

# Infrastructure weekly update

For the week starting 11 March 2024




To: Hon Chris Bishop, Minister for Infrastructure,  
Simon Court MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary  
to the Minister for Infrastructure

Minister's comments:

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## 1. Actions arising from previous meetings

Meeting date	Agreed action	By whom	By when	Status
28 November	Consider next steps for the NZ Infrastructure Strategy	Minister	No deadline	Pending
11 December	Set up meeting with Transmission Gully reviewers	Minister/ TW	22 Dec	Briefing delivered 14 December [TW-2023-308]. Meeting with reviewers now scheduled for 10 April.
11 December		TW	asap	Pending
		s9(2)(g)(i)		
24 January	Provide a briefing on CO(23)9	TW	tbc	Updating post TSY briefing re IMS

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[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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s9(2)(g)(i)

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## 2. Key issues and updates

### 2.1. Public Works Act and fast track consenting regime

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

s9(2)(f)(iv)

*Barbara Tebbs, GM Policy*

### 2.2. Follow-up from meeting with Mr Court on 5 March

We met with Under-Secretary Court together with colleagues from the Ministry for the Environment on Tuesday 5 March. US Court outlined the thinking he has shared with you about the high-level architecture of the resource management reform programme. Given our focus on immediate improvements to National Direction to better enable the delivery of infrastructure, it was helpful to understand the bigger context and likely objectives of the reform programme. We will continue to support our MfE colleagues with whole-of-system infrastructure advice. Our focus will be on no-regrets immediate improvements for infrastructure provision within the broader architecture of the reform programme.

*Barbara Tebbs, GM Policy*

### 2.3. Update from DPMC on the Emergency Management Bill

All Ministers with bills reinstated from the previous Government have been asked to submit a short paper for LEG consideration on 21 March to confirm whether the Government wishes to proceed with each bill.

On the National Emergency Management Agency's (NEMA) recommendation, the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery (Hon Mitchell) has indicated his preference is not to proceed with the Emergency Management Bill (EM Bill) in its current form and instead pursue more transformative legislation. This would allow the Government to account for any recommendations from the Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events, which is due at the end of this month.

We (DPMC) are supportive of not proceeding with the EM Bill in its current form. This means that the critical infrastructure resilience work programme will now be the sole mechanism for delivering on some of the outcomes initially sought to be partially achieved through the EM Bill. This includes work to: legislate the definition of critical infrastructure, facilitate more comprehensive information sharing and gathering, and set enforceable minimum resilience standards. We expect this will also be welcomed by stakeholders (such as the Telecommunications Forum), who had expressed concerns about multiple pieces of work seeking to achieve similar outcomes being progressed in parallel.

Minister Mitchell is expected to discuss this with you next week, given some measures in the EM Bill were intended to enhance the resilience of critical infrastructure. DPMC officials are available to support this conversation, if desired.

*Ryan Walsh, DPMC*

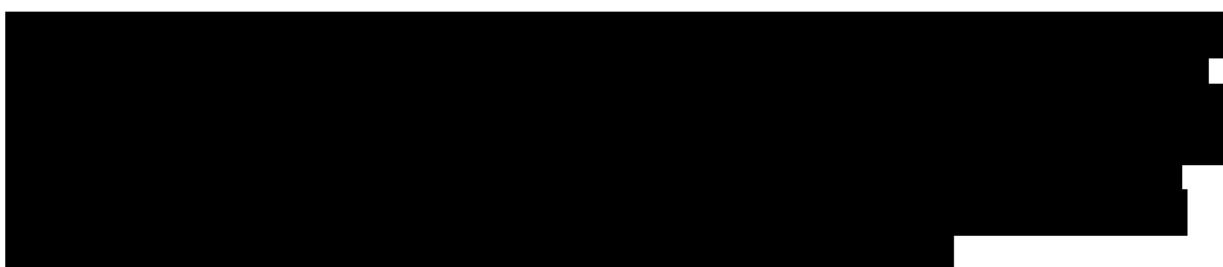
## 2.4. Advice to MBIE re: Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulation 2003

We have provided advice to MBIE on their proposed changes to the Hazard from Trees Regulations. These regulations assign tree-trimming responsibilities between asset owners and vegetation owners. Electricity line damage caused by trees during the Extreme North Island Weather Events reinforce the importance of reviewing appropriateness of these regulations – particularly how risks posed by trees outside the Growth Limit Zone are mitigated.

We support MBIE's proposed risk-based approach and have provided advice on regulatory design, cost allocation, and a phased approach to progressively reducing tree-fall risk through plantation forests.

*Barbara Tebbs, GM Policy*

## 2.5. Advice to DIA re: water sector insurance



*Barbara Tebbs, GM Policy*

## 2.6. Advice to MOT re: Land Transport GPS 2024

In February, we provided advice to the Ministry of Transport during agency consultation on the draft Land Transport Government Policy Statement 2024 (GPS). We consider there are opportunities to clarify the GPS related to resilience investments, emissions reduction, performance monitoring and the way in which Roads of National Significance are implemented.

We will be joining with you to meet with Minister Brown on 25 March and will provide background notes about the Transport GPS and the related matters of reviewing the transport revenue system, the system setting changes needed to enable new revenue tools for transport, the importance of stabilising transport revenue for the 30 year Infrastructure Plan, and establishment of the National Infrastructure Agency.

*Barbara Tebbs, GM Policy*

## 2.7. Invitation to speak at Auckland Infrastructure Leaders Network (ILN) Meet-up in June

Thank you to the Minister and Under Secretary for your involvement in the Wellington ILN Meet-up last month. The feedback from the leaders was overwhelmingly positive. The insights and open dialogue you fostered were highlighted as key elements of the event's success and greatly appreciated by all participants.

This success has led to a request from Auckland-based leaders that we repeat the format in Auckland in June. We can schedule this event to suit your availability. Ideally, we would look to hold the Auckland Meet-up on a Monday afternoon or Friday morning within the first two weeks of June.

If you accept the invitation, we will work with your office/s to confirm a suitable date and time.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with the ILN community.

*Rebecca Robertshawe, Acting GM Delivery*

## 2.8. Upcoming events

We advise you of any significant forums or events that Infrastructure Commission staff are attending or presenting at.

Event	Event date	Description (attending/presenting/purpose)
Wellington Regional Leadership Committee forum	12 March	Geoff Cooper, General Manager Strategy, will be speaking about transport infrastructure needs.
Infrastructure NZ: Funding and Financing Conference	26/27 March	Geoff Cooper, General Manager Strategy, will be presenting on findings from some of the Commission's recent research.
IPWEA International Public Works Conference	30 April – 3 May	Ross Copland, CE will be presenting at this event.
Infrastructure Commission Symposium	9 April	A number of Commission staff will be speaking about their research and findings.
Combined Local Government Sector Meeting	April 11	Geoff Cooper, General Manager Strategy, will be speaking about the National Infrastructure Plan and Infrastructure Priority List
Auckland-based Infrastructure Leaders Network Meet-Up	June (tbc)	This event will be based on the successful format of the inaugural Meet-up in Wellington in February.

Responsible GM: Anna Moodie

## 3. Upcoming advice

### 3.1. Upcoming briefings and aides memoire

We provide advice to you on our work programme and our contribution to the government’s wider work programme – both proactively and in response to requests from you.

Topic and <a href="#">tracking number</a>	Date due to your office	What this advice covers	Deadline for Minister’s feedback
Options to align Public Works Act and fast track consenting processes [TW-2024-358]	Sent 29 February	Responds to your request on 27 February for our advice, including reference to approaches in other jurisdictions, on options to align Public Works Act (PWA) and Fast-track consenting (FTC) processes.	asap
Meetings for US Court in Whangārei on 1 March [TW-2024-353]	Sent 29 February	AM for US Court: Provides background notes, talking points and bios for US Court’s meetings in Whangārei on 1 March to discuss infrastructure-related issues	1 March
Background for the Minister’s meetings in London 12-15 March	Sent 1 March (for bullets 1, 2, 4) Sent 4 March (for bullets 3 and 4)	Te Waihangā provided four background briefings as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure landscape in NZ [TW-2024-354]</li> <li>• Meeting re Crossrail</li> <li>• Meeting with UK National Infrastructure Commission</li> <li>• Meeting with Infrastructure and Projects Authority UK</li> <li>• [REDACTED]</li> </ul>	6 March
Comments re Cabinet paper on New Dunedin Hospital [TW-2024-357]	Sent 1 March	Provides context and talking points for the Minister to take to Cabinet on 4 March.	4 March
Background for US Court’s meeting with the Minister of Health [TW-2024-363]	Sent 6 March	AM for US Court: background for his discussion on 7 March with Hon Reti re his delegations re health infrastructure, and funding and financing.	7 March

North Island Weather Event (NIWE) recovery project construction workforce modelling [TW-2024-364]	Sent 7 March	AM for the Minister of Finance.	n/a
Background for US Court's meeting with the Minister of Education	tbc	AM for US Court: background for his discussion with Hon Stanford re his delegations re education infrastructure, and funding and financing.	tbc
Plan for development of the 30-year infrastructure plan	28 March	Will set out a project plan detailing actions and milestones for development of the 30-year infrastructure plan.	n/a
Overview of Cabinet Office circular CO(23)9	On hold	On 24 January, the Minister requested an overview of this circular entitled: <i>Investment Management and Asset Performance in Departments and Other Entities</i> . We are coordinating with the Treasury on timing and scope of this advice.	n/a
<b>Briefings re reports and publications</b>			
Research insights: local government financing tools – a review [TW-2024-362]	Sent 6 March	Informs you of the key findings Research Insights paper that reviews local government financing tools and discusses the use of debt for infrastructure. A draft of the Research Insights paper is attached.	25 March (aiming to publish in that week)
Approaches to infrastructure pricing – research report	March/April	Will outline insights from a current pricing analysis being conducted by PWC as part of a programme of work to develop an economic framework for pricing infrastructure across four sectors – land transport, water, telco and energy.	n/a

### 3.2. Monitoring and performance reports

We provide quarterly reports on our performance against the Statement of Performance Expectations, regular updates on the National Infrastructure Pipeline, and updates on cross-government work to deliver the Infrastructure Strategy.

Topic	Date due to your office	What this report covers	Timeline
Infrastructure Strategy Monitoring Report	End of March/early April	Reports on progress in delivering actions and outcomes signalled in the NZ Infrastructure Strategy.	For release and discussion at the May Symposium

### 3.3. Upcoming Cabinet papers

We provide advice to you on upcoming papers that you or your colleagues are taking to Cabinet, where relevant to the infrastructure system.

Lead Minister	Description	Date due to your office	Committee	Timeframe
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
			s9(2)(g)(i)	

### 3.4. Ministerial Official Information Act requests

Where requested, we provide information to inform responses to OIAs that you receive.

Date received from your office	Correspondent	Description of request	Date due to Minister	Date due to send
12 February	[Redacted] s9(2)(a)	Correspondence between the Minister for Infrastructure’s office and the Infrastructure Commission in January 2024 re: infrastructure projects, initiatives, or policy developments; funding allocations, budgetary considerations, or financial matters; upcoming release of documents and reports; requests for information, data, or analysis.	Sent 4 March 2024	11 March 2024
29 February	[Redacted]	Request for a number of specific briefings provided to the Minister for Infrastructure between 1 December 2023 and 15 February 2024	13 March 2024	25 March 2024
1 March	[Redacted]	Request for 2 specific briefings provided to the Minister for Infrastructure dated 19 February disclosed under WPQ 927 (2024)	19 March 2024	28 March 2024
5 March	[Redacted]	Request for a number of specific briefings provided to the Minister for Infrastructure between 19-27 February disclosed under WPQ 1189 (2024)	22 March 2024	3 April 2024
	s9(2)(a)			

### 3.5. Departmental Official Information Act requests

We provide you with a heads-up on OIAs that we have received and our proposed response.

Date received	Correspondent	Description of request	Date for heads up to Minister's office	Date due to send
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)	[REDACTED]
9 February	[REDACTED] s9(2)(a)	Correspondence received since 1 December 2023 from Minister/s re the fiscal sustainability programme, including any savings required by us; Any letters of expectation or guidance from Te Kawa Mataaho received since 1 December 2023 re change management or employment relations.	Sent 29 February	8 March 2024
21 February	[REDACTED] s9(2)(a)	Advice from the Infrastructure Commission to Auckland Light Rail Ltd from its establishment in October 2022 to present, as well as its predecessor the Auckland Light Rail Establishment Unit from March 2021-October 2022.	13 March	20 March 2024

### 3.6. Upcoming Ministerial meetings

Where requested, we provide support for meetings you are attending.

Meeting	Meeting date	Who will be attending/presenting	Comment / action
US Court meeting with Hon Shane Reti	7 March	Mr Court and Hon Reti	Mr Court met with Hon Reti to discuss his health infrastructure, and funding and financing delegations. We provided a background aide memoire on 6 March [TW-2024-363 refers].

'Chew session' with US Court on the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act	8 March (tbc)	Andy Hagan	Mr Court is interested in our insights into what is working well, and what tweaks/changes to the Act could be considered.
Minister's travel to London to meet with UK infrastructure leaders	12-15 March	Ross Copland will attend some of the London meetings and events (tbc)	We provided background briefings on 1 and 4 March, and supported briefings from other agencies.
Meeting with Alan Pollard, Civil Contractors NZ Inc	4.30-5.30pm 18 March	Ministers Bishop and Brown will meet with Mr Pollard	We are providing an event briefing by 14 March.
Request for meeting with Minister of Transport to discuss the draft GPS on land transport	25 March	Infrastructure Commission officials (tbc). May be an opportunity to discuss a range of transport matters in addition to the GPS.	Minister Brown has requested this meeting to discuss feedback we provided to Ministry of Transport officials on 15 February.
Climate Priorities Ministers Group	26 March	PM, Ministers of Climate Change, Finance, Infrastructure, Energy, Transport, Local Government, Agriculture, Forestry, Trade, Foreign Affairs and others tbc	This is the first meeting of this Group, which is chaired by the PM. Indicative agenda items include: terms of ref for the Group; overview of domestic and international obligations; draft Roadmap to 2050; progress to develop an adaptation framework for NZ.
Meeting with Transmission Gully post-construction reviewers	10 April	Steve Richards, Reviewer (NineSquared) and Lindsay Crossen, Peer Reviewer (Lincross Contracting)	A briefing on the TG post-construction review was delivered 14 December [TW-2023-308].
US Court meeting with Hon Erica Stanford	tbc	Mr Court and Hon Standford	Mr Court will meet with Hon Standford to discuss his education infrastructure, and funding and financing delegations. We will provide a background aide memoire.
Request for meeting with the Minister of Regional Development to discuss infrastructure-related aspects of RM reform	tbc	Infrastructure Commission officials – Alan Bollard, Ross Copland	Meeting requested following RM Ministers meeting on 20 February. Minister's office to organise. We have been asked to provide an agenda.

[Note that, due to timeframes, Written and Oral Parliamentary questions and media requests will be provided directly to the Minister's office and not signalled in this report.]

## Appendix A: List of upcoming reports and publications

We investigate a range of topics to help build the capability and performance of the infrastructure system and to support discussions with the sector. We publish reports that we commission or author ourselves – including research insights, ‘deep dive’ inquiries, project reviews, economic analysis, and policy insights. The list below sets out our current programme of reports. We provide the Minister’s office with a heads-up before publishing.

Topic / Title	Type of report	Intended publication date	What this report or publication covers
Local government financing in New Zealand (Research Insights paper)	Research Insight	Week beginning 25 March	<p>The paper provides historical context on local government’s use of debt for infrastructure investment, describes current local government financing mechanisms, and provides information on councils’ current debt levels, debt capacity, and cost of capital.</p> <p>An aide memoire providing a heads-up on this work was provided to the Minister on 19 December [TW-2023-332 refers]. A further aide memoire attaching the draft report for feedback was delivered on 6 March [TW-2024-362 refers].</p>
Potential sites for aggregate extraction in fast growing regions	Research report	April 2024	<p>This work is being undertaken by GNS and is intended to provide useful spatial planning information to inform local government integrated planning. The product will provide geospatial information on potential aggregate sources in four regions: Auckland, Wellington, Tauranga and Queenstown where supply is currently constrained. Between now and publication we are engaging with the relevant local government agencies and MBIE, and then with the quarrying sector, to ensure the final product is fit for purpose. The published geospatial data will be hosted by GNS with free password protected access for users.</p>
Māori engagement in Infrastructure	Research report	May	<p>This work aims to deliver on a recommendation in the New Zealand Infrastructure Strategy for a ‘state of play’ of Māori engagement for infrastructure. It includes both a report into Māori engagement on projects initiated by infrastructure</p>

			providers as well as a summary of the history of Māori experiences of infrastructure.
Asset management maturity across the public sector	Research report	Q2	This report looks at the maturity of New Zealand's system settings to ensure that we have the appropriate skills, processes, and funding in place to look after and be a good steward of New Zealand's infrastructure.
Approaches to Infrastructure Pricing Study	Research Insight	Q2	This is part of a programme of work to develop an economic framework for pricing infrastructure across four sectors – land transport, water, telco and energy. Research to be published includes current pricing analysis done by PwC.
Transmission Gully post-construction review	Project review	Q1/Q2 2024	In August 2020, the Government directed us to oversee an independent review of how the Transmission Gully Project was commissioned. When this was released in April 2021, we were instructed to do a further review once the project was complete. While we expected to have the review finalised in late 2022, the project's construction is not yet technically complete. However, the post-construction review is ready for publication if/when the Minister agrees. A briefing on this was provided to the Minister on 14 December [TW-2023-308 refers].
			[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)
Paying for infrastructure – Deep dive topic	Research report	Q2 2024	Final report of deep dive summarising key findings and recommendations from project and supplementary reports.
Monitoring progress against Infrastructure Strategy	Monitoring report	Q2 2024	This report will show progress against the New Zealand Infrastructure Strategy's 68 recommendations. This report will meet the monitoring requirements spelled out in our SPE.

[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
Insurance of infrastructure against natural disasters (June quarter 2024 Research Insights paper)	Research Insight	TBC 2024	<p style="text-align: right;">s9(2)(g)(i)</p> <p>This report is expected to provide information on current approaches to insuring infrastructure assets, across multiple networks, against natural disasters. It will also explore the economic consequences of different approaches to insurance or self-insurance.</p>