

Infrastructure weekly update

For the week starting 10 March 2025



To: Hon Chris Bishop, Minister for Infrastructure

Minister's comments:

Table of Contents

1. Actions arising from previous meetings	2
2. Key issues and updates	3
2.1. National Infrastructure Plan (NIP)	3
2.2. Infrastructure perspective on Resource Management Reform.....	4
2.3. Strategic Issues Letter and 3-year Business Plan.....	4
2.4. Upcoming events	4
3. Upcoming advice	8
3.1. Upcoming briefings and aides memoire for the Minister	8
3.2. Upcoming briefings and aides memoire for the Parliamentary Under-Secretary.....	9
3.3. Monitoring and performance reports.....	9
3.4. Upcoming Cabinet papers.....	10
3.5. Ministerial Official Information Act requests	11
3.6. Departmental Official Information Act requests	11
3.7. Upcoming proactive releases.....	12
3.8. Upcoming Ministerial meetings.....	12
3.9. Upcoming meetings for the Parliamentary Under-Secretary.....	13
Appendix A: List of upcoming reports and publications.....	14

1. Actions arising from previous meetings

Meeting date	Agreed action	By whom	By when	Status
None				

2. Key issues and updates

2.1. National Infrastructure Plan (NIP)

Engagement

On 4 March, we had an initial meeting with representatives who have experience in both te ao Māori and infrastructure delivery to discuss the establishment of a Māori advisory group to support the development of the NIP and the Commission's wider work programme.

On 5 March, we held our standing meeting with the Government Agency Forum. Comprised of core infrastructure policy and delivery agencies, the purpose of the forum is to provide coordination across the different agencies in the development of the NIP.

We are continuing to engage with a range of stakeholders on individual workstreams, including the needs analysis, the Infrastructure Priorities Programme and the National Infrastructure Pipeline, to support the development of the NIP.

Infrastructure Priorities Programme (IPP) update

We have appointed five leading infrastructure experts as an independent review panel for the IPP. The five independent reviewers bring expertise in infrastructure economics, engineering, governance and investment appraisals. They will review the assessments made by the Commission and make recommendations before assessments are released.

The independent review panel is an important part of making sure the IPP processes are independent, robust and follow best practice.

The five review panel members are:

- **Anna Chau:** Anna is one of Australia's foremost infrastructure economists, specialising in investment appraisals, business case evaluations, and assurance. As Infrastructure Australia's Executive Director of Project Advisory, Anna was responsible for the development and delivery of the annual Infrastructure Priority List, which included chairing the Assessment Panel that recommended projects to the Board for inclusion on the List.
- **David Carter:** David is a highly experienced engineer with a diverse sector background spanning water, industrial, energy, airports and roading. He has worked both in New Zealand and internationally and is experienced with a range of project delivery mechanisms. He holds several strategic roles, including Executive Chair of Beca, a Guardian of both the Aotearoa Circle and Koi Tū, and Chair of The University of Auckland Foundation. He has a PhD in Geotechnical Engineering from UC Berkeley and received the award for Outstanding Leadership and Contribution to Infrastructure at Building Nations 2024.
- **Mike Underhill (Ngāti Raukawa):** Mike is a well-regarded governance and energy expert. He has decades of experience in infrastructure and asset management across a range of industries, including as Chief Executive of several energy businesses in both the private and public sectors. He has a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering and a Masters of Economics (Hons) from Canterbury University, and is a graduate of Harvard Business School. Mike is a Distinguished Fellow of Engineering NZ and lives at Ōtaki Beach.
- **Steve Richards:** Steve Richards is a well-known expert in infrastructure assessment, review and assurance, with significant experience including major reviews and Gateway reviews throughout Australia's infrastructure sector. These included leading reviews of major road and rail projects under the Australian government's \$100 billion/10-year Infrastructure Investment Programme.

In New Zealand, he led interim and post-construction reviews of Transmission Gully. He is currently assisting the Ministry of Education as Independent Quality Advisor for the PPP Schools Expansion Programme, on commercial negotiations and programme governance. Steve holds degrees in commerce and teaching (University of Queensland), and lives in Australia.

- Stuart Donovan:** Stuart is a highly regarded urban economist with expertise advising large public-sector organisations on the economics of infrastructure, particularly transport and urban development. Over the last two decades, Stuart has contributed to research and major projects across Australasia. More recently, Stuart was appointed to the Housing Expert Advisory Group, advising the New Zealand Government on its “Going for Housing Growth” programme. Stuart is a Senior Fellow at Motu Research in Wellington, having recently returned to New Zealand from Australia. Originally trained in engineering science, Stuart now holds a PhD in economics from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

Peter Nunns, General Manager, Strategy

2.2. Infrastructure perspective on Resource Management Reform

We are proposing to discuss s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i) at your Infrastructure officials’ meeting on 20 March. We will provide you with a short aide memoire ahead of this meeting that identifies the reforms that are most important for the infrastructure system. This will augment the briefing we recently provided, on your request, that summarises the Commission’s views on the Expert Advisory Group’s blueprint for RM reform [TW-2025-538 refers].

In addition to inputting to the Ministry for the Environment’s work s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i), we will provide you with independent Infrastructure Portfolio advice from time to time to inform your RM reform decisions.

Barbara Tebbs, General Manager, Policy

2.3. Strategic Issues Letter and 3-year Business Plan

We have received your updated Letter of Expectations and are preparing the Strategic Issues letter, which is on-track to be delivered to your office on the due date of 14 March. We have discussed our draft 3-year Business Plan with the Monitor and the feedback has been positive regarding the scope and level of detail in the plan. We will be delivering the final version of the 3-year business plan to you by 31 March, with the scope and detail as agreed with the Monitor.

Vanisa Dhiru, General Manager, Corporate (Operations)

2.4. 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)
Infrastructure Resilience Conference (Auckland)	18 March	Peter Nunns, GM – Strategy, has been asked to speak at a conference session on ‘resilience in interconnected infrastructure networks’ this is being hosted by Infrastructure New Zealand. Minister Bishop is also presenting and we are preparing speech notes.

Event	Event date	Description (attending/presenting/purpose)
Leaning into Asset Management Planning in 2025 – SPM Assets (Auckland)	20 March	Geoff Cooper, CE, will be providing a presentation at this event with time for questions.
Infrastructure Leaders Network (ILN) (Online masterclass)	25 March	Graeme Newton, CE of Cross River Rail (Brisbane), will speak project directors about driving innovation.
Asset Management Community of Practice (Wellington)	27 March	We are partnering with Āpōpō to host a Community of Practice for Public Service Asset Managers.
Research Insights report on the fiscal returns of infrastructure investment (Webinar)	4 April	Graham Campbell, Principal Economist – Strategy, will provide an overview on this research report that is being published late March (more detail in Appendix A).
Construction Clients' Group seminar (Wellington)	10 April	Peter Nunns, GM – Strategy, will be presenting an update on the development of the draft National Infrastructure Plan.
Presentation to Transport Accident Investigation Commission (Wellington)	29 April	Geoff Cooper, CE, has been asked to present to the Commissioners and Executive Leadership Team of the Transport Accident Investigation Commission.
LGNZ All-of-local government meeting – focus on infrastructure (Wellington)	1 May (tbc)	Peter Nunns, GM – Strategy, will be sharing findings from 'Nation Building: 150 Years of Infrastructure Networks', which will be published that day.
Annual Āpōpō Congress (Christchurch)	14-16 May	The theme for the conference this year is 'Delivering infrastructure value'. We are currently confirming who from the Commission will be speaking at the Congress.
NZTA Pavements Conference (Christchurch)	9-11 June	Peter Nunns, GM – Strategy, has been asked to speak at the 22nd NZTA Pavements Conference. This year's theme is 'the Next Generation – Pavements and People'.
WasteMINZ Conference (Christchurch)	10-12 June	Peter Nunns, GM – Strategy, has been asked to speak at the WasteMINZ annual conference.
Infrastructure Commission Symposium (Wellington)	25 June	We will be holding our annual symposium in the Beehive Banquet Hall on this date. We will be confirming speakers over the coming months. s9(2)(f)(iv)
Infrastructure Leaders Network (ILN) Meet-Up (Wellington)	26 June (tbc)	The agenda is currently being developed and will continue to focus on fostering leadership, capability, and collaboration across the infrastructure sector. Please let us know if you wish to attend.
QuarryNZ Conference (Hamilton)	9-11 July	Geoff Cooper, CE, has been asked to speak this conference. The theme for this year is 'The future is now: Empowering the next generation of quarry professionals'.

Event	Event date	Description (attending/presenting/purpose)
IPWEA Conference (Sydney)	25-28 August	Geoff Cooper, CE, is a keynote speaker at this event. The theme of the conference this year is 'Shaping Tomorrow's World'.

Below is a list of some of the additional external events that will be coming up this year that have an infrastructure focus. This list is not exhaustive and will continue to be updated.

Event	Event date	Organiser and event description
Infrastructure Resilience Conference (Auckland)	18 March	Infrastructure New Zealand's Infrastructure Resilience Conference.
Downstream Conference (Christchurch)	20-21 March	The energy sector's annual conference.
New Zealand Planning Institute Conference (Invercargill)	26-28 March	Annual conference.
Stormwater Conference (Rotorua)	13-15 May	Annual conference organised by Water NZ.
Creating Great Communities Forum (Wellington)	28-29 May	Event held by Taituarā, a membership organisation for professionals working in local government.
Infrastructure Sustainability Council Connect Conference (Auckland)	24 -25 June	Annual event for private and public sector members, with a focus on advancing sustainability. A New Zealand event was not held last year.
SuperLocal Conference (Christchurch)	16-17 July	Organised by Local Government New Zealand. We have had initial conversations with LGNZ about speaking opportunities at this conference but have not yet confirmed.
Building Nations 2025 (Wellington)	6-7 August	A vision for New Zealand hosted by Infrastructure New Zealand.
IPWEA International Public Works Conference (Sydney)	25-28 August	International conference.
NZ Wind Energy Association Summit (Wellington)	26-28 August	Annual conference.
Taituarā Conference 2025 (Christchurch)	3-5 September	Annual conference.
Electricity Engineer's Association (Christchurch)	9-11 September	Annual conference
Constructive Forum (Auckland)	11-12 September	Annual conference for the construction industry.
NZ Airports Hui (Blenheim)	6-8 October	Conference held by the NZ Airports Association.
IWA-Aspire Conference and Water New Zealand	20-24 October	Joint event held by International Water Association (IWA) and Water New Zealand. The theme is

Event	Event date	Organiser and event description
Conference & Expo 2025 (Auckland)		"Empowering Tomorrow: Smart Water Solutions for Resilient Communities."
Annual roading sector conference (Hamilton)	19-20 November	Annual conference.

Vanisa Dhiru, General Manager, Corporate (Operations)

3. Upcoming advice

3.1. Upcoming briefings and aides memoire for the Minister

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

Topic and tracking number	Date due to your office	What this advice covers	Deadline for Minister’s feedback
Future of the Census [TW-2024-525]	Sent 19 December	Provides advice on the letter to the Minister for Infrastructure from the Minister of Statistics of 7 November, with proposed changes relating to the future of census.	Ahead of Cabinet consideration in March 2025
Update on National Infrastructure Plan work on resilience to natural hazards [TW-2025-542]	13 March	Provides an overview of recent work on natural hazards and how this can be included in the National Infrastructure Plan.	tbc
s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i)			
Delivering the Draft National Infrastructure Plan	20 March	Provides detail of the steps to deliver the Draft NIP to you ^{s9(2)(f)(iv)} updates on cross party engagement plan, options for engaging with your Ministerial colleagues and providing your feedback to the Commission on the Draft NIP.	2 April
Infrastructure Priorities Programme Update	Early April	Overview of Round 1 of the Infrastructure Priorities Programme. We outline our review and sign-out process that we have used to ensure consistency and robustness of assessments, and the proposals that have been assessed in Round 1.	tbc
Briefings re reports and publications			
Research report on the financial returns to infrastructure investment	13 March	Overview of a research report we intend to publish 27 March (further detail is in Appendix A).	tbc

Topic and tracking number	Date due to your office	What this advice covers	Deadline for Minister's feedback
Summary of responses to the discussion document on the National Infrastructure Plan	20 March	Overview of feedback received on the discussion document we released on 5 November 2024. We intend to publish the report the week of 31 March (further detail is in Appendix A).	tbc
Delivering better value and better outcomes: changing practices in infrastructure delivery	27 March	Overview of a report that we intend to publish in April (further detail is in Appendix A).	tbc
Towards better contracts	27 March	Overview of a report that we intend to publish in April (further detail is in Appendix A).	tbc

3.2. Upcoming briefings and aides memoire for the Parliamentary Under-Secretary

We provide advice to Mr Court in line with his delegations from the Minister – both proactively and in response to requests from him. All advice to Mr Court is copied to the Minister.

Topic and tracking number	Date due to your office	What this advice covers	Deadline for USC's feedback
None			

3.3. 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.

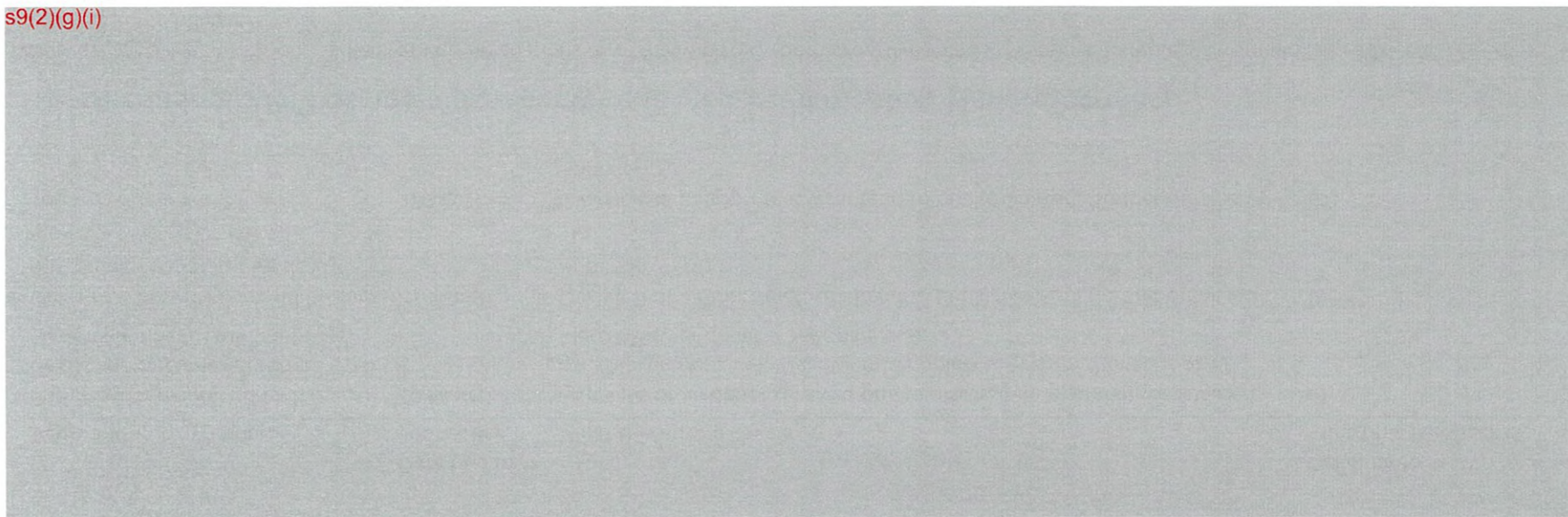
Topic	Date due to your office	What this report covers	Timeline
3-year Business Plan	31 March	The 3-year business plan will include strategic context (including priorities and initiatives); a financial plan including a 3-year forecast, income statement, balance sheet, future funding requirements and forecast allocation of resources against outputs and deliverables, and actions the Commission plans to take to minimise consultancy costs and improve the efficiency of its operations.	Interim information was provided to the Treasury and Minister on 30 September 2024. A final 3-year business plan is due by 31 March 2025.

Topic	Date due to your office	What this report covers	Timeline
Quarterly Report Q3	Before 30 April	Quarterly Performance Reporting as required under the Owners Expectations issued by The Treasury. The report summarises performance against the Commission's Statement of Performance Expectations, highlights major achievements for the quarter, identifies the cause of any major variances, provides an outlook of performance to the end of the year, and signals any developing issues and emerging risks and opportunities.	The report for the quarter 1 January to 31 March 2025 will be due with the Minister/Monitor no later than 30 April 2025.

3.4. Upcoming Cabinet papers

We provide advice to you on upcoming papers that you or your colleagues are taking to Cabinet, where the Infrastructure Commission has provided comment.

s9(2)(g)(i)



3.5. 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
4 March	s9(2)(a)	Copy of briefing titled <i>Health New Zealand Infrastructure Investment Plan</i> [TW-2025-530]	20 March	31 March

3.6. 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 due to send
24 February	s9(2)(a)	Copies of 16 specified documents	24 March
26 February		Use of s23 powers in the <i>New Zealand Infrastructure Commission/Te Waihanga Act 2019</i>	26 March
4 March		Advice relating to the <i>Land Transport Revenue Action Plan: Time of use charging</i> Cabinet paper	1 April
4 March		Information relating to National Infrastructure Plan engagement and Infrastructure Priorities Programme applications	1 April

3.7. Upcoming proactive releases

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

Description	Status	Indicative date to publish
Proactive release of <i>Challenges and opportunities in the transport system</i> [TW-2025-528]	We have consulted with key stakeholders (Treasury, NZTA, MOT, KiwiRail, CRL, Office of the Auditor-General), as they are referenced in the report, that we will be publishing this report. We have provided to the Office a copy of the material proposed to be released.	Week of 17 March
Proactive release of material we prepared for the Transport and Infrastructure Committee briefing on the Northland RONS on 30 January 2025	We have provided a copy of material proposed to be released to the Office and have consulted with the Ministry of Transport and NZTA.	Week of 17 March
Proactive release of weekly updates (October, November, December, January)	We will provide a copy of redacted material proposed to be released to the Office.	To be released in tranches during March and April

3.8. Upcoming Ministerial meetings

Where requested, we provide support for meetings the Minister is attending.

Meeting	Meeting date	Who will be attending/presenting	Comment / action	TW lead
Infrastructure officials meeting	20 March, 10:45-11:30am	Minister, infrastructure officials	Agenda tbc	Geoff Cooper
Infrastructure officials meeting	26 March, tbc	Minister, infrastructure officials	Agenda tbc	Geoff Cooper
Monthly meeting between the Minister and US Court	26 March, 5:15-6:15pm	Minister Bishop and US Court, officials tbc	Agenda tbc	Andy Hagan / Barbara Tebbs
Infrastructure officials meeting	2 April, tbc	Minister, infrastructure officials	Agenda tbc	Geoff Cooper
Infrastructure and Investment Ministers Group (IIMG)	2 April, 7-8pm	Hons Bishop (Chair), Willis, Brown, Jones and US Court	Agenda tbc	Geoff Cooper

Meeting	Meeting date	Who will be attending/presenting	Comment / action	TW lead
Monthly meeting between the Minister and US Court	15 April, 5:15-6:15pm	Minister Bishop and US Court, officials tbc	Agenda tbc	Andy Hagan / Barbara Tebbs

3.9. Upcoming meetings for the Parliamentary Under-Secretary

Where requested, we provide support for meetings US Court is attending.

Meeting	Meeting date	Who will be attending/presenting	Comment / action	TW lead
Monthly meeting between the Minister and US Court	26 March, 5:15-6:15pm	Minister Bishop and US Court, officials tbc	Agenda tbc	Andy Hagan / Barbara Tebbs
Monthly meeting between the Minister and US Court	15 April, 5:15-6:15pm	Minister Bishop and US Court, officials tbc	Agenda tbc	Andy Hagan / Barbara Tebbs

[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
An examination of the fiscal returns to infrastructure investment	Research report	Week of 24 March	This research report will share findings on whether infrastructure-enabled economic or population growth is sufficient to generate revenues to cover the costs of infrastructure provision.
Summary of responses to the discussion document on the National Infrastructure Plan	Report	Week of 31 March	This report will provide an overview of feedback received on our discussion document <i>Testing our thinking: Developing an enduring National Infrastructure Plan</i> . We will share what we’ve learnt and highlight ways the feedback will inform the Plan.
Delivering better value and better outcomes: changing practices in infrastructure delivery	Report	April	Based on best international practice, this report points to ‘lowest price tender’ as generally giving poor long-term outcomes where major projects are concerned. And highlights some delivery principles that will help government become a better infrastructure client when conceiving, designing and building major infrastructure projects.
Towards better contracts	Report	April	Contracts express and drive the relationship between client and delivery partner/s, and as such are a cornerstone of good projects. This report looks at New Zealand government contracting practice and the relationships this drives/supports from the perspective of a number of different agents: client, engineer, lawyer, contractor, etc – highlighting what they’ve said in structured interviews about this.

Topic / Title	Type of report	Intended publication date	What this report or publication covers
Nation building: 150 years of infrastructure investment in New Zealand	Research report	1 May	This report will provide a new long-term database on infrastructure construction prices, infrastructure investment, and size of infrastructure networks, broken down by infrastructure sector. The report will be an important background paper for the Infrastructure Needs Analysis work that is being done as part of the development of the National Infrastructure Plan. We are working with LGNZ to present some of the findings of this report at their all-of-local government meeting on 1 May as part of our publication launch.

