

APPENDIX – Further information

About Greater Wellington Regional Council

Located in our capital city and including the Wairarapa and Kāpiti Coast, Greater Wellington is one of the largest and most diverse regional councils in New Zealand. We have core roles across environmental protection, public transport provision, regional leadership and co-ordination, and bulk water supply.

Regional councils play a critical role in both emissions reduction and climate change resilience. We have strong partnerships with our territorial authorities and local mana whenua, and we have key roles in both planning and practical implementation.

Greater Wellington has had an evolving formal relationship with six mana whenua partners for over three decades:

- Ngāti Kahungunu represented by Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa;
- Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga represented by Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki;
- Ngāti Toa Rangatira represented by Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Inc.;
- Rangitāne represented by Rangitāne o Wairarapa Inc.
- Taranaki Whānui represented by the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust.
- Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai represented by Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust.

The arrangements include Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resources Plan Committee which was established in 2009 and having mana whenua representatives on various Council Committees including the Long-Term Plan committee as the most recent example.

Due to the Cook Strait ferries we have the highest number of shipping movements in New Zealand. This together with the number of passing ships (both on the NZ coast and vessels passing through Cook Strait) means that our coastline is especially vulnerable to shipping incidents.

Due to its very nature and rapidly changing environmental conditions, Cook Strait is an area where the line between safe travel and disaster can get very narrow.

Issues of significance

1. Invest in the Wellington Single-User Ferry Terminal development.

The Cook Strait crossing is a strategic national asset, extending State Highway One and the Main Trunk Railway between the North and South islands and providing a vital part of New Zealand's transport and tourism infrastructure.

On average each year, the Interislander operates around 3,800 services, transports about 850,000 passengers, 250,000 cars and up to \$14 billion worth of freight, and these numbers are forecast to increase. It also provides a unique New Zealand tourism experience bringing in money, visitors and supporting jobs in Wellington and Waitohi Picton.

The Interislander service is, however, at risk. The current Interislander ferries are nearing the end of their 30-year working lives and the replacement programme is now time critical. As the fleet ages, the ferries struggle to meet modern safety requirements, there are rising maintenance costs, high carbon emissions, sub-standard crew conditions and no capacity for growth or increased profitability.

To address these issues, KiwiRail has ordered two large new rail-enabled ferries due to arrive from 2026. However, the terminal infrastructure in Wellington and Waitohi Picton needs substantial upgrades to bring it up to modern safety standards and to be ready for the new ferries. The new ferries cannot be accommodated by the existing terminal.

This project is about moving away from a state of managed decline to future planning and investment so that New Zealand has a reliable, safe, and resilient Interislander service by the mid-2020s. Government funding is critical to ensuring delivery of this national asset to the appropriate standard.

REQUEST

We ask that Government:

- a) commit to funding the identified cost increases to ensure timely delivery of the Single-User Ferry terminal.

2. Partner with us to accelerate a multi-user ferry precinct.

The Single User Ferry Terminal only provides a short-term transport solution that will reach capacity within a few years from completing construction. This will impede future opportunities for growth. Recognising this, the region has agreed to a Masterplan for expansion to a multi-user facility, which should be accelerated and integrated as soon as possible to achieve the best outcome for NZ.

We would be pleased to discuss the Masterplan with you, to identify how Government support could enable and accelerate this project.

REQUEST

We ask that Government:

- b) partner with us to accelerate a multi-user approach to the ferry precinct development.

3. Need to support out-of-port vessels in the Cook Strait

While a lack of capability has been apparent for many years, the risk to vessels crossing Cook Strait and travelling elsewhere has become apparent in 2023. Serious ferry failures in January and February, the *MV Shiling* incident in May and the domestic cargo freighter *Rangitata* power loss this month have highlighted the ongoing safety concerns for this route and the lack of practical and timely support for these vessels outside of Port areas.

REQUEST

We ask that Government

- c) progresses Maritime New Zealand's recent work to identify solutions for ensuring greater safety for ships, passengers, crew, and cargo crossing the Cook Strait and elsewhere in New Zealand.
- d) Partner with the regional sector so that Harbourmasters can understand the Government's direction and can apply their collective experience towards developing an effective solution.

4. Maritime NZ's need for more maritime inspection capability

Several recent incidents have raised concerns around the quality and safety of many ships operating around the New Zealand's coast, both domestic and international. They present real risk to life and the environment. Generally, there are indications as to which ships are going to be problematic and Maritime NZ's inspection teams must have the capability and capacity to inspect to pick up these issues before accidents happen. Currently, its capacity is well under-strength, and it needs Government support to bring it up to an acceptable level.

REQUEST

We ask that Government

- e) provides increased funding to support Maritime NZ's ship inspection capability and capacity.

5. Consistent rules needed for small boat safety and wearing lifejackets.

Most boating fatalities occur on small boats, and it is well accepted that wearing life jackets saves lives. The national recreational boating rule (Part 91) of the Maritime Rules is out of date and inadequate. There should be a common and fit for purpose set of rules for recreational boating, led out by the Government and Maritime New Zealand.

Instead, we have a fragmented approach across New Zealand, as the task has been passed to Regional Councils through their Navigation Safety Bylaws.

To resolve this situation and create much-needed consistency, Maritime NZ has worked with the Harbourmasters across New Zealand on a fit for purpose set of rules for small boat safety. However, former Ministers have not allowed Maritime NZ to continue with this work.

REQUEST

We ask that Government

- f) supports Maritime NZ to develop and support the implementation of a fit for purpose set of rules for recreational boating, in consultation with the regional sector.