

# Infrastructure weekly update

For the week starting 8 April 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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s9(2)(f)(iv)

# 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	Completed – you have agreed that the national infrastructure plan will be a ‘strategy report’ in line with the Act (see item 2.2 below)
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 15 April.
11 December	Provide advice on improving Government information in the Infrastructure Pipeline	TW	Sent 27 March	Completed [TW-2024-379 refers]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
25 March	Prepare a paper for the first joint Infrastructure Ministers group meeting on 9 April, on next steps for agency input to the 30-year plan	TW	Sent 27 March	Completed [TW-2024-379 refers]

s9(2)(f)(iv)



- what functions and form the NIA should have to help bridge the gap between the current state and desired future state.

On 2 April, the Panel also held brief stakeholder interviews with the NZ Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi), Rau Paenga, Health NZ, Ministry of Health, Treasury, Crown Infrastructure Partners and the Commission to get a better understanding of the existing roles and responsibilities of Crown infrastructure entities, including any duplication and/or performance issues. This ‘lite’ system review will help inform the establishment of the NIA as well as any proposed changes to existing agencies. The Panel will have their final meeting on 11 April.

In response to the Panel’s advice, the Commission and the Treasury will provide you with our joint view on these matters by the **week of 29 April**.

*Rebecca Robertshawe, General Manager Delivery (Acting)*

### 2.3. New Dunedin Hospital –

[Redacted content]

s9(2)(g)(i)

[Redacted content]

*Rebecca Robertshawe, General Manager Delivery (Acting)*

### 2.4. Technical notes to support the ‘What’s Fair’ deep dive work programme

In June 2023 we published a report “How much do we pay for infrastructure? Household expenditure on infrastructure services” [TW2023/254 refers] using data from Statistics New Zealand’s Household Economic Survey (HES). We have conducted further analysis and produced three technical notes which expand on findings from the initial report. We intend to publish these technical notes on our website on or after 15 April 2024:

- **Updated estimates of the income elasticity of household infrastructure expenditure:** Our initial report estimated income elasticity of demand for household infrastructure spending. In this technical note we refined these estimates. We found that including permanent income (what people expect to earn on average over the longer run) has a stronger influence on infrastructure spending than current income. s9(2)(f)(iv)
- **Drivers of household expenditure on infrastructure – An analysis of the factors that explain variations in household infrastructure spending:** Our initial report identified variations in infrastructure spending between notionally similar types of households. In this technical note we analysed factors influencing these spending disparities. We found the variables most strongly influencing household infrastructure spending were after-tax income, non-capital item expenditure (a proxy for permanent income), local authority rates paid, and car ownership.

- **Māori infrastructure expenditure on infrastructure services:** Our initial report found that New Zealand households spend an average of 16% of their income on infrastructure. In this technical note we examined Māori household expenditure and overall found no statistically significant difference in infrastructure spending between Māori and non-Māori households.

We can share these technical reports with your office ahead of publication, if desired.

*Geoff Cooper, General Manager Strategy*

## 2.5. Proactive release of advice on fast-track consenting

You will be receiving a briefing from the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) on 8 April in response to your decision to proactively release all advice on the Fast Track Approvals Bill from agencies to Ministers delegated to make decisions on the Bill. Our advice to you is captured by this process.

The advice proposed for release indicates our in-principle support for a fast track, and a one-stop-shop approach. The main areas where our advice differs from final decisions relates to the role of decision-makers (Expert Panel/Ministers), and the scope and purpose (where we argued for a narrower focus on significant infrastructure projects for public benefit, and greater reference back to the RMA and Covid Fast Track procedures.)

We will support your office with any questions about the proactive release of this advice.

*Barbara Tebbs, General Manager, Policy*

## 2.6. Select Committee consideration of the Fast Track Approvals Bill

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) has met with us and intends to formally request our advice on the Fast Track Approvals Bill to help inform his submission to the Environment Select Committee (due by 19 April).

The Commission is not intending to provide a formal submission to the Select Committee, given our role in providing advice as part of the policy development process. We support our advice being proactively released in time to support the Select Committee in their deliberations. We also note that the PCE has indicated he will likely recommend that the Select Committee request to meet with us.

*Barbara Tebbs, General Manager, Policy*

## 2.7. RMA Amendment Bill #2

Thank you for your feedback on our briefing on infrastructure priorities of RMA Amendment Bill #2. As indicated, we will work with MfE and do some targeted testing with infrastructure providers in the time available. We note your particular interest in [REDACTED]

s9(2)(f)(iv)

*Barbara Tebbs, General Manager, Policy*

## 2.8. 'Before the Deluge 2.0' business case and links to the Regional Infrastructure Fund

On Monday 8 April, you are scheduled to meet with Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) and Environment Canterbury (ECan) alongside the Minister for Regional Development and his Associate Minister. GWRC and ECan are re-presenting a business case titled 'Before the Deluge 2.0' prepared by Te

Uru Kahika, the collective representing 16 regional councils and unitary authorities. The business case seeks a 60% Crown contribution (\$197m) through the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF). We have contributed to a briefing prepared by Kānoa, the Regional Economic Development and Investment Unit within MBIE.

We support Crown investments in proactive resilience where net benefits can be demonstrated and note no Central Government agency has fully assessed this business case, nor the 80 individual flood protection projects it proposes. We support Kānoa's recommendation to defer any funding commitment until after the RIF has been formally established, the investment criteria finalised, and the business case assessed.

Cabinet will shortly consider a paper from Minister Jones on the RIF (scheduled to go to ECO on 10 April and Cabinet on 15 April).

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We can support you with advice on these settings and investment criteria in line with investment principles in the Infrastructure Strategy. s9(2)(f)(iv)

*Barbara Tebbs, General Manager, Policy*

## 2.9. Update from DPMC: Briefings with Ministers on work to enhance critical infrastructure resilience

As per your request of 26 February, on 2 April officials met with the Minister for Regulation (Seymour) and Minister for Regional Development (Jones) to brief them on the work DPMC is leading to enhance the resilience of New Zealand's critical infrastructure system.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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

On 9 April, officials will be meeting with Minister Brown to provide the same briefing. This reflects the significant implications of this work for his Energy, Local Government and Transport portfolios. We expect Minister Brown to be particularly focussed on the cost implications of reform, particularly for local and central government, who own significant critical infrastructure assets in the water and transport sectors and face funding constraints.

Finally, ahead of Cabinet's planned consideration of the release of a Discussion Document on this work in May, we would also recommend briefing the Minister for State Owned Enterprises (Hon Goldsmith), Minister for Media and Communications (Hon Lee) and the Minister of Climate Change (Hon Watts) on DPMC's work. Subject to your approval, we will work with your Office to arrange these sessions.

*Ryan Walsh, DPMC*

## 2.10. 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)
OECD Infrastructure Week, Paris	8-12 April	Includes PPP network and inaugural meeting of OECD Delivery network. Richard Wall, senior advisor, is attending in person.
Transparency International NZ Public Sector Leaders Integrity Forum	9 April	Ross Copland will speak about the findings of a Massey University report commissioned by Te Waihanga (published in August 2023) to look at the transparency of large public infrastructure projects.
Combined Local Government Sector Meeting – LGNZ	11 April	Geoff Cooper, General Manager Strategy, will be speaking about the National Infrastructure Plan and Infrastructure Priority List
Metro Sector Panel Discussion – LGNZ	12 April	Geoff Cooper, General Manager Strategy, will join other panellists to discuss local government financing.
IPWEA International Public Works Conference	30 April – 3 May	Ross Copland, Chief Executive, will be presenting at this event.
Infrastructure Commission Symposium	9 May	A number of Commission staff will be speaking about their research and findings.
Wellington Regional Leadership Committee Seminar	15 May	Geoff Cooper, General Manager Strategy, will be presenting on findings from some of the Commission’s recent research.
Āpōpō Congress on Asset Management	21 and 22 May	Peter Nunns, Director – Economics, will be presenting on findings from some of Commission’s recent research on 21 May. On 22 May, Ross Copland, Chief Executive, will be moderating a discussion panel.
Auckland-based Infrastructure Leaders Network Meet-Up	14 June (8am-12pm)	This event will be based on the successful format of the inaugural Meet-up in Wellington in February. We are working with your offices on whether you would be available to attend/speak.

Responsible GM: Anna Moodie

## 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 <a href="#">tracking number</a>	Date due to your office	What this advice covers	Deadline for Minister’s feedback
Information required to support development of the National Infrastructure Plan [TW-2024-379]	Sent 27 March	Sets out the proposed approach and content of letters for sign out and distribution by Ministers to infrastructure agencies, to set out expectations for information to support development of the NIP. s9(2)(g)(i)	Ahead of the meeting of the Infrastructure and Investment Ministers Group on 9 April
New Dunedin Hospital [REDACTED]	Sent 28 March s9(2)(f)(iv)	[REDACTED]	5 April
Plan for development of the 30-year infrastructure plan	See item 2.1 above	Sets out a project plan detailing actions and milestones for development of the 30-year infrastructure plan.	n/a
Meeting with Equity AI	5 April	Equity AI is meeting with you on 9 April to discuss Big Data, affordable housing and New Zealand.	9 April
Initial briefing to support the Minister’s regular meetings with LGNZ	12 April	A ‘setup’ briefing to support the Minister’s regular monthly meetings with Local Government New Zealand, beginning 16 April. Will outline the context of infrastructure in local government, and identify a small number of key issues that the Minister could seek to advance through this engagement process	16 April
National Infrastructure Agency (NIA)	Week of 29 April	The Commission and the Treasury will provide you with a joint briefing in response to the Expert Panel’s advice to you.	n/a

Briefings re reports and publications			
Draft Infrastructure Strategy Monitoring report [TW-2024-378]	Sent 27 March	Seeks the Minister's feedback on the draft report by 12 April. The report will be released at the Symposium on 9 May.	12 April
Technical notes to support the 'What's Fair' deep dive work programme	See item 2.4 above	Informs you of our plan to publish three technical notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income elasticity of demand for infrastructure</li> <li>• Drivers of infrastructure spend</li> <li>• Māori infrastructure expenditure</li> </ul>	For publication the week beg 15 April
Policy papers relating to the 'What's Fair' deep dive work programme	6 May	Informs you of our plan to publish a final report and three policy papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final report – <i>Paying for infrastructure: What's fair? Insights, findings and recommendations</i></li> <li>• Supplementary papers:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>How various pricing policies affect households across different income levels</i></li> <li>– <i>Pricing policy simulations</i></li> <li>– <i>Access and quality of four networked infrastructure services</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	For publication the week beg 20 May
Approaches to infrastructure pricing – research report	May	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. 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 <a href="#">tracking number</a>	Date due to your office	What this advice covers	Deadline for US's feedback
Meeting with Minister of Defence	Sent 4 April	Talking points to support your meeting with Hon Penk at 9am on 5 April	5 April

### 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.

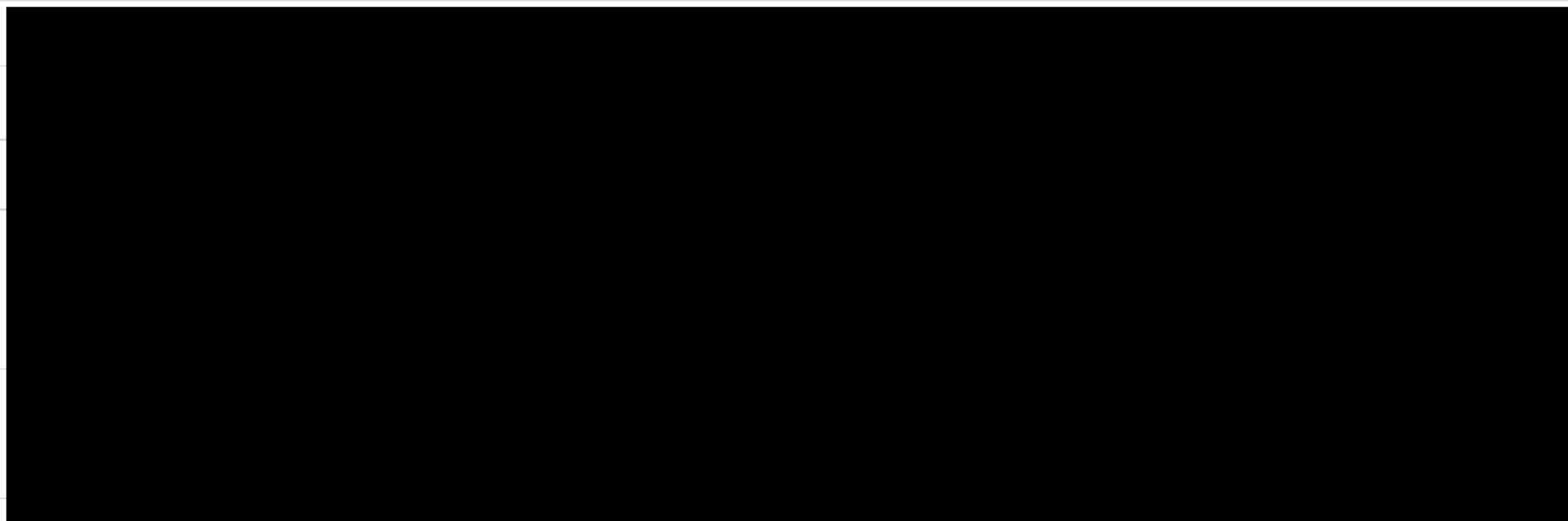
Topic	Date due to your office	What this report covers	Timeline
Infrastructure Strategy Monitoring Report	Sent 28 March	Reports on progress in delivering actions and outcomes signalled in the NZ Infrastructure Strategy.	For release and discussion at the May Symposium
Third quarter report for 2023/24	30 April	Reports on progress against measures in the Commission's Statement of Performance Expectations for 2023/24	N/A

### 3.4. 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]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

s9(2)(g)(i)



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
29 February	[REDACTED]	Request for a number of specific briefings provided to the Minister for Infrastructure between 1 December 2023 and 15 February 2024	Sent 14 March 2024	25 March 2024
1 March	s9(2)(a) [REDACTED]	Request for 2 specific briefings provided to the Minister for Infrastructure dated 19 February disclosed under WPQ 927 (2024)	Sent 8 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)	Sent 21 March 2024	3 April 2024

27 March	[REDACTED]	Request for a number of specific briefings provided to the Minister for Infrastructure between 29 February-6 March as disclosed under WPQ 2247 (2024)	16 April	26 April 2024
s9(2)(a)	[REDACTED]			
3 April	[REDACTED]	Copies of specific briefings provided to the Minister for Infrastructure	19 April	1 May 2024

### 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
14 March	Being coordinated by the Ministry for the Environment	Proactive release of documents relating to Fast Track Consenting	Asap
4 April	s9(2)(a) [REDACTED]	Information regarding expenditure on public relations and communications support by the Infrastructure Commission	3 May

### 3.7. Upcoming Ministerial meetings

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

Meeting	Meeting date	Who will be attending/presenting	Comment / action
Discussion re Before the Deluge report	8.30am, 8 April	Ministers Bishop, Jones, and Mitchell; officials from GWRC and ECAN	The purpose of the meeting is to discuss flood management and the <a href="#">Before the Deluge report</a> . We provided input to Kānoa (MBIE), alongside MfE and DPMC (critical infrastructure resilience team), to a briefing for Ministers – see item 2.8 above.
Infrastructure and Investment Ministers Group	9 April	Ministers Bishop (Chair), Willis, Brown, Goldsmith, Jones and Mr Court	Tsy has offered to prepare an annotated agenda if needed. They will provide the agenda and papers on

			28 March for circulation to Ministers on 4 April. TW will prepare a short note on agency input to development of the 30-year infrastructure plan.
Meeting with Equity AI	3.15pm, 9 April	Minister Bishop and Matthew Webster, Equity AI	Equity AI has asked to discuss Big Data, affordable housing and New Zealand. We will prepare an aide memoire with background information and talking points.
Meeting with Transmission Gully post-construction reviewers	15 April	Steve Richards, Reviewer (NineSquared) and Lindsay Crossen, Peer Reviewer (Lincross Contracting), Rebecca Robertshawe and Brendan Herder (Infracom) and representatives from NZTA	A briefing on the TG post-construction review was delivered 14 December [TW-2023-308].
Meeting with Infrastructure Expert Advisory Panel	29 April (tbc)	Minister, IEAP	To discuss the IEAP's draft report

[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.]

### 3.8. Upcoming meetings for the Parliamentary Under-Secretary

Where requested, we provide support for meetings US Court is attending (in addition to those he attends with the Minister, above).

Meeting	Meeting date	Who will be attending/presenting	Comment / action
Meeting with Hon Penk, Minister of Defence	5 April	Mr Court and Hon Penk	We provided talking points on 4 April.

## 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
Potential sites for aggregate extraction in fast growing regions	Research report	May 2024	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.
Approaches to Infrastructure Pricing Study	Research Insight	Q2 2024	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	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].	
				s9(2)(f)(iv)
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.	
				s9(2)(g)(i)
Insurance of infrastructure against natural disasters	Research Insight	Q3/Q4 2024	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.	

s9(2)(f)(iv)