

The Treasury

Submissions on a New Independent Infrastructure Body Information Release

February 2019

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[1] 9(2)(a) - to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people;

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RUAPEHU DISTRICT COUNCIL

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To: The Treasury
infrastructure@treasury.govt.nz

Subject: **Independent Infrastructure Body – Submission from Ruapehu District Council**

Submission from: Ruapehu District Council
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GROUP MANAGER CUSTOMER SERVICES

[1]

Council does not wish to speak in support of its submission.

1 GENERAL COMMENTS

The Ruapehu District Council (RDC) appreciates the opportunity to submit on the Independent Infrastructure Body.

The Ruapehu District is a predominantly rural District with significant tracts of agriculture, forestry, conservation and defense estates, as well as a rapidly growing tourism industry. The District has a low usually resident population of about 11,844 people with large increases in the population during winter and increasingly over the summer months.

The peak population is estimated to be about 22,000 at some times of the year.

The Ruapehu District ... where adventure begins!



The Ruapehu District covers a large land area (673,019ha), 36% of which is Crown owned. About 45% of Councils budget is spent on roading and transport. This is well above the national average.

Despite having a small population we deal with a number of the growth related issues, for example:

- (a) Development pressure around Ohakune and National Park (including pressure on existing infrastructure), and in the surrounding rural areas e.g. around Tongariro National Park.
- (b) High peak demands on infrastructure associated with tourism (At the peak of the ski season there can be as many as 7,500 people skiing on Mount Ruapehu. The two closest towns National Park and Ohakune have a normally resident population of 240 and 1,000 respectively).
- (c) Protection of outstanding landscape.

2 SUBMISSION

This submission from Ruapehu District Council (RDC) has taken into account the Local Government New Zealand) (LGNZ) submission.

RDC supports the submission presented by LGNZ and wishes this support to be noted.

RDC agrees with LGNZ that the current planning and monitoring environment is complicated across government agencies and organisations and in particular agrees with the following statement *“adding a new, independent body to aid in the delivery of badly needed infrastructure holds promise, but if not executed with precision and accuracy, could add to a very complicated and opaque process.”*

1. Options for institutional form and powers of the infrastructure body?

RDC supports LGNZ submission on this question.

RDC also believes that Infrastructure investment should be lead by a core, independent non partisan, board to ensure they are guided by expertise and capability, including operations capability, and knowledge of Local Government. Driving and sustaining growth in New Zealand is critical for the prosperity of NZ.

2. How the infrastructure body’s role will fit with the wider infrastructure system?

RDC supports LGNZ comments on this question

RDC acknowledges that NZTA and REG group have done a large amount of work on providing best practice and guidance documents for procurement and evidence based asset investment approaches and would like to see this body incorporate this lead.

RDC is also in support of the proposed pipeline of work.

3. Arrangements for ensuring the infrastructure body is mandated appropriately so it can perform its role, while recognising the ultimate responsibility of governments to make decisions on infrastructure and investments?

RDC supports LGNZ submission on this question.

In particular RDC strongly supports the following statement

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“It must be an all-of-government leadership initiative, its mission must be premised on filling a gap made clear by circumstance or research revealing a deficiency, and it must confirm that where other, associated efforts in government have been made, organisational design and capability allocated this new body will be fit-for-purpose.”

4. Accountability mechanisms for the Minister for Infrastructure and government to retain control over the Government’s policy direction and prioritisation?

RDC supports LGNZ submission on this question.

5. The overall purpose and objectives of the infrastructure body to ensure it is properly directed toward considering the broader public good benefits of infrastructure?

RDC supports LGNZ submission on this question.

RDC also strongly reiterates that a culture of quality and timely delivery to customers (not government) must be initiated from a governing board and permeate the organisation to ensure success, and must be an essential qualification for leadership and guidance of this new body.

