a "door" metaphor is used in the report to illustrate how people can currently access the services being offered by government organisations in Rotorua. The report starts by looking at "Who's knocking at the door?" in terms of who is, and who should be, accessing the services offered. To identify the range of ways people can access the organisation, the researchers have asked "Is there a door?" and "Is the door open?" They have also asked whether there are any barriers to people accessing to the services in question.

The ideas that organisations have for improving access to their services are considered in "How the door is being oiled".

"No wrong door" presents ways that government agencies are working together to coordinate the delivery of services.

It is hoped that the research will enable the State Services to provide accessible, responsive and effective services to New Zealand communities.

Checking ID: New Standard

The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) is piloting a new "Evidence of Identity" (EOI) Standard with the aim of preventing identity fraud. The standard will also enable people who are asked for ID to know just how much information a department or ministry can ask for.

Today, identity fraud is a major problem. International studies provide figures that show:

- 4.25% of all adults in the USA (9.3 million people) are victims of identity fraud on an annual basis (US Javelin Data);
- identity fraud costs the UK economy £1.7 billion. (Source: Home Office Identity Fraud Steering Committee estimate of the cost to the economy of identity fraud. February 2006); and
- a 2003 Australian study revealed that identity fraud cost the Australian community \$1.1 billion. (Securities Industries Research Centre Report 2003)

Examples of situations where the guide will be used include obtaining citizenship, enrolling at university, receiving a benefit or paying taxes.

There are three parts to establishing identity:

- evidence that the person was born and, if so, that the owner of the identity is still alive;
- evidence that the person claiming the identity is who they say they are and that they are the only claimant of the Identity; and
- evidence that the claimant is operating under this identity in the community

Note: Regulations setting out personal information that can be held by agencies are governed by the Privacy Act 1993. The Privacy Act also governs who has the right to see personal information and how that individual might get access to the information. For information about the Privacy Act see the Privacy Commissioner's website: www.privacy.org.nz.

More information about the Evidence of Identity Standard: http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Resource-material-Evidence-of-Identity-Standard-Index

New Government Directory

More detailed data is available on the social report website <http://www.socialreport.msd.govt.nz>

This directory includes:

- a complete ministerial list of Ministers both inside and outside of cabinet. This includes portfolios, direct phone and fax numbers, email addresses and secretaries' names;
- a complete list of the members of the House of Representatives, including which party each is from and which electorate they represent;
- a list of contact details for parliamentary select committees;
- judiciary information including judges of the Court of Appeal and the High Court. Contacts are also included;
- contact information for the Waitangi Tribunal; and
- a full list of 187 government departments from ACC to the Ministry of Youth Development, with description of the departments, addresses and other contact details for key staff members within each department/organisation.

All information is supplied and authorised by the Ministries, departments and agencies listed and is updated every 6 months.

\$50 including GST and postage. Email: thedirectory@xtra.co.nz.
Phone: 021 2222699. New Zealand Directory Limited

Some Education IT Updates

- **Project PROBE.** This project (PROBE stands for Provincial Broadband Extension) offers schools that have not had access to broadband the opportunity to access a range of broadband products and services from a variety of providers. The project has also provided broadband services to smaller communities around the country.
- **Small Schools Network Infrastructure Upgrade.** The Small Schools Network Infrastructure Upgrade Project is an \$11 million project to upgrade the ICT infrastructure of small schools. Most of the 150 or so eligible schools have rolls of less than 77 and are in rural areas. Each one taking part receives a school-wide cabling and power upgrade plus a server and associated hardware and software.
- **Virtual Learning Network.** The Virtual Learning Network (VLN) is aimed at smaller rural schools which cannot provide extensive curriculum options for senior students. The VLN project extends the range of subject options for these students by sharing subject-specialist teachers through video and audio-conferencing. There are 115 virtual learning network courses offered (24 are provided by tertiary institutions), and around 100 schools will use the network this year.

Internet

New Zealand Internet Rankings

More than two-thirds of New Zealanders now have internet access at home, placing this country eighth out of 30 developed countries. The Ministry of Social Development's (MSD) latest Social Report (see article elsewhere in this issue) shows that the percentage of adults aged 18 and over with internet access jumped from 36.5% in 2000 to 65.1% in 2004.

The most connected households are Asian and other ethnic groups, whose internet access rose from 50.5% to 79.6% by 2004. The least connected are superannuitants with little other income, with only 30.6% online in 2004. But that was still three times greater than four years earlier (9.1%).

International comparisons for 2004 were not available, but the report said New Zealand's 2003 internet access rate of 53% placed the country eighth out of 30 nations in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). New Zealand was ranked behind Australia (57%) and the United States (55%), but ahead of Canada (48%) and Britain (42%).

Within New Zealand, internet access increased from 2000 to 2004 from 36.8% to 63.1% for Europeans, from 26.9% to 45.5% for Maori and from 11% to 39.5% for Pacific Islanders.

Access rose from 46.5% to 77.7% in two-parent families with children, and more than doubled from 22.8% to 50.2% in solo-parent families with children.

Internet Sites

Do you have problems with business regulations? <http://www.businessconsultation.govt.nz> is a website that has been set up so you can tell the Government about problems with rules or regulations (including how the rules are administered) that are affecting business. Business owners, operators and people interested in business are invited have their say, and also to send in suggested solutions to the concern/s they have. Site acts as an online business advisor. You can also be consulted on your opinions on proposed or existing government regulation. Postal address: New Zealand Business Consultation Website, P O Box 1473, Wellington, fax: 0508 775 775.

Maori Development: <http://www.rakiora.org/> has resources on sustainable Maori development produced by the former James Henare Maori Research Centre and the Tai Tokerau Sustainable Development Research Group.

Access to legal information: www.lawaccess.lsa.govt.nz is the Law Access website. It has a new look and added features to improve electronic access to legal information. As well as more than 1500 law-related resources, the site now features a glossary of commonly used legal terms and freephone numbers. Also, if you provide law-related resources and want to become a contributor to the site, email info@lawaccess.lsa.govt.nz

Voluntary Sector Database: <http://www.nzfwo.org.nz/cst/> is the site of the Community Sector Taskforce (CST) which is building a website and national database for the community and voluntary sector. The work is being funded by the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector, a unit within the Ministry of Economic Development. The CST is an independent body of ten community representatives, established in 2003 to develop links between government and the sector. It is funded by the Ministry.

Companies Office: <http://www.companies.govt.nz> is the new Companies Office website. It includes a more comprehensive range of information for new businesses, along with a more powerful search function. Among the services are more information on conducting business in New Zealand and overseas, planning tax and director's obligations, information on the resources available to small businesses and a wider range of customer support services.

"Complex, buttery, peppery, with a hint of..." <http://www.tasting-wine.com/> is one of the sites with information for those who (like someone I know) have long been confused about "winespeak": includes wine terms and tastes, why tasters taste the way they do, tips on serving and wine etiquette.

Water On The Web: <http://waterontheweb.org/> is a new website designed to promote increased awareness of the country's water resources. Launched by the Ministry for the Environment (MfE), the site provides facts and figures on water resources, and how the resource is managed. Also explains the Government's Sustainable Water Programme of Action programme and provides a link to the Sustainable Households website (this is managed by a number of regional and local authorities).

Treaty Settlement Process

Fisheries Settlements

Ngati Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated has met the constitutional and structural requirements set out in the Maori Fisheries Act 2004, and has been approved as a Joint Mandated Iwi Organisation by Te Ohu Kai Moana/the Maori Fisheries Commission (TOKM). The approval follows negotiations between Ngati Kahungunu and Rongomaiwahine who have agreed that Rongomaiwahine would stay within the Kahungunu structure, and receive a percentage of the fisheries assets for its own benefit. Ngati Kahungunu is to be transferred more than \$31 million, with the remaining share of the inshore, harbour, remaining deepwater and freshwater fish stocks being allocated once agreements have been reached with neighbouring iwi. These agreements can be made when the neighbouring iwi have also been recognised as mandated iwi organisations.

TOKM has also approved the allocation of a share of the Maori Fisheries Settlement to Te Runanga o Te Rarawa following recognition of Te Rarawa's iwi status. TOKM will be allocating Te Rarawa a population-based share of the fisheries settlement of about \$6.9 million.

Ngāti Mutunga Claims Settlement Bill

The Ngāti Mutunga Claims Settlement Bill gives effect to the Deed of Settlement, signed in July 2005, to settle all of Ngāti Mutunga's historical Taranaki-based Treaty of Waitangi claims.

The settlement package contains a formal Crown apology, cultural and commercial redress, and a total quantum of \$14.9 million. This is the ninth settlement bill since 1999, and the fourth settlement bill addressing the raupatu (confiscation) claims in Taranaki.

Te Arawa Treaty Settlement Bill

This Bill will settle all historical claims of Te Arawa relating to 14 lakes around Rotorua and gives effect to the Deed of Settlement, signed in December 2004. This settlement includes a formal Crown apology; cultural redress including title to the 13 lakebeds (the Crown will continue to own the water column and airspace above the lakebeds); and financial redress of \$2.7 million. Te Arawa has approximately 40,000 members and is centred in Rotorua.

In the past three years six deeds of settlement have been reached and thirteen groups have entered negotiations. Three settlement bills were passed last year. This is the second settlement bill to be introduced this year, with another likely to be introduced before the end of the year. Currently, the Government is in negotiations with over 20 groups, covering several hundred claims.

New Zealand Profile

New Zealand's Social Wellbeing

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has released the 2006 "Social Report" for New Zealand. It shows that:

- since the mid-1980s, life expectancy has increased, suicide rates have reduced, and cigarette smoking has decreased. However, obesity has doubled for men and almost doubled for women, reflecting changes in diet and physical activity;
- there have been substantial increases in participation in early childhood and tertiary education, and more school leavers have higher qualifications. The unemployment rate has fallen steadily since it peaked at over 10 percent in 1992, and employment has risen. The part-time employment rate increased from 11.9% in 1986 to 15.9% in 2005;
- in a reversal, fewer people can afford a house, people on low incomes were worse off in 2004 than in 1986, and more people are in a situation of severe hardship, although the situation is improving. Income inequality was also worse in 2004 than 1986, but is largely stable. Market income per person is better and household crowding has eased compared to 1986;
- Maori life expectancy has increased since the mid-1980s and suicide rates and smoking have fallen, although in 2004 Maori

still had the highest rates of smoking of all ethnic groups. Maori unemployment rates have fallen. Participation in early childhood and tertiary education has increased, and a higher proportion of Maori students leave school with higher qualifications than in the mid-1980s. Obesity has not improved though economic outcomes for Maori have improved since the mid-1990s. The proportion of Maori families with low incomes fell from 42% in 1993 to 24% in 2004. The proportion of people spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs dropped from 36% in 1997 to 21% in 2004, but overall, average outcomes for Maori remain worse than for Europeans;

- Overall, the picture for Pacific people is similar to that for Maori. Outcomes are improving for most of the indicators, particularly in the areas of knowledge and skills, paid work, and economic standards of living. In some cases outcomes are improving faster for Pacific people than for the population as a whole;
- women's and men's outcomes are similar across many of the indicators. Women's health and education outcomes are better than men's, but men have better outcomes in the paid work area;
- despite a small drop in participation in tertiary education (largely due to a decline in participation in certificate level courses), the Knowledge and Skills outcomes were generally better;
- voter turnout in the 2005 general election increased against a long-term downward trend, and more women were elected to Parliament. Turnout in the 2004 local authority elections declined, and a similar proportion of women as previously were elected to local authorities;
- people perceived there was less discrimination against most groups. New Zealand continues to be a world leader in terms of perceived corruption;
- both the air and drinking water quality indicators have improved;
- intentional injury child mortality improved, road deaths declined but road injuries went up;
- telephone access and contact with family/friends remained similar, but internet access increased substantially; and
- overall, since the mid-1980s there have been substantial increases in participation in early childhood and tertiary education and more school leavers have higher qualifications. The "apparent" early childhood education participation rate was 98% for 3 year olds and 103% for 4 year olds in 2005 compared with 43% and 73% respectively in 1986.

More detailed data is available on the social report website <http://www.socialreport.msd.govt.nz>

New Zealanders: Making World a Better Place

New Zealand is ranked sixth out of the 21 richest nations in a survey of countries helping to make the world a better, safer place to live. The Washington-based Centre for Global Development's annual Commitment to Development Index (CDI) rated aid, trade, investment, migration, the environment, security and technology.

Some details of New Zealand's specific rankings include:

- New Zealand came in first for trade, with the report approving of the low tariffs and subsidies on agriculture;
- but we ranked only 12th in the environment category (the report said New Zealand had high greenhouse gas emission, low gas taxes, high fishing subsidies and no policy to regulate illegal timber products);
- we ranked third for security, with the report noting the "significant financial and personnel contributions during interventions in Papua New Guinea, Afghanistan and the Solomon Islands";
- we scored highly for migration (the report said our strengths in the area included a large increase in immigration of skilled, non-skilled and foreign students);
- the country was ranked just over halfway for technology, coming in at 10th;
- New Zealand fared worse for aid, where we ranked 18th, after it was reported New Zealand had a low net aid volume share of GDP; and
- New Zealand was ranked 19th for investment because no national agency provided political risk insurance.

The List: **1** Denmark, **2** Netherlands, **3** Sweden, **4** Australia, **5** Norway, **6** New Zealand, **7** Finland, **8** Austria, **9** Germany, **10** United Kingdom, **11** Canada, **12** United States, **13** Switzerland, **14** Portugal, **15** France, **16** Belgium, **17** Spain, **18** Italy, **19** Ireland, **20** Greece, **21** Japan

You can find more information on the Commitment to Development Index at: http://www.cgdev.org/section/initiatives/_active/cdi

Happy? Apparently, We Are...

It's official: We're happier than the Australians!

New Zealand has been ranked the 18th happiest country on earth in an international survey. It ranked higher than the United States (23), Australia (26) and the United Kingdom (41) in the University of Leicester happiness study.

The "world map of happiness" found a nation's level of happiness was closely associated with health levels, followed by wealth and then provision of education. The analysis was based on findings from more than 100 different studies around the world, which questioned 80,000 people worldwide. The survey used data published by organisations including UNESCO, the CIA and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The Danes were found to be the happiest people in the world, followed by Swiss and Austrians. Down the bottom of the list were the Democratic Republic of the Congo (176) and Zimbabwe (177). In last place was Burundi, which has been embroiled in civil war for the past 13 years.

People living in countries with large populations were not all that happy about their lot: China, in 82nd place was followed by India (125) and Russia (167). The study found people in countries in the top 10 had a life expectancy close to 80 years, except for Bhutan in eighth place (62.9 years) and The Bahamas (69.7 years).

Happiest nations: **1** Denmark, **2** Switzerland, **3** Austria, **4** Iceland, **5** The Bahamas, **6** Finland, **7** Sweden, **8** Bhutan, **9** Brunei, **10** Canada, **18** New Zealand

Arts and Culture

Publishing Pioneer Receives Award

Publishing pioneer Robyn Bargh of Huia Publishers is the first person to receive Creative New Zealand's new Te Tohu Toi Ke a te Waka Toi award for making a difference in the literary sector. Creative New Zealand says that the new award is in recognition of individuals who are making a positive difference to the development and retention of Maori arts and culture.

New Zealand Film Industry: Major Export Earner

New figures show the film industry is becoming a major export earner for New Zealand. The first Statistics New Zealand survey of the industry shows it made \$2.6 billion gross revenue in the past financial year. This puts it on a level with forestry and logging and the horticultural industry.

Montana Book Awards

Winners are:

Deutz Medal for Fiction or Poetry and Fiction category winner – Blindsight by Maurice Gee (Penguin Books);

Montana Medal for Non Fiction and Environment category winner – Pohutukawa & Rata: New Zealand's Iron-hearted Trees by Philip Simpson (Te Papa Press)

New Zealand Society Of Authors Best First Book Awards:

- **E H McCormick Best First Book Award for Non Fiction** – Pakeha and the Treaty: Why It's Our Treaty Too by Patrick Snedden (Random House New Zealand);
- **Jessie Mackay Best First Book Award for Poetry** – Dream Fish Floating by Karlo Mila (Huia Publishers);
- **Hubert Church Best First Book Award for Fiction** – A Red Silk Sea by Gillian Ranstead (Penguin Books);

A W Reed Award For Contribution To New Zealand Literature: Kevin Ireland;

Reviewer And Review Page Or Programme Awards: Jolisa Gracewood (reviews are published in The New Zealand Listener); and

Best Review Page or Programme Award: The Dominion Post.

Funding Opportunities

Community Internship Programme: Apply Now

Under the Community Internship Programme (CIP) the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) provides grants for experienced and skilled people from public, private, and community and voluntary organisations to work with a not-for-profit organisation. Placements are for six-months, with the intern working on a specific project.

The host organisation is a non-profit community organisation that acts as employer to the intern for the six-month period of the internship. The community organisation will be working towards the well being of their community through, for example, social service provision, economic development, environmental work, cultural development or employment support services. See Information for Host Organisations at http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Services-Community-Internship-Programme-Information-for-Host-Organisations?OpenDocument

The intern is a person who temporarily leaves their position with their employer/home organisation to work for the host community organisation for six months. During that six-month period the intern shares their skills and expertise with the host organisation. At the end of the six month period the intern returns to their home organisation and shares the understandings gained during their internship.

The home organisation is the organisation with which the intern was working (either as a paid or voluntary worker) before the placement: s/he will return there afterwards. A home organisation can be a commercial enterprise, a government department, a local body, or a non-government organisation. See Information for Employers/Home Organisations at http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Services-Community-Internship-Programme-Information-for-Employers-Home-Organisations?OpenDocument

Applications for the second round of CIP 2006-7 funding close on 12 October 2006. For more information on any aspect of the Community Internship Programme please Email: internship@dia.govt.nz or Freephone: 0800 824 824 or Fax: (04) 495 9444

Community Funding: Some Closing Dates

- **Lottery Grants Board:** Regional Community Committees. Closes 1 November. More information: www.dia.govt.nz, or tel 0800 824 824

- **Building Pacific Organisations** (alcohol/drug abuse; children; counselling; domestic violence; elderly; family; health; Pacific Island people; people with disabilities; poverty; anti-racism; sexual abuse; women; youth). Closes 31 October. J R McKenzie Trust, P O Box 10-006, The Terrace, Wellington. Ph. 472 8876, fax 472 5367info@jrmckenzie.org.nz. Web www.jrmckenzie.org.nz.
- **CLANZ** (Community Learning Aotearoa/New Zealand. Closes 31 October. Contact CLANZ – Community Learning Aotearoa/New Zealand, Tertiary Education Commission, P O Box 27048, Wellington. Ph 462 5200, fax 499 4947. Email anne.rayner@tec.govt.nz, web www.tec.govt.nz

General

New Maori King

The new Maori King, Tuheitia Pahi, is the second child, and first son of the late Maori Queen, Te Arikinui Te Atairangi Kahu. He was born on 21 April 1955, and was announced as her successor, and crowned, on August 21 2006. Dame Te Atairangi Kahu, who was the Kingitanga movement's first Maori Queen, was crowned on May 23 1966.

Kiwisaver: Voluntary Savings Scheme

KiwiSaver is a new, voluntary, work-based savings scheme which aims to get New Zealanders to save. Inland Revenue will administer the scheme through the pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) tax system and forward members' contributions for investment

All new employees will be automatically enrolled in KiwiSaver except for people under 18 years, casual employees, private domestic workers, and those on ACC and paid parental leave. Employees will have eight weeks from starting their new job to decide if they want to opt out. If they do any contributions already deducted will be refunded.

Existing employees won't be automatically enrolled when KiwiSaver starts up but they're free to join. They can do this by contacting Inland Revenue or their chosen KiwiSaver scheme, or by asking their employer to start making deductions. Self-employed people and beneficiaries can also join but they need to make payments directly to Inland Revenue or their scheme.

Contributions will be deducted from employees' pay at a before tax rate of 4%, which can be increased to 8%. Inland Revenue will hold the contributions for an initial three-month period while members seek financial advice and choose a KiwiSaver scheme.

Savings can't be accessed until the saver is eligible for New Zealand Superannuation – currently age 65 – or after you've been in the scheme for five years, whichever is the longer period. There are exceptions for significant financial hardship or serious illness, or permanent emigration.

KiwiSavers can make a one-off withdrawal towards a deposit on their first home after they've been contributing for three years. Although funds are "locked in" savers can take a break for up to five years at a time by applying for a "contributions holiday". A KiwiSaver needs to have been contributing for 12 months to apply for a contributions holiday, except in cases of financial hardship.

Employers are responsible for:

- distributing an information pack provided by Inland Revenue;
- passing on their new employees' details to Inland Revenue;
- deducting employees' contributions and forwarding them to Inland Revenue with their PAYE; and
- receiving opt-out notices from their employees and advising Inland Revenue of the opt-out.

Employer contributions may count towards the employee's contributions of 4% or 8%. These contributions will not have specified superannuation contributions withholding tax (SSCWT) deducted if the employer contribution is the same as the employee's contribution or 4% of the employee's salary or wages, whichever is less.

The Government will:

- make an upfront contribution of \$1000 per person, to be "locked in" until the recipient reaches the age of eligibility for New Zealand Superannuation or for five years, whichever is the greater;
- make an annual contribution to each member in relation to fees charged by the provider; and
- after three years of saving, offer a first home deposit subsidy of \$1000 per year of membership in the scheme, up to a maximum of \$5000 for five years.

More information about the Kiwisaver saving scheme: www.ird.govt.nz

New Zealand Superannuation Fund: 2006 Return

In the 12 months to 30 June 2006 the assets of the New Zealand Superannuation Fund grew from \$6.6 billion to \$10.1 billion (net of current and deferred tax). The growth reflects \$2.3 billion in Government contributions and \$1.4 billion in pre-tax investment income.

The Fund's rate of return for the 12 months was 19.2% (after costs and foreign tax, but before New Zealand tax). This exceeded the risk-free rate of return of 6.77% by 12.43%. In dollar terms, it equates to approximately \$930 million above the risk-free rate of return. The Board of the Guardians of New Zealand Superannuation says it has invested heavily in buoyant global equity markets because over the long term (20 years plus), they are expected to outperform more stable investments.

More at: <http://www.nzsuperfund.co.nz/>

Retirement Villages: Compulsory Complaints Procedures

From 1 October when the disputes resolution section of the Retirement Villages Act 2003 comes into force it will be compulsory for retirement villages to have formal disputes procedures in place. The dispute resolution provisions in the Act also set out clear guidelines for lodging, hearing and resolving complaints (e.g. around sales of residential units/repayment of residents' entitlements).

More information from the Retirement Commissioner at www.retirement.org.nz

- an additional 14,914 Maori enrolled on the Maori Roll (new enrolments and net result of roll type changes);
- 4,634 fewer Maori enrolled on the General Roll (new enrolments and net result of roll type changes); and
- a total of 385,977 people who have identified themselves as Maori are now enrolled to vote.

In short:

- 14,294 people moved from the General Roll to the Maori Roll; and
- 7,294 people moved from the Maori Roll to the General Roll.

More information: www.elections.org.nz/maori-option-results.html

Beating Graffiti

The Ministry of Justice and Local Government New Zealand have joined forces to provide local authorities with strategies and tools to develop a local response to graffiti problems within their communities.

You can find the "Beat Graffiti Guide" on the Local Government New Zealand website at: http://www.lgnz.co.nz/projects/BeatGraffiti/KnowHow_Beat_Graffiti_Guide_06.pdf

Choke the Smoke: New Vehicle Warrant Test

A visible smoke test is to become part of the warrant or certificate of fitness test for vehicles from 27 October 2006. Inspectors will check exhaust smoke by running the car for five seconds while the engine idles and for another five seconds when engine speed is increased. Vehicles that produce smoke for five seconds or more will need to be repaired before they can be taken out on the road.

More information: www.transport.govt.nz/choke-the-smoke/

Results of 2006 Maori Electoral Option

The 2006 Maori Electoral Option is over, with 21,588 Maori changing the type of electoral roll they are on and another 10,280 Maori enrolling for the first time. The 2006 Maori Electoral Option ran from 3 April until 2 August giving every eligible Maori the opportunity to choose to enrol on the General Electoral Roll or the Maori Electoral Roll.

The main overall results were:

Kiwi TV Content Up

Local TV programming content has just broken the 7000 hour mark for the second time in New Zealand's TV history. The first time it did this was in 2002 with America's Cup coverage. New Zealand content played in prime time reached its highest level ever at 2070 hours, an increase of 210 hours, or 11.3% since 2004. In all hours of local content have increased from 6423 in 2004, to 7026 in 2005.

As well:

- TV One's local content increased from 51.6% to 54% (3551 hours), including 61% in prime time;
- Prime TV introduced 571 hours of local content for the first time;
- between 2000 and 2005 local content hours increased by 13.6%, (6187 in 2000 and 7026 in 2005); and
- total first run, or new content hours increased 10% from 5182 hours in 2000 to 5698 in 2005.

The figures are likely to increase further next year, because this will be the first year Maori Television is included in the reported hours.

The Government provides \$62 million a year for local content through New Zealand On Air and \$15 million to TVNZ to support charter programming.

Maori TV Wins Free-To-Air League

Maori Television has secured free-to-air rights to the Tri-Nations rugby league tournament. We won last time, and our win marked the first time that Australia had not won an international test series in 27 years. The Tri-Nations starts in October with the final played in Australia in November. Sky TV has live coverage rights, and New Zealand Rugby League actively supported Maori TV as its free-to-air broadcaster of choice. Maori TV will also be broadcasting the series between New Zealand Maori and the Cook Islands in Rarotonga in November.

Viewers can call the helpline on 0800 MA TATOU (0800 628 2868) for advice on how to tune into Maori Television.

Electricity: "Too Many Monopolies"

In a second report the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) says the electricity supply industry needs to be "democratised" if it is to effectively meet New Zealand's future energy needs.

In its second assessment of the Electricity Commission's environmental performance, PCE says the sector has "too many monopoly elements" but with the "right policy settings, people would embrace the challenge".

It goes on to say that it is really important that electricity services focus on:

- improving the efficiency of all aspects of electricity supply and distribution;
- improving the way the entire system responds – from supply to use – so that in physical, ownership, capital, and human resource terms, it can deal with whatever the future holds; and
- decarbonising electricity generation as quickly as the depreciation of assets allows.

In response to its findings the PCE is now going to examine the potential for small-scale distributed generation and energy systems.

More information: <http://www.pce.govt.nz>

Easier for Kiwis to Bring Families Home

It is going to be easier for Kiwis to bring overseas family members to New Zealand. Currently families of ex-pats are part of a limited allocation (i.e. a "capped" allocation) in the family stream of the New Zealand Residence Programme. From July next year the cap will be removed for partners and dependent children of New Zealand residents and citizens, in a move to support New Zealanders overseas coming home.

Parents, siblings and adult children of New Zealand sponsored migrants will remain in a capped stream of the residence programme.

In another policy change, a maximum age of 55 years has been introduced for sibling and adult child applicants. This limit reflects the age restriction for skilled migrants in the New Zealand Residence Programme.

Life Insurance Tax Rules Review

A new review is going to look at life insurance tax rules. Life insurance constitutes a major sector of the savings industry, with over \$9 billion of savings funds under management. The current rules have been operating since 1990, even though the commer-

cial, regulatory and savings environment has changed markedly over the last 16 years.

The review will also look at whether life insurance should be included in the proposed rules for taxing "portfolio investment entities". Any changes emerging from the review will be included in a tax bill to be introduced next year.

National Climate Summary – Winter 2006

- **Winter 2006:** wild in the lower North Island, exceptional snowstorms in the east of the South Island, but quite benign in the north of both islands. New high sunshine records in places.
- **Rainfall:** wet in the southern half of the North Island, especially Wanganui, Wairarapa, and Wellington; relatively dry in the north of both islands, and Otago.
- **Sunshine:** extremely sunny for winter with record winter sunshine in parts of the north and west of the North Island and the southeast of the South Island.
- **Temperature:** below normal in the north and west of the North Island, Buller, South Canterbury and east Otago; near normal elsewhere.

This was a winter of extremes in parts of New Zealand, with exceptional snowstorms in the east of the South Island, significant snowfall also in the central North Island, severe floods and landslips in the lower North Island, and damaging winds. In contrast it was also very sunny in many areas and dry in the north of both islands and Otago.

Winter rainfall was at least 150% (one and a half times) of normal in Wanganui and Wairarapa, and parts of Wellington (including Kapiti). Soil moisture in these regions was already at field capacity (nearly saturated) at the start of June. In contrast, winter rainfall was only about 50% (half) of normal in parts of Northland and Otago, and below normal in Thames-Coromandel, Western Bay of Plenty, much of Auckland, Nelson, and much of Marlborough. The national average winter temperature of 8.1°C was close to normal, being 0.2°C below average.

This winter was also unusual because June was an exceptionally cold month, the coldest month of the winter. Temperatures, for New Zealand as a whole, were above or near normal for the remainder of winter. Sunshine hours for winter were extremely high in the north and west of the North Island from Northland to Wellington, and in the east of the South Island from inland South Canterbury to Southland, with some centres recording their sunniest winter on record.

Upcoming Conferences

International Landcare Conference, 8-11 October 2006, Melbourne

This conference will bring together people interested in creating future landscapes, lifestyles and livelihoods to communicate with each other, learn from each other and contribute to building networks for natural resource management. You can register now for the International Landcare Conference 2006 by logging on to

the Conference website www.internationallandcareconference2006.com.au

NZARM Conference, 20-23 November 2006, Christchurch

Resource management under stormy skies: water allocation @ the crossroads? New Zealand Association of Resource Management is jointly hosting the conference with the New Zealand Hydrological Society and the Meteorological Society of New Zealand.

For more information go to <http://www.conference.canterbury.ac.nz/rmuss/>

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

Rural Bulletin may be copied in full and circulated, and individual items may be reproduced providing the source is acknowledged.

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

Craig Matthews/Paddy Twist

Editors Rural Bulletin

Tel: 04 473 5524

Fax: 04 472 8946

Email ruralbulletin@ruralwomen.org.nz

Noeline Holt

Executive Officer

Rural Women New Zealand

Tel: 04 473 5524

Fax 04 472 8946

Email: enquiries@ruralwomen.org.nz

Jackie Edkins

Communications Officer

Rural Women New Zealand

Tel: 04 473 5524

Fax 04 472 8946

Email: enquiries@ruralwomen.org.nz

Website: www.ruralwomen.org

Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to ensure the information in Rural Bulletin is accurate, Rural Women New Zealand does not accept liability for error of fact or opinion which may be present, nor for the consequences of any financial decision based on the information. Any views or opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of Rural Women New Zealand.

Appointments

Former lawyer, judge, and ombudsman Honourable Anand Satyanand is the country's nineteenth *Governor-General*. Dr David Collins QC has been appointed *Solicitor-General and Chief Executive of the Crown Law Office*. Brian Dwyer, has been appointed an *Environment Judge*. Craig Rickit has been appointed as *New Zealand's next High Commissioner to Kiribati*. Adrian Macey is the new *Climate Change Ambassador*. Mark Barrow and Roger Taylor have been appointed to the *Board of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra*. Board re-appointments are: Joe Pope, Bill Falconer, Susan McCormack, and Peter Rowe. New members of the recently established *Territorial Forces Employer Support Committee* are David McGregor (Auckland); Ted Dean (Waikato/Tauranga); Mary Bourke (Manawatu/Taranaki/Kapiti region); Raymond Lind (Wellington/Hawkes Bay) Sandra Manderson (Christchurch/Upper South Island); Julian Smith (Otago/Southland); Rodger Kerr-Newell (Business New Zealand); Lindsay Taiaroa (Vice Chancellors association); and Tim Brewer (Director General of Reserve Forces). Appointments to the *Careers Services Board* are: Kaye Turner (Chair); Brent Kennerley (re-appointment); Arthur Graves and Dr Majolein Lips-Wiersma. Dame Anne Salmond has been reappointed *Chair of the Historic Places Trust Board* and five members have been reappointed (John Acland, Tumu Te Heuheu, Te Aue Davis, Merata Kawharu, and Murray Mouat).

Craig Matthews and Paddy Twist

Editors

Rural Bulletin