

Rural Bulletin



December 2009

www.ruralwomen.org.nz

Message from the Publisher

Nga mihi mo te wa Kirihimete, me nga mihi mo te Tau Hou

It's time to celebrate Christmas. Seasons greetings to you all

This year has been particularly challenging. You will no doubt be aware of how close the publication came to becoming another casualty of the recession. However, thanks to both our existing and new supporters Rural Bulletin has broadened and blossomed in a way that, we believe, is unique.

Thank you to our very welcome and generous supporters - telecom^{nz}, FarmSafe, Totalspan and Versatile Buildings, Access Homehealth Ltd, TaxRefunds.co.nz, Landcorp, and NZX; and welcome to new supporter Farmside Ltd. We also thank our very generous grantors - NZ Lottery Grants Board, the JR McKenzie Trust, and the Sargood Bequest. And a big thanks to you, our readers, for enabling Rural Bulletin to continue beyond the difficulties the recession has presented.

As part of battling the toughness, the hard decision was made to say goodbye to our hard copies. We were worried about a gap in circulation that could affect people who did not have access to computers.

Well it seems that gap is being filled by you! Many of you have told us that you are taking the time to, and standing the cost of, printing copies of the Rural Bulletin to make sure information does reach more widely into local communities. Thank you, all of you!

Finally, our thanks go to our Editors, Paddy Twist and Craig Matthews, for continuing their sterling efforts in researching and editing the Bulletin to a very high standard.

The next issue of Rural Bulletin will be published in February 2010.

Keep safe and well this summer.

Margaret Chapman

President

Rural Women New Zealand



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Consultation

Official Information Requests

The Law Commission is reviewing the Official Information Act 1982 and the official information section (Parts 1–6) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Acts 1987. The Commission says that both Acts have promoted a culture of openness in Government, but after over 20 years, some aspects are tricky, and the explosion of information technology has complicated things further.

The Commission wants to know what works well, where the problems lie, and what can be done about them - whether by improving processes and practices, or by legislating. The first stage of its review is a survey called "Talk Official Information", which is now up on the Commission's TalkLaw website.

Comments are sought by late January 2010. They can be submitted electronically or sent to Law Commission, PO Box 2590, Wellington 6011. The survey is at www.talklaw.co.nz/talkofficialinformation

Realising NZ's Petroleum Potential

The Government is seeking feedback on an action plan for maximising NZ's petroleum potential, a potential that focuses on exploration of NZ's offshore deepwater basins.

Currently, the petroleum sector accounts for around \$3 billion per annum of NZ's export revenue. If resources in unexplored basins are developed, it is estimated that export revenue could increase to \$30 billion a year in by 2025. Actions in the plan build on work completed to date, ongoing management of the Crown's petroleum estate, and programmes such as the Government's seismic data acquisition programme. They also include positioning the Government as highly supportive of developing NZ's petroleum resources, publicising NZ's petroleum resources to maximise investor interest, and adjusting NZ's regulatory, royalty, and taxation arrangements for petroleum.

You can also comment on five related government-commissioned reports.

Submissions on the plan close on 29 January 2010. Email feedback to petroleum-strategy@med.govt.nz. The plan and background reports are at www.med.govt.nz/petroleum-strategy

Adventure Tourism Review

People interested in the adventure tourism industry are being asked for their views on its safety and the risks involved.

The reviewers have prepared two questionnaires - one for outdoor and commercial sector organisations, and one for individuals. As well as questions about the business practices of adventure and outdoor commercial sector operators, the questionnaires ask for people's views on:

- the strengths and weaknesses of risk management and safety in the sector;
- what is working well;
- what could be improved; and
- the six most important principles that people should work with to manage risks well.

Submissions close on 16 December 2009. The questionnaires can be downloaded from the Department of Labour's website at <http://www.dol.govt.nz/consultation/index.asp>. Email them to AOCsreview@dol.govt.nz or post them to D Mulholland, Project Manager, Workplace Health and Safety Policy, Department of Labour, PO Box 3705, Wellington

Victims' Rights Consultation

A discussion paper on victims' rights in the criminal justice system has been released. Proposals in it include:

- establishing a Victims' Services Centre to coordinate the services available to support victims;
- developing a code of practice outlining agencies' obligations to victims;
- establishing a Victims of Crime Complaints Officer;
- improving the role of victims' role within the criminal justice system;
- allowing victims the right to say and read their Victim Impact Statement in court; and
- improving the Victim Notification System for victims of serious offences.

Submissions close on 31 March 2010. They go to A Focus on Victims of Crime, Ministry of Justice, PO Box 180, Wellington, email VictimsRightsReview@justice.govt.nz "A Focus on Victims of Crime: A Review of Victims' Rights" is at <http://www.justice.govt.nz/policy-and-consultation/victims>

Improving Immunisation Rates

Public submissions are now being invited on an inquiry into how to improve completion rates of childhood immunisation against such diseases as measles, whooping cough, pneumococcal pneumonia, and other common infectious diseases. Immunisation is available at no charge, but many children still contract these diseases.

Submissions close on 12 February 2010. You can submit online. You can also send two copies of written submissions to Committee Secretariat, Health, Parliament Buildings Wellington. The Terms of Reference are at http://www.parliament.nz/NR/rdonlyres/B88E5646-993F-4D48-A42F-38973739A9C7/117558/DBSCH_INQ_9658_Inquiryintohowtoimprovecompletionra.pdf

Treaty Claims Settlement Bills

The **Ngati Apa (North Island) Claims Settlement Bill** outlines the agreement of the Crown and Ngati Apa (North Island) to a final settlement of the Ngati Apa (North Island) historical claims. The Bill is at <http://www.parliament.nz/NR/rdonlyres/36791520-4ADB-4509-86F2-0662F3174E6E/115540/1714NgatiApa1.pdf>

The **Whanganui Iwi (Wanganui (Kaitoke) Prison and Northern Part of Wanganui Forest) On-account Settlement Bill** outlines the agreement between the Crown and Whanganui Iwi to the transfer of assets on account of the settlement of the Whanganui Iwi historical claims. The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2009/0067/4.0/versions.aspx>

Submissions on both Bills close on 15 January 2010. You can make a submission online, or send two copies to the Maori Affairs Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

Asylum Seekers & Human Rights

The Human Rights Commission (HRC) is currently updating its status report on human rights in NZ, as it prepares to develop the second NZ Action Plan for Human Rights next year. A section of the status report is on the right to asylum. The section looks at how that right is provided for in NZ, both in terms of asylum seekers and quota refugees. Your input on the current situation and the ways in which NZ policy and practice could be improved is sought.

Submissions close on 31 December 2009. Email comments to nzdiversity@hrc.co.nz. The 2004 chapter on the right to asylum is at <http://www.hrc.co.nz/report/chapters/chapter12/asylum01.html>

NZFSA: Dairying Standards

NZ's Food Safety Authority has published several discussion papers proposing amendments to some of the dairy "Approved Criteria". These criteria set out the standards for dairy processing. They are used to check that risk management programmes and the people involved with them are meeting the requirements of the Animal Products Act 1999.

Submissions close on 18 December, 2009. They go to Coordinator (Administration), Standards Group, NZFSA, P.O. Box 2835, Wellington, email robyn.scully@nzfsa.govt.nz. More information is at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/consultation/approved-criteria/index.htm>

Settlement Systems: Draft Policy

The Reserve Bank and the Securities Commission have published a draft policy paper for comment called "The Designation and Oversight of Designated Settlement Systems" (DSS1). The paper explains the roles of the Reserve Bank and the Securities Commission in overseeing the settlement systems that have been authorised under the Reserve Bank Act.

*A settlement system is an arrangement for processing settlement instructions, which includes a payment system (the Reserve Bank and the Securities Commission interest is in settlement systems for securities, e.g., futures).

Submissions close on 22 January 2010. They go to S Irvine, Reserve Bank of NZ, PO Box 2498, Wellington 6011, email stuart.irvine@rbnz.govt.nz, or P Nielsen, Securities Commission, PO Box 1179, Wellington 6011, email peter.nielsen@seccom.govt.nz. The discussion paper is at <http://www.sec-com.govt.nz/publications/documents/current-discussion-doc.shtml>

MAF Biosecurity: Onions from China

A proposed amendment to the Import Health Standard for the Importation and Clearance of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables into NZ would require imported processed onions to have their outer layer completely removed before export from China.

Submissions close on 23 December 2009. They go to Plant Imports, Border Standards, MAF Biosecurity NZ, PO Box 2526, Wellington. More is at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/files/biosec/consult/ihs-amendmend-onion-bulbs-from-china.pdf>, email plantimports@maf.govt.nz

National Volunteer Managers Survey

This survey is for anyone involved in managing volunteers. It is being carried out by Victoria University of Wellington and is supported by Volunteering NZ and the Tindall Foundation.

Responses will be used to further develop volunteer management in NZ.

The close-off date for survey responses is 31 January 2010. The survey is at http://vuw.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4ZRur9xLI7UDQw&SVID=Prod. For more information email Nicholas.dutton@vuw.ac.nz, tel (04) 463 5233 extn 8948

Auckland's Public Transport Plan

The Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA) has released the Draft Auckland Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) for public consultation. The aim of this plan is to spell out how ARTA will deliver on the public transport parts of the Auckland Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS). The RLTS calls for a significant increase in investment in public transport over the next 10 years, and outlines policies aimed at guiding the way this spending on public transport is prioritised.

Submissions close on 24 December 2009. Email written submissions to drafrptp@arta.co.nz or submit online at www.arta.co.nz. Copies of the draft strategy are in libraries and councils, or go to www.arta.co.nz

IRD Consultations

Submission closing dates are in brackets:

- draft determination **setting a new rate for "test chambers" in the "Engineering and Electronic Engineering" industry category** applying to assets acquired during the 2009-2010 or subsequent years (29 January 2010);

- draft provisional depreciation determination **setting the rate for "Computer Controlled Tablet Dispensing Systems"** in the "Medical and Medical Laboratory" and "Pharmaceuticals" industry categories. Will apply to assets acquired during the 2009-2010 and subsequent income years (29 January 2010);
- **income tax treatment of commissions** received by life agents on their own life insurance policies and those of associated persons, and **the fringe benefit tax treatment** of discounted life insurance policies received by life agents and associated persons (24 December 2009);
- **deductibility of business relocation costs:** following consultation on an earlier draft the Commissioner has reconsidered the approach taken in the earlier version (24 December 2009); and
- **residential rental properties - depreciation of items of depreciable property:** This interpretation sets out a three-step test the Commissioner will apply to determine whether an residential rental property item can be depreciated separately or whether it should be depreciated as part of the building (18 December 2009).

Email comments to public.consultation@ird.govt.nz. More is at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/public-consultation/>

NZ Place Names

The NZ Geographic Board (NZGB) is consulting on a number of proposals for changes to NZ place names.

Submissions close on 12 February 2010. They go to Secretary for the NZGB, c/- Land Information NZ, PO Box 5501, Wellington 614, email info@linz.govt.nz. The places names are at <http://www.linz.govt.nz/placenames/consultation-decisions/index.aspx>

LINZ Consultations

These include (submission closing dates are in brackets)

- **Hunter Hills pastoral lease** preliminary proposal (21 December 2009);
- **Dunstan Peaks pastoral lease** preliminary proposal (18 January 2010);
- **Temple Peak Station pastoral lease** preliminary proposal (18 January 2010); and
- **Mt Grand pastoral lease** preliminary proposal (5 February 2010).

For more information on each proposal and where to send submissions go to <http://www.linz.govt.nz/about-linz/news-publications-and-consultations/consultation-projects-and-reviews/index.aspx>

Reminders

N-F-P's Financial Reporting Rules: have your say: two discussion papers - one from the Ministry of Economic Development and one from the Accounting Standards Review Board consider the law covering financial reporting of not-for-profit organisations. Submissions close on 29 January 2010. The papers and more information about making a submission are at www.med.govt.nz/templates/StandardSummary_187.aspx or www.asrb.co.nz/on.

Maori Community Development Act: Inquiry - considers intent of the Maori Community Development Act 1962, what "Maori community development" actually means today, and considers the role of the NZ Maori Council, Maori wardens, and Community Officers. Submissions close on 12 February 2010. They can be made online at www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/SC/MakeSub, or two copies can be sent to the Maori Affairs Committee Secretariat, Bowen House, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. More is at <http://www.community.net.nz/communitycentre/news/national/maoridevelopment.htm>

Inquiry: Consequences of Tobacco Use for Maori - focuses on actions of the tobacco industry to promote tobacco use amongst Maori, the impact of tobacco on the health of the Maori population, and the economic, social, cultural, and developmental implications of tobacco use. Submissions close on 29 January. You can submit online or send two copies of your submission to the Maori Affairs Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. More is at http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/SC/MakeSub/2/0/7/49SCMA_SCF_00DBSCH_INQ_9591_1-Inquiry-into-the-tobacco-industry-in.htm

SME's Tax Payments: a report from the NZ Institute of Chartered Accountants (NZICA) and Tax Management NZ looks at the way NZ small businesses (SMEs) calculate and pay tax. The report proposes a "Micro Business Taxation" proposal; and a "Small Business Taxation" proposal. Comments close on 1 February 2010. The report is at <http://www.smetax.co.nz/reports/> and you can post comments on an interactive section of the website or email them to carla.feakin@nzica.com.

Using Methyl Bromide: The Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) has made a preliminary recommendation that methyl bromide be re-approved in the medium term (10 years) for quarantine and pre-shipment purposes only, with tighter controls on its use. Submissions close on 18 December 2009. You can find out more at <http://www.ermanz.govt.nz/news-events/archives/media-releases/2009/mr-20091105.html>

Rural

Rural Property Downs and Ups

REINZ's latest Rural Market Report shows 205 farms sold in the three months to October 2009, down from 390 in the three months to October 2008. Canterbury (31) and Bay of Plenty (28) recorded the greatest number of sales. Twenty farms were sold in Northland, 18 in Waikato and 17 in Auckland. The value of farm prices in a three-year comparison has also dropped in the three months to October 2009 to a national median of \$875,000; compared with \$1,305,000 in the three months to October 2007 and \$1,500,000 in the three months to October 2008.

However, the national median (half are higher and half are lower) selling price for a lifestyle property was well up at \$430,000. This compares to \$428,000 and \$425,278 in the corresponding periods in 2007 and 2008.

More is at http://www.reinz.org.nz/Reinz/index.cfm?C098EA2A-E298-5EDA-3ABC-A2FD95493308&obj_uuid=F99CBA14-18FE-7E88-42CF-DD5FE7ABC909

Varroa Mite Resistance (Auckland)

NZ honey bees are under new threat from the varroa destructor mite following reports of varroa resistance to treatment in the Auckland area, and overseas evidence suggests that as resistance to varroa treatment spreads over the country it will be more difficult for beekeepers to keep their honey bees alive.

Even though resistant varroa have been found in the Auckland area it is very hard to know where they originated and all beekeepers throughout NZ should be vigilant in checking their hives. Beekeepers who notice signs of resistance to varroa treatment in their hives should contact the National Beekeepers Association of NZ (NBA) immediately on 04 4716254 and test their colonies to confirm the diagnosis

Trees for Bees

The Federated Farmers Bee Industry Group has established the "Trees for Bees" programme so bees can gather pollen and nectar, and get the vitamins and minerals they need to maintain optimum hive strength and a viable pollinated bee force. The group is producing brochures, by region, which make suggestions about what you can plant on your farm and along the riparian margins in order to support bee health. The brochures also highlight plants and trees that the bee industry do not want to see planted (for example, Tutin), and also include a list of the plants and trees (by region) banned by regional councils.

You can find out more at <http://www.fedfarm.org.nz/industry/bees>

Rural Women NZ Award 2010

Applications are now open for the RWNZ Enterprising Rural Women Award 2010. This award recognises outstanding rural businesswomen running their own enterprises and celebrates the success of rural women entrepreneurs. Rural businesswomen often have to overcome additional challenges on their path to success, and the finalists will have shown great determination and innovation in creating or developing a successful rural enterprise.

All entrants receive a year's free membership of Rural Women NZ, and are eligible for a free listing in the RWNZ online Business Directory. The awards also represent an opportunity to showcase entrants' businesses through the media.

Finalists from the North and South Islands will each receive trophies and prize money of \$1,000, with a further \$1,000 going to the overall winner.

Entries close on 17 February 2010. The winner will be announced at the opening of the RWNZ National Conference in Oamaru on 24 May 2010. More information/entry forms are available on the RWNZ website at <http://www.ruralwomen.org.nz>

Safety Makes Business Sense

Running a farm often involves managing a lot of risks including the possibility of injury to yourself or staff. Findings from a two-year study by Otago University's Injury Prevention Research Unit, report that the rate of serious injuries and fatalities on NZ farms has remained high in contrast to other industries over the past two decades. Long hours, working alone, uncomfortable safety gear, time and economic constraints, and new and unfamiliar equipment (along with lack of training), were identified as key accident and incident risk factors.

Managing hazards and understanding your responsibilities are key to making your farm a safe place – every day. But, aside from health and safety aspects it also makes good business sense. Completing a Farmsafe Plans workshop, for instance, will give you the skills to write a Health and Safety Plan to reduce risks on your farm. Once this is written, if applicable you can apply to ACC for a 10% discount on the work component of your levy (WSD).

For more information visit <http://www.farmsafe.co.nz/our-products/our-training-workshops/plans.aspx>

Earth Food Inc

Farmers and growers practising biological agriculture* around the country now have an industry organisation to represent them. Called Earth Food Inc, its aim is to talk with consumers, scientists, government, and farmers about how nutritional food can be grown using biological methods, with positive implications for the health of the planet.

*Biological agriculture is a management approach that promotes beneficial soil microbe activity through the use of mineral and microbial applications, enhancing nutrient quality, and plant and animal health.

More is at www.integritysoils.co.nz

Land & Environmental Toolkits

This LEP toolkit provides a stock-take of land, soil, and water resources on farms. A step-by-step process enables farmers to document land and environmental issues and opportunities on the farm. The kit offers information about what they can do to address issues, and where and when they should take action.

To obtain a kit, contact Meat and Wool NZ on freephone 0800 696 328, or email help@meatandwoolnz.com

2009 Air NZ Wine Awards

Pinot Noir was the varietal awarded the most gold medals this year, receiving 19 medals, followed by Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc, receiving 18 and 13 gold medals, respectively.

Top of the pops in 2009: were Air NZ Champion Wine of the Show Trophy winner: Julicher Pinot Noir 2008, and Bell Gully's Champion Sustainable Wine Trophy: Olssens Annieburn Riesling 2009.

A full list of medal winners is at <http://www.airnzwineawards.co.nz/>

Animal Welfare Papers

The National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) has published two papers on animal welfare entitled "Regulation of Animal Use in Research, Testing and Teaching: Comparison of NZ and European Legislation" and "Compliance Monitoring: The University of Auckland Approach".

Both papers are at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/animal-welfare/pubs/naeac>

New Zespri Partnership

A partnership between Zespri International and Plant & Food Research, aims to fast-track development of new kiwifruit varieties. The partnership will form the world's largest kiwifruit research and development programme.

Environment

Climate Change "Imagining 2020"

The climate change debate has often been framed as a matter of costs: models have been produced which show, for instance, the likely negative impact on GDP growth of ways to help minimise climate change. On other hand, different models look at the costs of not changing our ways in response to climate change.

Many commentators are now pointing out that the reality of climate-induced economic transformation is more complicated than either these two opposing views indicate. Others say there is a great opportunity for economic growth in transformation.

A group of NZ websites (www.Scoop.co.nz, www.Celsius.com and www.Hot-Topic.co.nz) has now got together to encourage discussion of the positive side to minimising climate change (the "Imagining 2020" project). In other words, getting people to think and write about what opportunities and benefits are present in a transformation to a low-carbon future for NZ and the global economy.

More is at <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL0911/S00150.htm>

Recession Brings Out Kiwi Green Thumb

Kiwis seem to have returned to gardening, boosting sales in vegetable garden equipment and seeds. Companies Masport and Yates have both reported growth of some product lines by as much as 30-33% annually during the tougher economic climate. The trend seems particularly strong in urban areas. Yates, for instance, notes the growth in sales of its baby or space saver varieties, putting this down to smaller section sizes and consumers who are growing in raised planter beds where there is a need to maximise yields from smaller spaces.

Sustainable 60 Series Winners...

[Eds' Note: you'll find a number of awards and accolades scattered throughout this Rural Bulletin. They flock in at this time of year..., and ...after all, this is the season of goodwill]

The Sustainable 60 Series Awards is designed to share and reward excellence in sustainable business practice in NZ. Winners for inaugural awards included: **Small Exemplar** – Locus Research; **Medium Exemplar** – Joint winners – The NZ Merino Company and Urgent Couriers; and **Large Exemplar**- IAG NZ Ltd. The winners of the five individual categories are: **Strategy and Governance** – carboNZero programme; **Workplace** – Urgent Couriers; **Marketplace** – carboNZero programme; **Environment** – Urgent Couriers; and **Community** – Fonterra/Sanitarium.

More is at <http://sustainable60.co.nz/>

... Sustainable Business of the Year...

The Sustainable Business of the Year award at the 2009 NZI National Sustainable Business Network Awards went to ecostore. In addition to taking the top honour, ecostore also won the Trailblazer Large and Corporate category.

More is at <http://www.sustainableawards.org.nz/>

... & Sustainable Habitat Challenge Winners

A retrofit of a Housing NZ home to improve living experiences of those on low incomes and a thermally detailed straw bale house in Central Otago were judged the winners of the Sustainable Habitat Challenge. For the Challenge, teams were given less than two years to design, fund, and create their vision for more sustainable housing. Altogether, nine teams entered from around NZ, resulting in eight new builds and retrofits.

More is at <http://www.shac.org.nz/>

Tourism

NZ in Lonely Planet Top 10...

NZ's made the cut to be named in Lonely Planet's prestigious Best in Travel publication for 2010. Also featured on the list are El Salvador, Germany, Greece, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, Portugal, Suriname, and the USA. It lists NZ essential experiences as being "as strong as ever", from spectacular landscapes and wildlife to Maori culture and food and drink. It also singles out NZ for praise in spearheading eco-travel and for its ethos towards responsible travel.

... Two Awards for NZ Tourism...

Whale Watch Kaikoura has taken the Supreme award at this year's Responsible Tourism Awards in London, held as part of World Responsible Tourism Day at the World Travel Market. And, in the category "Best large hotel / accommodation (more than 50 rooms)" the Winner was YHA Wellington City, NZ. The event, the largest of its kind in the world and launched in 2004, attracts more than 5000 exhibitors from more than 200 countries.

More is at <http://www.responsibletourismawards.com/>

...& "Golden Backpack" Award

Queenstown's AJ Hackett Bungy has won the latest "Golden Backpack" after being voted this country's Best Tour/Activity. Other finalists in the Best Tour/Activity in NZ category were: NZSki, Shotover Canyon Swing, NZONE Skydive, Franz Josef Glacier Guides, and Taupo Tandem Skydive.

The Golden Backpack Awards are run by backpacker publisher TNT Magazine.

More is at <http://www.tntdownunder.com/golden-backpack.html>

International Tourism Update

Spending by international visitors reached \$6.1 billion in the year to September 2009, up 1.2% on the previous year, according to Ministry of Tourism data. This increase is being seen as a good result given the 1.8% decline in international arrivals over the same period.

International guest nights in short-term commercial accommodation were up 8% in September 2009 compared with September 2008, Statistics NZ indicates. Total guest nights in September 2009 were up 3% over the same period. Eleven of the 12 regions experienced an increase in guest nights, with Otago and Canterbury recording the largest increases.

Visitor arrivals in October 2009 (187,400) were up 13,400 (8%) compared with October 2008. Arrivals from Australia (up 15,900) were again the major contributor. There were more Chinese visitors (up 1,100), but fewer from Korea (down 1,900) and the UK (down 1,300). Visitor arrivals in the October 2009 year (2.439 million) were down 24,400 (1%) from the October 2008 year.

Kiwis departed on 176,500 short-term overseas trips in October 2009, up 600 (less than 1%) from October 2008. There were

more trips to Australia and Samoa, but fewer trips to the UK. For the October 2009 year, short-term departures of NZ residents were down 3% compared to the previous year.

NZ's annual net permanent and long-term (PLT) migration balance was a gain of 18,600 in the October 2009 year, up from 4,300 in the October 2008 year. This is the highest annual gain since August 2004.

More on tourism spending is at <http://www.tourismresearch.govt.nz/>, more on guest nights is at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/tourism/accommodation/Accommodation-Survey_MR_Sep09.aspx, and more on arrivals and departures is at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/population/Migration/InternationalTravelAndMigration_MROct09.aspx

Health and Welfare

Major Global Health Risks

According to a recent report from the World Health Organisation (WHO), addressing five critical risk factors – underweight childhood, unsafe sex, alcohol use, lack of safe water, sanitation and hygiene, and high blood pressure – could add almost five years to global life expectancy. These five factors are responsible for one quarter of the 60 million deaths estimated to occur annually.

The report "Global Health Risks" is a comprehensive assessment of leading risks to global health. It provides detailed global and regional estimates of premature mortality, disability, and loss of health attributable to 24 global risk factors.

More is at http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/global_health_risks/en/index.html

Family Health Centres Coming

Nine primary health care provider groups have been chosen to move through to the next stage of developing and putting in place "better, sooner, more convenient" primary health care. They are: Canterbury Clinical Network, Greater Auckland Integrated Health Network, Health+ Alliance PHO (of three Pacific PHOs), Kawerau PHO, MidCentral PHOs, Midland Network, National Maori PHO Coalition, Wairarapa Community PHO, and West Coast PHO. They will develop Integrated Family Health Centres* (IFHCs), more nurse-led services, more multi-disciplinary teams, and closer cooperation with hospitals.

*Integrated Family Health Centres enable people to go to one location and, for example, maybe see a GP or nurse without an appointment, have a blood test or an X-ray, see a physiotherapist, have a first specialist assessment, or visit a pharmacy for their prescription, even have minor surgery - all in the same building.

Applicants not on the short-list are encouraged to discuss their plans with their local DHBs to see whether they can be developed locally.

DHB Performances Available

The public can now check out how their DHBs are performing against six health targets. Three of the targets focus on hospital performance. They are: shorter stays in emergency departments, improved access to elective surgery, and shorter waits for cancer treatment radiotherapy.

The other three focus on preventive measures. These ones are: increased immunisation, better help for smokers to quit, and better diabetes and cardiovascular services.

Information about how the DHBs measure up is at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Targets1%20Nov09%20web-art.pdf>

ACC: Recent Entitlement Changes...

From 1 December, homecare workers may no longer claim for payments for the first 20kms they travel to an ACC client. Agricultural workers feature particularly highly in workforce accident statistics (due to the physical nature of their work) and the change could affect homecare for this group.

Other reductions in the home health sector include: cuts to public holiday supplements for workers who support ACC's non-serious injury clients; changes to pay rates for workers carrying out personal care and household management for ACC's serious injury clients; and cuts to sleeper pay rates (for spouses who care for their husbands or wives).

...& ACC's 2010/11 Levies

New ACC levies for next year are:

- **the Earners' Account Levy** (paid by all employees and self employed to cover their non-work, non-motor vehicle injuries) will increase from \$1.70 to \$2.00 (including GST) per \$100 of liable earnings from 1 April 2010;
- **the average employer/self-employed levy** will increase from \$1.31 to \$1.47 per \$100 of payroll from 1 April 2010 (individual rates for industry groups may be higher or lower, excludes GST);
- **the ACC part of the motor vehicle license fee** for a petrol car will increase from \$168.46 to \$198.46 from 1 July 2010 while the ACC petrol levy will stay at 9.90 cents per litre; and
- **mopeds** 50cc and under will pay \$129.24; **motorbikes** up to 600cc will pay \$327.70; and **bikes** over 600cc will pay \$426.92.

Other minor changes include removing the exemption for hearses, collecting the ACC levy on biofuels, small changes in Work Account classifications, and adjusting maximum and minimum liable earnings in line with the labour cost index and minimum wage increases.

For more see Item 8 in the Cabinet Paper at <http://www.dol.govt.nz/initiatives/workplace/acc/index.asp>

Child Disciplining: Review Findings

A review of how the Crimes (Substituted Section 59) Amendment Act is working has been completed, using data collected from Police and Child Youth and Family. The reviewers found no evidence that parents are being subject to unnecessary state intervention for occasionally lightly smacking their children, but suggested more could be done to reassure parents they will not be criminalised or unduly investigated for a light smack. Recommendations include: establishing a new parent support helpline within CYF; publishing guidelines for social workers dealing with child abuse reports involving smacking; requiring Police officers and social workers to provide families with information on what their rights are; and collecting more information on the application of S59. The review was carried out by the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Social Development, the Commissioner of Police and Nigel Latta.

The review is at http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Sec59_review.pdf

Health & Disability Act Review

In his review, the Health and Disability Commissioner has recommended, among other things, that

the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights (the Code) be amended to give people with disabilities the right to timely access to disability services that they have been assessed as needing;

needs assessment and service coordination services be covered by the Code; and

the definition of "disability services consumer" in the Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994 be amended so it is consistent with the NZ Disability Strategy and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

More is at <http://www.hdc.org.nz/publications/review-act-code-09>

"Serious Harm": New Definition?

If "serious harm" occurs, employers or people in control of a workplace are required to immediately notify the Department of Labour, the Civil Aviation Authority, or Maritime NZ.

A proposed new definition of the term "serious harm" would include physical injuries leading to an employee being unable to perform their normal duties for 10 or more calendar days. It would also include any permanent injuries, specified events such as electrocution or loss of consciousness, and diagnosed occupational illnesses.

“First Response” Programme Trial

A trial of a new “First Response” programme in Grey Lynn, Panmure, and Onehunga next year aims to give crisis support to families with under-2 year olds immediately after a family violence incident. Under the Child, Youth and Family, Police and Shine (Safer Homes in NZ) programme, a Shine social worker will meet with the family, and help them create a plan to keep everyone safe.

Robots in Retirement Villages?

The University of Auckland and ETRI Korea are jointly researching the use of inexpensive robots in retirement villages. The university has been asking residents and workers at Selwyn Village Anglican aged care service in Auckland what kind of robot they feel most comfortable around. They have indicated that appearance and the kinds of tasks it would perform are important. Detecting falls, calling for help, switching on & off appliances, lifting heavy things, and medication reminders are some of the tasks residents would like a robot to do. It should not be too large and imposing in appearance, about 1.25m with wheels and a screen on the body.

ETRI Korea’s robots are already being used in homes in Korea, and a trial of a modified Korean robot is now about to start here. It’s hoped that the robot will eventually help support better quality care for residents while being affordable for service providers.

More is at <https://wiki.auckland.ac.nz/display/csihealthbots/Healthbots+Project;jsessionid=07688E57CA58F9425C699A808AE70409>

First NZ Mobile Telehealth Trial

Twenty heart patients in Auckland are trialling a first for NZ – using mobile technology to transmit their daily health readings without having to go to a hospital. The three-month trial (which started on 1 October 2009) has participants taking daily measurements of weight, blood pressure, and pulse rate using an electronic scale and blood pressure monitor provided to them. Their measurements are automatically transmitted via mobile phone to a secure online database which stores the readings along with relevant medical data. The readings will be monitored daily via a web portal, by the Auckland City Hospital cardiac team. Patients are also able to monitor their own readings. The pilot is a partnership between the Auckland District Health Board (ADHB), Gen-I, and Alcatel-Lucent.

NZ & Asia-Pacific HIV Vaccination

NZ is to contribute \$420,000 to the World Health Organization (WHO) in support of an H1N1 vaccine roll-out in the Asia Pacific region. It will go towards the purchase of syringes and sharps bins, and complements Australia’s donation of up to 10 percent of its H1N1 vaccine stocks to the WHO for use in the Pacific island countries.

Swine Flu Update

Next winter’s seasonal influenza vaccine will contain the pandemic (swine flu) strain and be free to extra groups who are at particular risk from swine flu. Free vaccines will be available from March 2010 to people over 65, but also to pregnant women, people who are morbidly obese, and children aged six months to four years who are enrolled in particular high deprivation General Practices. Seasonal flu immunisation is already free for all people over 65, and to those aged 6 months to 64 years with certain pre-existing health conditions.

A study investigating the level of immunity NZers have to pandemic influenza (H1N1) began in November. Blood samples will be taken from 2500 people to see who has been exposed to pandemic influenza and developed immunity to it. This information will be used to establish how many people are still at risk of contracting the illness.

Be Sun Smart This Summer

The Cancer Society has developed a sun smart resource kit for kiwis who work outside, and their employers, to encourage the adoption of sound sun safety practices. It’s estimated that around 15% of our workforce works outdoors, and these workers are at higher risk of developing a range of skin cancers including melanoma.

More information is at <http://www.cancernz.org.nz/reducing-your-cancer-risk/sunsmart/sunsmart-workplaces/>

Clinical Trials: New Ethical Guidelines

New ethical guidelines for clinical trials and related types of health research have been developed so researchers can identify and address ethical issues in their studies. They cover key ethical issues, e.g., participation in studies by vulnerable people (including children, people with severe intellectual disability, or those with a terminal illness), access to treatments after the study is completed, and compensation for injury.

“The Ethical Guidelines for Intervention Studies” can be downloaded from <http://www.neac.health.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexcm/neac-resources-ethical-guidelines-for-intervention-studies>

PHARMAC’s Annual Review

Prescriptions for government funded medicines increased by almost 4 percent last year to 36.3 million, but the rate of that growth is slowing, drug buying agency PHARMAC says in its annual review. Also, 3.1 million kiwis received government funded medication in the 2008/09 year at a cost of \$653 million – the exact amount that had been budgeted. This budgeted amount was an increase of \$17.6 million (2.8%) on 2007/08. PHARMAC noted that the number of prescriptions being written continues to outstrip the amount PHARMAC has to spend on medicines.

Download the annual review at <http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/2009/12/08/Review%20part%201.pdf>

Storing Sperm, Eggs & Embryos

Under a recently-introduced "Human Assisted Reproductive Technology (Storage) Amendment Bill" sperm, eggs, and embryos stored before 2004 can be stored until 2014. Fertility clinic clients wishing to store them beyond 2014 would need to get ethics committee approval before the 10-year storage limit period was up.

Support for Fathers: New Research

The Families Commission has released two pieces of research into fathering issues:

- **"Supporting Kiwi Dads"**: for this, researchers surveyed 1721 step-fathers, single fathers, separated dads, teenage parents, foster fathers, and fathers from a range of ethnic and social backgrounds in early 2009, providing a snapshot of the views of about a number of issues fathers face, including the support they need; and
- **"Heart and Head"**: for this one University of Canterbury researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 22 men about their role as dads.

"Supporting Kiwi Dads" is at <http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz/research/fathers/supporting-kiwi-dads> and "Heart and Head" is at <http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz/research/heart-and-head>

Wellbeing for Ethnic Women...

The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MWA) and the Office of Ethnic Affairs (OEA) have been consulting with women from ethnic groups as part of a joint project on intimate partner violence in ethnic communities. They say there are a number of barriers for ethnic women seeking support and services, including: a lack of knowledge and information about the law in NZ, where to go for help and support, their rights and responsibilities and protections as NZ citizens, communication difficulties, and a lack of a social support network.

Initially, MWA and OEA plan to produce a brochure outlining relevant legislation, information on where to go for support, and a local directory of the agencies and support services available in NZ to assist ethnic communities.

More is at <http://www.mwa.govt.nz/news-and-pubs/publications/panui/panui-december-2009#well-being-for-ethnic>

...& Measuring NZ Children's Wellbeing

A NZ Children's Social Health Monitor was launched recently. Supported by the Starship Foundation, it will track the impact of the economic downturn on children's wellbeing using a number of health indicators, and will be updated annually.

More is at <http://www.nzchildren.co.nz/index.php>

The "Opening Doors" Guide

This guide is for community groups who want to include people with experience of mental illness in their club, programme, activity, or facility. It was developed as a collaborative project between the MASH Trust, Kites Trust, and Wellington City Council, and was written by people with experience of mental illness.

It is at http://www.kites.org.nz/pdf/Community_Opening_Doors_final_version_Dec_2008.pdf

"A Theology of Children"

Barnardos NZ and Plunket have jointly launched a new publication, "A Theology of Children". The 24-page book is aimed at supporting and strengthening Pacific parents, grandparents, and caregivers with strategies for non-physical discipline of children within a theological context. The book aims to help guide parents and caregivers through the six principles of effective discipline: love and warmth, talking and listening, guidance and understanding, limits and boundaries, consistency and consequences, and a structured and secure world.

More is at http://www.barnardos.org.nz/AboutUs/theology_of_children.pdf

Stressed at Work? Shout

The old adage "Don't get mad, get even" may have to be rewritten as a new study by Swedish doctors has indicated that venting some of your frustrations could help you avoid health problems. The researchers, from the University of Stockholm, followed 2755 male workers from the early 1990s to 2003. They took a range of measurements, including blood pressure, body mass index, and cholesterol levels, and asked the men how they coped with unfair treatment or conflict at work. They recorded whether the workers used avoidance tactics, such as walking away from a situation, and whether they suffered headaches or other physical symptoms.

There were 47 deaths from heart attack or heart disease in the group in the 10 years. After correcting for the degree of job strain the men were under, and biological factors, they found those who persistently bottled up their anger rather than expressing it openly were more than twice as likely to suffer from heart attacks or heart disease. Women were included in the study and the results showed bottling things up was equally damaging for them.

The results are published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.

US 2010 Food Trends

In a recent survey in the US, more than 1,800 professional chefs ranked nearly 215 culinary items as a "hot trend," "yesterday's news," or "perennial favourite" on restaurant menus in 2010. The top 5 trends are locally grown produce; locally sourced meats and seafood; sustainability as a culinary theme; mini-desserts; and locally produced wine and beer. Rounding out the top 10 list are nutritious kids' meals; half-portions/smaller portions for a smaller price; farm-branded ingredients; gluten-free/food-allergy conscious meals; and sustainable seafood.

More is at http://www.restaurant.org/pressroom/social_media_whats_hot_2010.cfm

Education/Training

Report on Special Education: OAG

The Auditor-General's (OAG) report "Ministry of Education: Managing support for students with high special educational needs" has been published. OAG staff carried out a performance audit to assess how well the Ministry of Education manages four initiatives set up to support around 250,000 school-age students that it assesses as having the highest level of intellectual, sensory, or physical disabilities, speech language difficulties, or behavioural needs. The initiatives are the Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes (ORRS), the School High Health Needs Fund, the Severe Behaviour Initiative, and the Speech Language Initiative.

Overall, the Ministry's management of the four initiatives was reasonable, but there were still areas that need to improve. OAG's ten recommendations encourage the Ministry to:

- continue to improve its information about the level of need for support;
- provide students who have similar needs and circumstances, with similar support, regardless of where they live;
- better assist and explain the initiatives to educators and parents/caregivers; and
- put in place more effective systems for collating information about the Ministry's support for students.

More is at <http://www.oag.govt.nz/2009/special-education/>

Public/Private School Buildings?

The Ministry of Education and Treasury are looking at the possibility of public private partnerships (PPPs) for building and maintaining some new school property. Under a PPP the private sector partner would be responsible only for the school property for the term of their contract. The operation of the school would remain the responsibility of its board of trustees, and the land would still be owned by the government.

More is at

<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/ppps+being+considered+new+school+property>

ORRS Support Schemes

Extended The Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes (ORRS), which provide support to students with high special education needs, are to be extended for one year to include another 400 students around the country. The schemes' criteria will be modified to include students who are older than nine years, and have missed out on ORRS by a narrow margin. Students placed in as a result of the extension will continue to receive ORRS support until they leave school.

More Qualify Via ITOs

Recent figures from the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) indicate that 35,958 qualifications were completed by workers with the support of Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) in 2008. This is a 22% increase on the number of qualifications attained in 2007. Similarly, a total of 40,042 industry training programmes were successfully completed in 2007, a 20% increase on 2007. Workers signed into training agreements with their employers and ITOs also achieved over 3.7 million credits worth of national industry skill standards in 2008 – an average of 20 credits per employee.

Copies of the 2008 Industry Training Statistics can be obtained from <http://www.tec.govt.nz/templates/StandardSummary.aspx?id=1203>

NZ-China Training Partnership...

NZ and China have signed an education agreement with a particular focus on training high-level research talent in academic research and education exchanges between institutions and organisations. The signing followed the opening of the Confucius Institute at the University of Canterbury in partnership with Huazhong University. The institute supports Chinese language learning in the South Island

...Asian Graduates' NZ Education...

A new AsiaNZ Foundation report indicates that most Asian business graduates who attended NZ tertiary institutions are positive about their experiences of living and studying in NZ. Some 71% indicated that they had enjoyed studying in NZ, and just over half said that their studies had matched their expectations, and 45% also said they wanted to remain in NZ after graduating, at least for a while. Fifty-eight percent also said maintaining links to NZ was a clear priority, and 80% said they wanted to maintain friendships formed while studying in NZ.

The report recommends that NZ's business community recognise the skills, understandings and connections of these graduates, and also the role they can play in the development of NZ-Asia business relationships.

The report is at <http://www.asianz.org.nz/our-work/knowledge-and-research/research-features/asian-business>

...& Asia Business Education Partnership

The Business Education Partnership, a partnership between companies, peak business associations, employee organisations, and education institutions, has been set up to encourage an increase in the amount of Asia-related material included in the curricula of NZ schools. The idea is to better prepare young people for a future increasingly dominated by Asian economies (as an example of this, the partnership notes that the top three export destinations for NZ goods and services after Australia and the US are China, Japan, and Korea).

The NZ Curriculum and Asia Guide has also been released. It includes school stories and comments from principals, teachers, and students already engaging with Asia and Asian communities as well as a series of questions to trigger discussion in schools about how to become more "Asia-aware".

More is at <http://www.asianz.org.nz/our-work/action-asia-business/bep>

Seniornet: How Seniors Learn

The results of a project aimed at identifying the factors contributing to Seniornet's* effectiveness in meeting the learning needs of older people in new technology were recently published in a report called "Improving Our Understanding of the Older Person's Needs in Learning New Technology". In the project, Seniornet tested the proposition that older people prefer, and are better able to learn new technology, through "older people helping older people"

*Seniornet brings older adults and computers together. There are now over 100 Seniornet Societies, or Learning Centres, throughout NZ with well over 20,000 members.

The report is at www.seniornet.org.nz/researchreport.asp

ICT in Schools

Some \$21.5 million has been allocated to schools in the latest round of school network upgrades. The long-term aim is to have 97% of all schools serving 99.7% of all students accessing ultra-fast broadband (with speeds of 100 Mbps or greater) within six years.

A \$10.8 million three-year ICT (Information, Communications & Technology) Professional Development programme will also provide teachers with the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to maximise the benefits of ICT in raising achievement levels for students. From next year 257 schools will join the programme.

Beneficiaries: Study Assistance

People receiving the Domestic Purposes Benefit, Widow's Benefit, Invalid's Benefit, or Emergency Maintenance Allowance who are studying to be nurses, doctors, midwives, vets, and teachers are now able to borrow an additional \$500 per year. The recoverable assistance is for next year.

Employment

Job Ads - & Applicants - Up

For the fifth month in a row new job advertisements placed on seek.co.nz have increased (up by 2.3% in November and by 16% since July 2009). Auckland has seen the most rapid growth with a 16.7% increase over the five month period. However, it is also an increasingly more competitive job market. The SEEK Employment Index shows a slight decline of 1.7% in November, driven by larger growth in the number of job applications than the growth in job ads for the month. SEEK says these are the top three tips for your CV:

- tailor your CV to the job you are applying for by matching your skills to those listed in the advertisement, try to use the language used in the advert, and highlight your most relevant experience;
- research the company and the environment in which it operates, and demonstrate your understanding; and
- ensure the most important and relevant information is at the top of your CV, stick to clear, concise language, and don't forget to spell check - every detail is important.

More Job Ops Scheme Places

Places on the Job Ops scheme have been increased, with 2,000 more places on it for young people with low or no skills who are want work. Job Ops creates a six-month work opportunity for an unemployed young person. In return, the employer receives a \$5000 subsidy from the Government.

Employers' Disciplinary Action Guide

The Department of Labour has published a Disciplinary Action Guide for Employers for small business owners, which explains the law relating to disciplinary action (including dismissals), redundancy, and inability to work because of illness. The first part of the guide explains the key principles that apply to all employment relationships. The second part describes the key requirements of having a "good reason" and following a "fair process" before taking disciplinary action, or making a decision to dismiss an employee. The final part explains the key steps involved in the various types of disciplinary and termination processes that may arise.

Separate guidelines are available for employees.

More is at <http://www.ers.dol.govt.nz>

Tu Mai Iwi: Labour Market Info

A new Tu Mai Iwi Tool has been developed to provide iwi with "at the fingertips" labour market information in one place, by bringing together data in an easily accessible way. The tool, which is designed to add value to iwi decision making in policy, business and career planning, enables comparisons to be made between about 100 individual iwi, Maori, and the general NZ population,

was developed to help with decision making in policy, business, and career planning.

More is at <http://www.dol.govt.nz/services/LMI/tools/tu-mai-iwi.asp>

Housing

Fast-track Consent Approvals

From 1 February 2010, a new "multiple-use" approval service will enable people building a number of buildings of the same design to gain "pre-approval" within 10 working days for building code compliance. The idea is to save time and money by fast-tracking the building consent process, with the local council only having to check site-specific conditions before issuing a building consent. Savings can be passed on to consumers.

More, including how to apply, is at www.dbh.govt.nz/nmua or contact S Sablyak, tel 04 817 4830

Residential Property Market

In October 2009, the national median (half the properties were higher than this and half lower) of \$355,000 was up nearly 6 percent on the corresponding figure (\$335,000) for October 2008, and also up \$5,000 on the median price for September 2009. Around the country, median values rose in seven out of 12 districts compared with October 2008 prices.

However, the turnover of houses was down in October to 6,091 properties compared with 6,464 in September 2009.

Rents Up, Mortgages Down...

Results from the Household Economic Survey (Income) (HES (Income)) for the year ended June 2009 show no overall change in average weekly expenditure on housing costs from the previous year. This result was made up of an increase across all households in average weekly property and ground rent payments (up 8.1%), offset by decreases in average mortgage principal repayments (down 7.1%) and average mortgage interest payments (down 2.8%).

Other survey results showed that average (mean) annual household income was \$78,876 in 2008/09, up 5.6% from 2007/08.

More is at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/Households/HouseholdEconomicSurvey_MRYeJun09.aspx

... & Building Down, Consents Up

According to Statistics NZ (SNZ) the volume of residential building work fell a further 5.4% in the September 2009 quarter, and is at its lowest level recorded in eight years. It has fallen by almost 40% since the most recent peak two years ago.

However, SNZ also says that the number of new housing units authorised (excluding apartments) rose 11% in October 2009. This follows a 3.5% rise in September 2009 and brings the number of consents to its highest since June 2008. When apartments are also included, the number of new housing units authorised rose 12%. The value of residential building consents (\$481 million) was 59% of all building consents in October 2009, compared with a monthly average of 52% for the previous 12 months. The value of non-residential building consents was \$329 million. The largest contribution to the non-residential value came from the social, cultural, and religious buildings category (26%), which was boosted by a number of sports facilities.

Welcome Home Loans: Update

The maximum amount that can be borrowed under the government's Welcome Home Loan scheme has been increased from \$280,000 to \$350,000 - in recognition of the changing market and the need to help first-home buyers in high-priced areas such as Auckland and Wellington.

No deposit is required under a Welcome Home Loan if you are borrowing \$200,000 or less. If you are borrowing more than \$200,000 you will need a deposit of 15% of the amount over \$200,000 (for example, someone wanting to borrow \$350,000 will need to pay a \$22,500 deposit).

Borrowers will still need to prove their ability to service a home loan before being accepted.

More is at www.welcomehomeloan.co.nz

Real Estate Authority in Place

The Real Estate Agents' Authority, which licences real estate agents, is up and running.

You can now check a free register to see if their real estate agent is licensed, and has been subject to any disciplinary action. The authority also provides a transparent complaints process, and serious matters can be laid before the Real Estate Agents' Disciplinary Tribunal.

The Real Estate Agents Authority is a Crown entity established under the Real Estate Agents Act 2008, and its board is chaired by Kristy McDonald QC.

Energy

Proposed Electricity Sector Changes

Changes to the country's electricity system were recently announced. These aim to improve competition and constrain price increases, increase security of supply, and make sure there is effective and stream-lined governance. Most of the changes are contained in an Electricity Industry Bill.

Proposals to strengthen competition include:

- transferring Tekapo A and B power stations from Meridian Energy to Genesis Energy, and transferring the government-owned Whirinaki to Meridian Energy;
- Meridian, Genesis, and Mighty River Power undertaking "virtual asset swaps" (this aims to make sure each company can provide increased competition in the island where they currently have little to no generation capacity);
- allowing lines companies back into electricity retailing; and
- establishing a fund to promote customer switching between retailers.

Proposals to increase security of supply include:

- requiring generators/retailers to compensate consumers in the event of conservation campaigns or a dry-year power cut; and
- increasing the attractiveness of gas exploration and development.

Proposals around governance include:

- abolishing the Electricity Commission and replacing it with a slimmed-down Electricity Authority;
- establishing a Security and Reliability Council to monitor Transpower's performance and advise on security of supply; and
- transferring responsibility for grid upgrade approvals to the Commerce Commission.

More, including background information is at <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/energy+sector+transformation+benefit+consumers>

New Kowhai Field Found

Greymouth Petroleum has discovered a new Kowhai field on the North Taranaki peninsula, which is predicted to yield 134 petajoules of gas and 3.2 million barrels of condensate. The field is located close to other Greymouth Group and common carrier gas pipelines, and also to Greymouth Group processing facilities. The planned on-stream date is March 2010, with construction of a power station and gas pipelines being part of the early roll out.

Home Insulation Fund Extended

The Warm Up NZ Heat Smart home insulation fund is to become a multi-year programme, allowing flexibility to bring funding forward to meet demand. The latest set of figures show 5,720 homes were retrofitted in October bringing the total to 19,759 homes being retrofitted in the first four months of the scheme.

Transport & Travel

Public Transport National Ticketing

The NZ Transport Agency Board has agreed to establish a national ticketing programme for public transport in NZ, and, as a first step, has approved funding for the development of the Auckland Regional Transport Authority's integrated ticketing and fares systems.

Integrated ticketing is seen as a critical part of any well-functioning public transport system. It makes public transport easier to use by allowing passengers to travel across a city using different kinds of public transport with a single ticket - offering flexibility and convenience for passengers, and making public transport a more attractive option.

New e-Passports

An e-Passport containing new artwork telling the story of NZ through themes of navigation and travel is to be phased in over the next few months. In English and Te Reo Maori, it has a black cover featuring silver fern design. Both the new and existing passports are secure and both will be equally accepted. Passport costs are unchanged.

Electric Vehicles: Cost-Benefits

Electric vehicles (EVs) are likely to play an important role in NZ's future as consumers seek cleaner and cheaper options to petrol and diesel, according to a recent report jointly commissioned by Contact Energy and Meridian Energy. Fuel cost savings for consumers, less reliance on imported fossil fuels, and reduction in transport-related greenhouse gases are among the benefits of adopting electric vehicles and fuelling cars with NZ's largely renewable electricity, the report finds.

The summary report is available at: www.meridianenergy.co.nz/AboutUs/News/ElectricVehiclesOfferBenefitsForNewZealand.htm

More Using Long Distance Trains

KiwiRail's long distance passenger train services have posted a rise in passenger numbers for the 2008/09 financial year. The four services, The Overlander, Tranz Coastal, Tranz Alpine, and Capital Connection carried a total of 492,000 passengers for the year compared with 487,000 for the proceeding year. The Capital Connection, linking Palmerston North and Wellington, was the most popular (85,000 passengers).

Air NZ's New Jets

The first of Air NZ's 14 new Airbus A320s (options for 11 more are included in the order) will arrive in January 2011. The fleet will be progressively introduced up to 2016. Moving to one single-aisle jet type across domestic and short-haul international networks is seen as delivering efficiencies in fuel burn, maintenance, training, spares holding, and fleet management.

Justice/the Law

Legal Aid Review: Report

The purpose of this review was to consider how the legal aid system could best be structured so it delivers high-quality legal services to those who need them most and in a way that is cost effective and sustainable. The report indicates that the legal aid system needs: a stronger direction, a customer focus, new processes, a quality system for lawyers, and a more flexible approach to the way services are obtained.

Since the report was published, the number of LSA board members has been reduced from six to four, four current members have left the board, and two new members have been appointed. Consideration is now being given to LSA becoming a part of the Ministry of Justice, and also to the appointment of an independent statutory officer to oversee the granting of legal aid and the running of cases by the Public Defence Service.

A review of the quality of legal services provided by legal aid lawyers is to be made in two years' time.

The report is at <http://media.nzherald.co.nz/webcontent/document/pdf/Legal%20AidReview1.pdf>

New District Court Rules

New District Courts Rules deal with concerns that claims are sometimes abandoned because the process is time consuming, and complex - especially when the claim is not a large one.

The plaintiff and the defendant now have to exchange information about the facts of the claim, identify documents and witnesses, and suggest a potential resolution before the Court deals with the matter.

A new website www.justice.govt.nz/civil guides the parties through the process. The new District Courts Rules are at www.legislation.govt.nz

Dispute Resolution: Private Mediation

A pilot project where private mediators carry out court-ordered mediation in some civil disputes is underway in Auckland. Its aim is to reduce the number of full hearings and free up judicial time for other matters. The pilot involves the equivalent of 50 day-long mediations (which will require the parties' agreement), and 15 mediators have been appointed. It is anticipated that each mediation will last less than one day. Nationwide extension is planned if the project is a success.

Suppressing Names and Evidence

The Law Commission has released a report called "Suppressing Names and Evidence". The report suggests the grounds on which suppression may be granted need to be clarified and tightened. But, whatever the situation, names or evidence should only be suppressed in exceptional cases and for compelling reasons.

There is a delicate balancing act around name or evidence suppression. Criminal cases in the courts must be open to public scrutiny. Also, as far as possible, the public should be able to attend court, and the media should be able to report what happens in the court room. But sometimes, doing justice in public poses risks to justice itself. The law must also protect the administration of justice, and the right to a fair trial. There may be special circumstances that justify suppressing information about a court case.

The report and a press release are at <http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/ProjectReport.aspx?ProjectID=158>

Race Relations Review

More than 800 people have contacted the Human Rights Commission about a politician's statement that they considered racist, and the Race Relations Commissioner has decided to conduct a review which will consider the issues that have been raised. These include:

- what the law says about what can and cannot be done when a public figure uses language that is racially offensive;
- the accountability mechanisms for an MP and political party; and
- perceptions of a double standard with different expectations for Maori and Pakeha politicians and public figures.

The review will be completed early next year.

Partial Defence of Provocation Gone

The historical rationale for this defence - to allow a person to avoid the mandatory sentence for murder - no longer exists, now that the Crimes (Provocation Repeal) Amendment Act is law.

Private Sector Prison Management

The recently passed Corrections (Contract Management of Prisons) Bill 2009 allows competitive tendering for the contract management of prisons. Earlier legislation provided for the private management of prisons in 1995, but this was repealed in 2004. The Department of Corrections' Chief Executive will be responsible for prisons under both public and private management. Contractors' performance will be overseen by prison monitors, and contractors will be subject to strict reporting requirements. Privately managed prisons will be subject to the Official Information Act, and the Office of the Ombudsman will have access to privately managed prisons on the same basis as government departments. A decision about which prison or prisons may be tendered will be made early next year

New Public Defender Service

A Public Defender Service (PDS), established at Auckland and Manukau courts in 2004 as a five-year pilot, is now in place at Waitakere District Court. Administered by the Legal Services Agency, it provides criminal legal aid and duty solicitor services to up to a third of all legally aided defendants (private sector lawyers look after the rest). The service will progressively be expanded to Waitakere, North Shore, Pukekohe, and Papakura courts.

Toning Down Boy Racers

Two recently enacted laws target the negative effects of street racing:

- **the Land Transport (Enforcement Powers) Act** includes provisions to allow local authorities to create bylaws that prevent vehicles repeatedly "cruising" city streets, and allows for compulsory impoundment of vehicles involved in illegal street racing. It also introduces demerit points for noise offences, licence breaches, and registration plate offences; and
- **the Sentencing (Vehicle Confiscation) Amendment Act** allows vehicles to be seized and destroyed as a new penalty for illegal street racing, and vehicles repeatedly used by people with overdue traffic fines to be seized and sold to pay those fines. It will also enable Police and Courts to target illegal street racers who commit offences in another person's vehicle.

Trans-Tasman Legal Ties: Legislation

A Trans-Tasman Proceedings Bill 2009 was recently introduced into the Australian Parliament - at the same time as a Bill of the same name was introduced into the NZ Parliament. They set in place a Treaty between Australia and NZ (this was signed in 2008), which is aimed at improving the processes for resolving trans-Tasman legal disputes. It allows for:

- a broader range of judgments to be registered and enforced between Australia and NZ;
- court appearances by video-link from one country to the other; and
- the enforcement of regulatory systems supporting trans-Tasman markets.

Recession Drives Fraud

Business fraud committed by middle and senior management across NZ has increased by almost 20 percent over the past year, according to the latest PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) Global Economic Crime Survey. The survey of 3000 respondents in 54 countries revealed that, in the last 12 months, a total of 42% of NZ organisations were the victims of fraud. The global average was 30%.

Asset misappropriation (theft) was the most common form of fraud, followed by financial statement fraud, and intellectual property theft. On average, NZ organisations lost almost \$500,000 in the last 12 months as a result of fraud.

The profile of fraudsters has changed. In PWC's 2007 fraud survey, 75% of fraud was carried out by junior staff. In 2009, that figure had dropped by almost 20 percent - but the fraud is now increasingly being committed by middle and senior management.

NZ was ranked eighth highest for rate of fraud out of the 54 countries surveyed. However, while NZ has reported a fairly high incidence of fraud, one possible explanation is that we have good detection systems. PWC believes that in NZ there is a high level of honesty in answering these surveys, so this is likely to represent a true rate of fraud for this country.

More is at <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/economic-crime-survey/index.jhtml>

Report on Money-Laundering

The Financial Action Taskforce's "2009 Mutual Evaluation Report on NZ's anti-money laundering and countering financing of terrorism" has been released. It includes an in-depth assessment of NZ's legal framework, of financial preventative measures, and of law enforcement agencies' ability to detect and deter money laundering and the financing of terrorism. It indicates that effective control of money laundering and crime that leads to it requires collaboration between the financial sector and government.

Issues the report raises have largely been addressed through the Anti-Money Laundering and Countering of Financing of Terrorism Act (AMLCFT), which was passed last month.

The 2009 FATF Mutual Evaluation Report is at www.fatf-gafi.org

Consumer Rights Survey

Results of National Consumer Survey 2009 indicate:

- NZers have a fairly good understanding of consumer rights, and know to contact the seller when they have a problem and that the seller will usually do something to put it right;
- consumers are generally aware of services and organisations where they can get consumer advice - particularly the Citizens' Advice Bureau (48%) and Consumer NZ (24%). TV shows Fair Go and Target were also noted as a source of advice by 14% of respondents (up from 6% in 2005); and
- areas identified as needing work include better information about extended warranties (which don't offer any greater protection than people already have under the law), and a lack of knowledge of rights under the Consumer Guarantees Act.

The survey was carried out from June-August and involved 1,000 face-to-face interviews with NZers aged 18 and over. It was commissioned by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.

Survey results are at www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/consumersurvey-2009.pdf

Public Service/Local Govt

NZ's Lack of Corruption

Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) measures the perceived level of public-sector corruption in 180 countries and territories around the world. The CPI is a "survey of surveys", based on 13 different expert and business surveys. Highest scorers in the 2009 CPI are NZ at 9.4, Denmark at 9.3, Singapore and Sweden tied at 9.2, and Switzerland at 9.0. These scores reflect political stability, long-established conflict of interest regulations, and solid, functioning public institutions.

More is at http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009

Fewer Public Servants

The latest Public Service Human Resources Survey reports a decline in the number of public servants since December 2008. There was an overall increase of 2.5%, driven by a 4% rise in the second half of 2008, but the number of full-time equivalent public servants decreased by 1.4% in the six months to 30 June 2009. As well, growth in public service wages has slowed, with average base salaries increasing by 5.3% in 2008/09 (mostly between July and December 2008). Health and education in the wider public sector had higher wage growth than the other sectors because of agreements entered into over the last couple of years under different economic conditions.

The report is on the SSC (State Services Commission) website:
<http://www.ssc.govt.nz/hrc-survey-2009>

Navy Wins Business Award

The Royal NZ Navy has become the first public sector organisation in NZ, and only the third NZ business in 10 years, to win an internationally recognised Baldrige Gold Award from the NZ Business Excellence Foundation. The award acknowledges that Navy productivity has doubled in the last 10 years.

More is at <http://www.nzbef.org.nz/awards.htm>

Surplus for CRIs

According to Stats NZ, the collective operating surplus for NZ's Crown Research Institutes (CRIs) reached \$25.2 million in the year ended June 2009 (down \$1.9 million on the June 2008 year surplus). After accounting for profit/loss on sale of fixed assets, extraordinary items, and taxation, the CRI's collective surplus in 2009 was \$12.5 million.

More is at
http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/government_finance/crown_research_institutes/CrownResearchInstituteStatistics_MRyeJun09.aspx

Expertise Centres Hold Purse Strings

Reforms to Government purchasing, aimed at achieving significant cost savings, will see specialist teams in new "Centres of Expertise" to negotiate all-of-Govt contracts. The first ones will be set up in Department of Internal Affairs (DIA - contracts for IT equipment) and the Ministry of Economic Development (MED - contracts for passenger vehicles and stationery). The first all-of-Govt contracts are expected to be in place by June 2010. All public and state service agencies will be required to use all-of-Govt contracts. It is estimated that the Crown Owned Enterprises could achieve 5-10% cost savings.

Councils' Accountability / Transparency

Changes to the Local Government Act aimed at improving local government transparency, accountability, and financial management are signalled in four cabinet papers on the Department of Internal Affairs website. Amongst the changes, the local government community outcomes process would be merged into the long-term council community planning process to: eliminate the costs of having two long-term planning processes, focus on the affordability of proposals, and better link outcomes the local authority wants with how it will achieve them.

The public will have an opportunity to make submissions when a related Bill is considered by a Parliamentary select committee.

The papers, together with a summary, are at www.communityoutcomes.govt.nz

Parliament

No Pay Rise is Legalised

Under a recently-passed Remuneration Authority Amendment Bill, the Remuneration Authority will be able to use its own discretion when setting salaries in difficult economic times.

The changes take effect next year and cover all professions the Authority is responsible for. These include MPs, members of the Judiciary, specified Statutory Officers, and Chairpersons and Members of Local Authorities and Community Boards.

Not-for-Profits

Global N-F-P Funding Confidence

Worldwide, fundraisers see green shoots of economic revival and confidence growing - with 56% reporting that they feel more optimistic about donations in the coming 12 months. The past year has been tough for some, with half of N-F-P (not-for-profit) organisations reporting a decline in income, but one third (33%) of fundraisers have successfully bucked the trend and generated additional income despite the recession. This is according to The Management Centre's Global Fundraising Confidence Survey 2009, which explores the views of 126 leading fundraising directors and sector experts (from Europe, Asia, North America, Australasia, and Africa) about the impact of the financial crisis on the N-F-P sector.

The Global Fundraising Confidence Survey 2009 can be downloaded at www.managementcentre.co.uk

New National Disability Network

The objectives of this network are to provide a clear voice to government and stay proactive on the issues and challenges ahead for the disability sector. Its interim management group is made up of the chairs of the NZ Federation of Vocational Support Services (VASS), National Residential Intellectual Disability Providers (NRID), Supported Living NZ (SLNZ), and the Association for Supported Employment in NZ (ASENZ) - supported by the CEOs of IHC and CCS Disability Action.

More is at <http://lists.community.net.nz/cna/?p=5868>

N-F-P/Government Relationships: Report

Non-profit organisations are affected by laws and regulations that determine their legal forms, tax treatment, and the ways in which they can act. Government agencies' policies, particularly in relation to funding for non-profits, also have a major impact. The final report from the Study of the NZ Non-Profit Sector called "NZ Non-Profit Sector and Government Policy" explores the impact of government policy on N-F-Ps.

The report is at www.ocvs.govt.nz/work-programme/building-knowledge/study-of-the-non-profit-sector/index.html

Budget Advisors Needed Nationwide

Family Budgeting Services are currently recruiting volunteers to be trained as budget advisers to work with families and individuals to help them manage their money better.

Further information can be obtained from the Family Budgeting services on their free number 0508 283 438. Training begins in February/March 2010. More is also at <http://www.familybudgeting.org.nz/>

Managing Risks: Standard Available

The new Risk management – Principles and guidelines Standard, AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 is now available for purchase from Standards NZ. The standard provides organisations with guiding principles, a framework, and a process for managing risks.

AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 seminars are planned for late February/March 2010 in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. To register your interest, please email seminars@standards.co.nz with your details. Order or download AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 from www.standards.co.nz, email enquiries@standards.co.nz, or call 0800 782 632

Lion & Perry Foundations Merge

The Lion Foundation and Perry Foundation, operating 261 gaming venues across the country, are to merge under the Lion Foundation name. The new organisation will continue to support worthy community causes across the spectrum, including arts, culture, sports, education, and health. Combined efficiencies and reduced administration costs will lead to increased funds assisting more community groups.

More is at www.lionfoundation.org.nz/ or www.perryfoundation.org.nz/

Effective Charities

The Charities Commission has developed a statement of the qualities that it considers contribute to making a charity efficient and effective, and best able to achieve its purposes.

The information sheet is available at: www.charities.govt.nz/news/fact_sheets/qualeff.htm

IRD Guideline: Reimbursing Volunteers

The Department of Inland Revenue has published a set of guidelines about payments to volunteers in reimbursement of their expenses. It spells out: when can someone receive reimbursement, kinds of reimbursement, tax status of reimbursements, a definition of honorarium, what "scheduled payments" are, and what happens when someone gets both an honorarium and a reimbursement.

The guideline is at <http://taxpolicy.ird.govt.nz/publications/files/Volunteersip.pdf>

Business

2025 Taskforce: First Report

The first report of the 2025 Taskforce has been released. This taskforce has been set up to report annually on progress towards closing the income gap with Australia by 2025 (currently Australians earn on average 30.5% more than NZers). Amongst other things, it recommends reducing the number of people on benefits, increasing the eligibility age for superannuation, winding up the NZ Super Fund, abolishing universal subsidies for doctor's visits and reducing pharmaceutical subsidies, market rates for student loans, abolishing fee caps on university fees, selling all businesses owned by central government operating in competitive markets, and progressively reducing the maximum personal tax rate, and the company and trust tax rates to 20 percent.

The Government has indicated it will consider the ideas, with others, over coming months.

More is at <http://www.2025taskforce.govt.nz/fromthetaskforce.htm>

Recent Regional Economic Activity

According to the National Bank of NZ, twelve out of the fourteen regions posted a rise in economic activity in the September quarter, with the nationwide measure expanding by 0.7% over the same period. Economic activity increased 0.6% in the North Island and 1.1% in the South Island in the three months to September.

Consecutive quarterly rises in economic activity were measured in ten regions (the biggest growth occurred in the Waikato). At the other extreme, Wellington was the only region to post back-to-back economic declines in both the June and September quarters.

For the year ending September, nationwide annual economic growth showed a 1.8% decline, unchanged from the figure measured in June. The South Island recorded a 1.6% decline in annual economic growth and the North Island recorded a 1.8% decline.

Import Values at 2005 Levels

According to recent figures from Statistics NZ, seasonally adjusted merchandise imports have declined to \$9.5 billion, a level similar to the December 2005 quarter. The seasonally adjusted value of imports fell 8.1% in the September 2009 quarter, following falls of 13.2% and 3.4% in the March and June 2009 quarters, respectively.

More is at

http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/imports_and_exports/overseas_cargo/OverseasMerchandiseTrade_MRSep09.aspx

Auditing Auditors: Changes Coming?

According to a Cabinet paper published on the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) website, the Government is proposing to change the way accountants and auditors offering services in NZ are regulated. Auditors are not regulated as a specialist profession, but as accountants, with auditor oversight currently being carried out by the Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICA) – who are currently also responsible for promoting the sector. The paper says that this approach doesn't adequately reflect the specialised skills, knowledge, and experience that auditors need to have, and this was very evident in relation to recent finance company failures.

It suggests that responsibility for auditor oversight would be moved to a beefed up Accounting Standards Review Board, which would be known as the External Reporting Board.

Download the Cabinet paper from

http://www.med.govt.nz/templates/MultipageDocumentTOC_42164.aspx

Merger & Acquisitions Guidelines

The Commerce Commission has released guidelines on how applications for mergers and acquisitions involving the "failing firm" argument will be treated. The guidelines are designed to assist businesses and their legal representatives by explaining how the Commission will assess claims that the target firm (or division of a firm) is failing as well as outlining the types of supporting evidence that could be required. The guidelines extend the Commission's Mergers and Acquisitions Guidelines.

The guidelines are available on the Commission's website www.comcom.govt.nz under Business Competition/Mergers and Acquisitions.

Trans-Pacific Partnership – US Move

The US has confirmed it will be holding discussions with the aim of commencing negotiations to join the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPP). The existing TPP partners – Chile, Singapore, NZ, and Brunei – will negotiate with the United States, Australia, and Peru for an expanded trade partnership. The announcement is seen as significant because US involvement in the TPP is perceived as paving the way for freer trade between NZ and the US.

NZ-Gulf States FTA

A NZ-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was recently concluded. Exports to GCC - made up of Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar - totalled NZ\$1.3 billion in the year to June 2009, an increase of 218% since 2000. The group now ranks as our seventh largest trading partner with bilateral trade worth \$3.85 billion. NZ's major exports to the region are dominated by primary sector products such as dairy, sheep meat, and wood but there is increasing interest in critical services areas such as ICT, education, environmental, and professional services.

NZ-Hong Kong, China CEP

A NZ - Hong Kong, China Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (CEP) has been concluded, seven months after negotiations began. Trade between the two economies has grown by an annual average of 7.4% for the past five years and is now worth more than NZ\$1 billion, and there is also considerable potential in the service sector, in particular in the areas of education, tourism, business, and environmental service. In addition, as well as in investment with Hong Kong, China is also seen as a hub for investment in the region.

The CEP is likely to be formally signed and its details released in the first half of 2010.

2009 Deloitte Fast 50 Named...

The country's 50 fastest growing companies were revealed, with Dunedin's NZ Honey Co topping the annual Index with revenue growth of 995% between 2007 and 2009. NZ Honey Co was established in 2005 and is NZ's single largest producer of speciality honeys.

Other highlights include:

- to make the Fast 50 this year, companies needed revenue growth of 145% or higher between 2007 and 2009;
- the Fast 50 companies grew the NZ economy by \$426 million collectively between 2007 and 2009, and created 784 jobs;
- Asia was named the most exciting export market to try and break into, and the biggest obstruction was dearth of market knowledge; and
- the most logical export market to try and break into is Australia, and the biggest barriers to doing so that were cited were funding, networks, and distribution channels.

More is at http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_NZ/nz/top-of-mind/deloitte-fast-50/index.htm

...Deloitte Management Magazine Awards...

The main awards include: **Executive of the Year:** Air NZ CEO, Rob Fyfe; **Company of the Year:** Abano Healthcare Group; **Chief Executive of the Decade:** Ralph Norris; **Chairperson of the Year:** John Palmer, chair of Air NZ and Solid Energy; **Kensington Swan Ethical Governance Award:** NZ Aluminium Smelters; and **Young Executive of the Year Award:** David Larsen, Sales & Marketing Manager, RayGlass Boats.

More is at <http://www.management.co.nz/top200/>

...& NZ Franchise of the Year

The Supreme Franchise System of the Year went to Columbus Coffee, and the Supreme Franchisee of the Year went to Fastway Couriers Franchisee, Tauranga CBD.

More is at <http://www.franchiseassociation.org.nz/>

Money Matters

Nov. 2009 Financial Stability Report

The outlook for the NZ economy and financial system has improved in the past six months as international conditions have stabilised, but some risks and challenges remain, according to the Reserve Bank's November 2009 Financial Stability Report. While the improved global outlook is generally positive for this country, the rise in the NZ dollar over recent months could hinder continued improvement in the external balance.

More is at <http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/finstab/fsreport/>

National Accounts: Year to March

Gross domestic product (GDP) in current prices* increased 2.0% for the year ended March 2009, Statistics NZ said recently. This increase is the lowest since the year ended March 1999 and follows a 7.7% increase in the March 2008 year. Other trends include: lower business profits, a low rise in disposable income, consumption only slightly increasing, lower investment in fixed assets, and lower national saving for the year. *Current prices means the effects of inflation have not been removed, unlike the estimates published in quarterly GDP releases.

More is at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/population/estimates_and_projections/NationalAccounts_MRyeMar09.aspx

Last Quarter's Govt Accounts

The Financial Statements of the Government for the three months ended 30 September 2009 were released by the Treasury recently. Core Crown tax revenue (at \$11.9 billion) was \$1.1 billion lower than forecast. Most of this decrease was due to corporate tax revenue which was \$900 million under forecast.

However, higher-than-forecast investment returns reported by the NZS Fund and ACC (\$1.4 billion and \$700 million, respectively) offset the tax result, meaning the operating balance deficit was slightly better than forecast at \$200 million (\$400 million lower than the forecast deficit of \$600 million).

More is at <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/releases/2009-11-04f>

Food Prices: November

In November 2009 compared with October 2009: food prices fell 0.3%; fruit and vegetable prices fell 2.0%; non-alcoholic beverage prices fell 0.8%; grocery food prices fell 0.2%; meat, poultry, and fish prices rose 0.1%; and restaurant meals and ready-to-eat food prices rose 0.6%.

From November 2008 to November 2009 food prices increased 0.9% - the lowest annual rise since September 2005.

Retail Sales

For the September 2009 quarter compared with the June 2009 quarter (seasonally adjusted): total retail sales value rose 0.5% (\$82 million); total retail sales volume rose 0.1%; core retail sales value rose 0.6% (\$69 million); core retail sales volume rose 0.5%; appliance retailing had the biggest volume rise, up 6.5%, and the second-biggest value rise, up 5.1% (\$32 million); and motor vehicle retailing had the biggest volume fall, down 2.0% - but the third-highest value rise, up 1.9% (\$31 million).

Latest Manufacturing Figures

Statistics NZ say that total manufacturing activity (measured by seasonally adjusted sales volumes) fell 1.4% in the September 2009 quarter - but, excluding meat and dairy product, rose 1% over the quarter.

Manufacturing volumes rose 1.0%. This is the first rise in seven quarters, and it follows a 15-year low last quarter. Meat and dairy product manufacturing was the dominant industry, with a 7.1% drop in the September 2009 quarter. Other industries with large movements in volume this quarter were; wood products, up 9.1%, basic metals, up 21.5%; and machinery and equipment, down 4.4%.

The value of sales fell by 5.1% (\$1,004 million) in the September 2009 quarter and are now at a level last seen in early 2007. Meat and dairy product manufacturing was again the dominant cause of the fall, mainly because of lower prices for dairy products. Excluding dairy, sales values were still down, but only by 0.8%.

NZers' Retirement Savings Up

Kiwis are "flooding back into Kiwisaver" and still saving for retirement despite the recession sapping their ability to spend, according to a recent AMP report (based on an August 2009 survey). Retirement savings have returned to pre-recession levels, with 64% of savers saying they are putting aside money for their superannuation.

The survey also found almost everyone who joined the Kiwisaver scheme said it was the right decision, with only a few trimming their contribution to the 2% minimum introduced by the National-led government in April.

More is at <http://www.amp.co.nz/upload/AMP%20SuperWatch%20112009%20.doc>

Pre-Xmas Spending Patterns

Recent data from Paymark show that 2009 festive trends are mimicking previous years, with the pre-Christmas spending increasing through November. By the end of the month, spending through the Paymark network rose 13% above the January to October average.

However, year on year growth for November continues to be modest with the value of spending via the Paymark network only increasing by 1.2% compared to November 2008. In the major cities the annual growth of total monthly spending is below the national average. Smaller regional centres such as Gisborne (+5.4%), Otago (+3.4%), and the Bay of Plenty (+3.2%) showed the fastest growth.

Sending Money to the Pacific?

A new website called SendMoneyPacific set up by the NZ and Australian governments enables people in Pacific communities to find the cheapest and easiest way to send money back home to Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

The site is at www.sendmoneypacific.org

Superannuitants' OEs Get Easier

From January 2010 superannuitants and veterans pensioners will be able to receive up to the full rate of their entitlement while travelling or living abroad, depending on how long they've resided in NZ between the ages of 20 and 65 years. Previously, they only received 50% of their payments while living overseas. Also, if superannuitants or veterans pensioners want to move to a country that isn't covered by a social security agreement or the special arrangement with Pacific countries, they may be able to take up to 100% of the gross rate of their pension with them.

People can apply from 5 January 2010. More about the changes is at www.seniors.ms.govt.nz

Tax Bill Passed

The main features of the recently-passed Taxation (Consequential Rate Alignment and Remedial Matters) Bill include:

- aligning resident withholding tax (RWT) rates on interest with recent changes to personal tax rates, and the 30% company tax rate introduced last year;
- and aligning portfolio investment entities (PIE) tax rates with new personal tax rates, thus making them 12.5%, 21%, and 30%.

(A number of other tax changes were also made via a supplementary order paper.)

Family Tax Credit Increase

The minimum family tax credit, currently guaranteeing families moving off a benefit and into paid work an income of \$20,540 a year, will guarantee an income of \$20,800 from 1 April 2010. Around 2700 families were entitled to the tax credit for the tax year ended March 2009.

New Budgeting Services Partnership

The Salvation Army and Rabobank are partnering up to provide free budgeting services, designed to enable people to handle their money responsibly. They will provide ongoing support and advice about personal and family budgeting, and also advocate on the subject.

NZ/Bahamas Tax Info Agreement

NZ has signed Tax Information Exchange Agreements (TIEA) with the Bahamas, and with the Federation of St Christopher and Nevis, more commonly known as St Kitts. TIEAs are bilateral treaties providing for full exchange of information on civil and criminal tax matters between two countries.

Internet/ICT

Ten Most Influential Internet Moments

The Webby Awards has named the ten most influential Internet moments of the 2000s. They are:

- **Craigslist expands outside San Francisco (2000).** In 2000, the free classifieds site broadened its reach outside of San Francisco into nine additional US cities, sending chills down the spines of newspaper publishers everywhere. Today Craigslist serves free listings in more than 500 cities in 50 countries;

- **Google AdWords launches (2000).** This turned advertising on its head, by opening the marketplace to any business, no matter how big or small, and allowed advertisers to target their customers more precisely;
- **Wikipedia launches (2001).** The free open-source encyclopaedia epitomizes the Internet's power to bring strangers from around the world together to collaborate on projects both big and small;
- **Napster Shut Down (2001).** Although Napster was shut down in 2001, its demise sparked a wave of innovations that forever changed how we obtain and experience music and video;
- **Google IPO (2004).** Google's IPO, one of the largest in history, put the six-year old search engine on the path to becoming the most dominant and influential company of the decade;
- **Online video revolution (2006).** In 2006, a perfect storm of faster bandwidth, cheaper camcorders, and the groundbreaking use of Adobe's Flash 9 video player by YouTube combined to launch the online video revolution;
- **Facebook opens to non-college students and Twitter takes off (2006).** This represented the point when social media went mainstream, radically changing the way we connect, collaborate, and communicate with everyone from friends to colleagues to customers;
- **The iPhone debuts (2007).** The point at which smartphones had gone from a luxury item to a necessity. The iPhone inspired the development of operating systems like Google Android, as well as an app for just about every aspect of modern life. Over the next decade, it's estimated that a billion new users will come to the Internet for the first time through mobile devices.
- **U.S. Presidential Campaign (2008).** The Internet altered presidential politicking in 2008 much as television had forty years earlier during the Kennedy/Nixon race;
- **Iranian election protests (2009).** When Iran's 2009 presidential election produced fishy results, the opposition took to the tweets -- and the "Twitter Revolution" was born.

More is at <http://www.webbyawards.com/press/topwebmomentsdecade.php>

Broadband Subscribers Top 1 Million

According to Statistics NZ, the total number of broadband subscribers was more than one million in June 2009, up 27% since the survey was last run in March 2008. Broadband subscribers now make up nearly three-quarters of all Internet subscribers. The number of subscribers using mobile data cards, cable, or satellite technology to connect to the Internet increased by 53% to 220,000.

More is at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/industry_sectors/information_technology_and_communications/InternetServiceProviderSurvey_MRJun09.aspx

Most Visited* Lifestyle Websites

The Nielsen Market Intelligence Website Ranking for October 2009 ranks the 10 most visited lifestyle websites as: 1 stuff.co.nz/lifestyle; 2 nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle; 3 yahooextra.co.nz/lifestyle; 4 viewauckland.co.nz; 5 menumania.co.nz; 6 voxy.co.nz; 7 grownups.co.nz; 8 foodlovers.co.nz; 9 menus.co.nz; 10 nzgirl.co.nz. *Refers to unique browsers.

Mobile Competition Enhanced: Report

The Commerce Commission's report on telecommunications markets in NZ covering the first six months of 2009 shows there has been continued investment in telecommunications infrastructure in the first half of 2009, with the construction of new or extended mobile networks by Telecom, Vodafone, and 2degrees.

The report also provides some more recent information about mobile prices in NZ following the launch of the 2degrees network in August. That entry means, for the first time in the Commission's analysis, kiwi consumers are able to access a prepaid plan at prices lower than the OECD average (the best ranking for a NZ prepaid plan was 26 out of 30).

Other findings include:

- uptake of broadband services has continued to grow at an annual rate of around 14%, which is above the OECD average;
- the pricing of broadband services in NZ is broadly in line with that of similarly developed countries; and
- there continues to be strong growth in the number of wholesale services sold that allow other providers to compete against Telecom in the retail market.

The monitoring report for the first six months of 2009 is available on the Commission's website www.comcom.govt.nz under Industry Regulation/Telecommunications/Monitoring and Reporting

Mobiles: Walk & Talk Danger?

Two new studies of pedestrian safety found that using a cell phone while hoofing it can endanger one's health. The studies, in which participants crossed a virtual street while talking on the phone or listening to music, found that the music-listeners were able to navigate traffic as well as the average unencumbered pedestrian. Users of hands-free cell phones, however, took longer to cross the same street under the same conditions and were more likely to get run over. Older cell-phone users, especially those unsteady on their feet to begin with, were even more likely to become traffic casualties.

The Web in 5 Years Time

Eric Schmidt, Google CEO, says Chinese will be the dominant online language as early as 2014. A web where Chinese is the dominant language, and connections are so fast that distinctions between audio, video, and text are blurred is perhaps just five years away, he told delegates at a technology conference in Orlando, Florida.

Find more information, including a link to video of the Eric Schmidt's interview online at http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/google_web_in_five_years.php

Kiwi Digital Agency Wins

Wellington digital agency Resn received wins at the 2009 Pixel Awards – a major international competition for the world's best digital agencies. In addition to Best in Show for the JAG Jeans brand website and Best Agency, Resn won the Best Music Site for Fat Freddy's Drop TV and Best Animation for Nelson company 26000 Vodkas website. 2009 is the first time an agency has received five wins.

More is at <http://www.pixelawards.com/>

“Go Large” Customers: Telecom Credits

Following court action in relation to Telecom advertising of its “Go Large” broadband plan and “unleashed” broadband plans, the company is crediting customers who were on the Go Large plan between October 2006 and December 2006 who have not already received a credit (Telecom applied credits in 2006 and 2007). Any customer due a credit will be contacted and credited shortly.

A Handful of Sites

- An indication of the different of ways in which socially conscious companies make contributions to the not-for-profit sector is at <http://www.nzbcscd.org.nz/story.asp?StoryID=1034>.
- *Submissions on the Governments proposals for rural broadband are available at www.med.govt.nz/rural-broadband and www.med.govt.nz/tso. A total of 67 submissions were received on the rural broadband proposal and 23 on the TSO reform proposal. Government targets for rural broadband are: 93% of rural schools will receive fibre, enabling speeds of at least 100Mbps, with the remaining 7% to achieve speeds of at least 10Mbps; and over 80% of rural households will have access to broadband with speeds of at least 5Mbps, with the remainder to achieve speeds of at least 1Mbps.*
- *Information about human rights and redundancy is at <http://www.hrc.co.nz/home/hrc/enquiriescomplaints/youasked/humanrightsandredundancy.php>*

- *A list of schools that will receive allocations of funding for Adult and Community Education in 2010* is at <http://www.tec.govt.nz/templates/NewsItem.aspx?id=5977>
- The website of a new association which promises to implement and enforce new guidelines for au pair agencies, the NZ Au Pair Association (NZAPA), is at www.nzapa.org.nz
- *A totally fun online game that tests your geography knowledge* is at <http://www.travelpod.com/traveler-ig>
- *Time Magazine's list of 50 best inventions for 2009* is at <http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/0,28757,1934027,00.html>
- *If you really wish to see a list of the recently-voted 15 stupidest products of all time* go to http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/11/02/the-15-stupidest-products_n_342316.html
- *If you only thought vodka was for drinking, well think again.* It can be used for, for instance for: increasing the life of cut flowers, removing cat odours, killing bacteria, and cleaning jewellery. For more handy tips go to <http://www.greenlivingtips.com/articles/354/1/Uses-for-vodka.html>
- *Two NZ companies, with Thailand firmly in their sights, passed on their insights to Asia NZ.* Read about it at <http://www.asianz.org.nz/our-work/action-asia-business/thailand>
- *Writing a good survey is hard work. The following article has some useful tips as well as links to useful survey tools:* <http://www.investigatortips.com/how-to-write-great-surveys/2009/10/27/>
- *The International Association of Sports Newspapers (IASN) has launched a new website -* <http://www.press-iasn.org> - to highlight its work in the promotion of the interests and freedom of the sports press.
- *Green Cities California, the collaborative of 10 cities and counties acknowledged as sustainability leaders,* recently launched a website - www.GreenCitiesCalifornia.org - designed as a repository of best practices and other tools for policymakers who are trying to improve the environmental performance of their locales.
- An article indicating US company spending on green products is rising, even though there's a recession attempts to answer the question of what it actually means when procurement goes green. The article is at <http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2009/11/19/what-does-it-mean-when-procurement-goes-green>
- More about "Project Laundry", launched with a mission of "making air-drying and cold-water washing laundry acceptable and desirable as a simple and effective way to save energy" is at <http://www.grist.org/article/2009-11-12-alex-lee-clothesline-revolution/> (Surprising as it may seem to us, many communities in the US do not allow clotheslines, out of fear that they will hurt property values.)
- *At some restaurants and pubs around the UK you can exchange your home-grown produce for a drink.* Read more at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/nov/12/fruit-vegetables-restaurant-barter>
- *You can view and download 100 green tips for small businesses* at <http://smallbiztrends.com/2009/10/100-green-small-business-tips.html>
- *See 12 ways to use shipping containers as offices, housing, and art* at <http://www.treehugger.com/files/2009/10/12-ways-to-use-shipping-containers.php>
- *Inland Revenue now has a wide range of statistical information about tax revenue and social entitlements* on its website at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/IRD/aboutir/external-stats/>, covering e.g., donation rebates, child support, Working for Families Tax Credits entitlements, GST turnover and filing, and income distribution by income bands. Revenue statistics cover the years from July 2001 to June 2008, and customer statistics are available from April 2001 to March 2008.
- A new web-based pilot project aimed at making it easier for businesses, researchers, analysts and journalists to access government information is at www.data.govt.nz.

Treaty Matters

Ngati Whare Settlement Signed

The Crown and Ngati Whare recently signed a Deed of Settlement for the iwi's historical Treaty of Waitangi claims. Ngati Whare's rohe is centred around Te Whaiti, Minginui, and the Whirinaki Conservation Park in the Bay of Plenty.

The agreement is a co-governance agreement focusing on the Whirinaki Forest Park, bringing ecological and economic benefits to both iwi and all New Zealanders who will continue to enjoy it. The settlement also provides for a joint Ngati Whare-Crown project that aims to regenerate up to 640 hectares of the Whirinaki Crown Forestry Licenced land adjacent to the Whirinaki Conservation Park back to indigenous forest, also for everyone to enjoy.

Ngati Whare's claims relate primarily to the Crown's actions during the 1860s wars, the impact of the Native Land Court and subsequent land alienation, the Urewera District Native Reserves Act 1896, Crown corporatisation, cessation of indigenous forest logging, and the return of Minginui without providing Ngati Whare with resources.

Arts & Culture

The Real Art Roadshow

The Real Art Roadshow is made up of two truckloads of post-1945 real NZ art that find their way to secondary schools throughout the country. Each truck unfolds to form a 64 square metre art gallery and displays over 60 original artworks by some of NZ's leading artists. The aim is to give every art student in NZ the opportunity to see the real thing no matter where they live or where they study.

The collection has been purchased from the artists themselves as well as from dealers and auctions, and it includes a wide range of well-known NZ artists.

The Roadshow is run as a not-for-profit organisation, which relies on the generosity of others to keep it trucking. Visits are free for schools and free for students.

More on the idea, the art, the itinerary, and how to book the roadshow is at <http://www.realartroadshow.co.nz/home.html>

Closing date for submissions is 15 January, 2010. More, including how to enter, is at <http://www.your-big-break.com/> The brief is at <http://www.your-big-break.com/thebrief>

Words of the Year 2009

There are two 'schools of thought' when it comes to choosing the word (or words) of the year: Oxford uses a committee of lexicographers and other experts to select a word that is not currently in the dictionary but will be added. Merriam-Webster, on the other hand, selects among existing entries based on Web site traffic.

Oxford's 2009 Word of the Year is: **unfriend** – verb – To remove someone as a "friend" on a social networking site such as Facebook. As in, "I decided to unfriend my roommate on Facebook after we had a fight."

Other new words Oxford considered include:

- **intexticated** – distracted because texting on a cellphone while driving a vehicle;
- **netbook** – a small, very portable laptop computer with limited memory;
- **paywall** – a way of blocking access to a part of a website which is only available to paying subscribers;
- **freemium** – a business model in which some basic services are provided for free, with the aim of enticing users to pay for additional, premium features or content;
- **zombie bank** – a financial institution whose liabilities are greater than its assets, but which continues to operate because of government support;
- **ecotown** - a town built and run on eco-friendly principles; and
- **deleb** – a dead celebrity.

Merriam Webster's word of the year is "admonish". When the US House admonished Representative Joe Wilson for shouting "You lie!" at President Barack Obama during a health care speech to Congress, it not only lit up talk show lines, but also sent many people scurrying to the Internet in search of a definition. Admonish, a verb dating to the 14th century meaning "to express warning or disapproval in a gentle, earnest, or solicitous manner," generated enough curiosity to crown it Merriam-Webster's Word of the Year.

More on Oxford's Word of the Year is at <http://blog.oup.com/2009/11/unfriend/>, and more on Merriam-Webster's is at <http://www.merriam-webster.com/info/09words.htm>

Short Film Competition

A Tourism NZ short film competition called "Your Big Break" is underway. Five finalists will be chosen from screen plays submitted that "capture the essence of 100% Pure NZ". They will shoot and direct their own short films on location in NZ at the post-production facility Park Road Post, in Wellington. Peter Jackson will judge the completed films, and the winning film will be shown on US television.

Books of the Decade...

UK newspaper "The Times" has published a list of what it considers to be the 100 best books of the decade. Books include: "Berlin: The Downfall, 1945" by Antony Beevor (2002); "Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found" by Suketu Mehta (2005); "Twilight" by Stephenie Meyer (2005); "The Enchantress of Florence" by Salman Rushdie (2008); "Collected Poems" by Michael Donaghy (2009); "Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed" by Jared Diamond (2005); "Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything" by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner (2005); "The Arrival" by Shaun Tan (2006); "Bad Science" by Ben Goldacre (2008); and "War and Peace" by Leo Tolstoy, in a new translation by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (2007).

The full list can be viewed at http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/books/book_reviews/article6914181.ece

...Films of the Decade...

UK newspaper "The Times" has published a list of what it considers to be the 100 best films of the decade. The films include: "The Devil Wears Prada" (2006); "House of Flying Daggers" (2004); "The Orphanage" (2007); "In The Loop" (2009); "Pan's Labyrinth" (2006); "The Class" (2008); "The Consequences of Love" (2004); "The Lord of The Rings: The Return of the King" (Peter Jackson, 2003); "Touching the Void" (2003); "Iraq in Fragments" (2006) "The Dark Knight" (2008); "Syriana" (2005); "In the Mood for Love" (2000); "Finding Nemo" (2003); "28 Days Later..." (2002); "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan" (2006); "The Queen" (2006); "Team America: World Police" (2004); and "Hidden (Cache)" (2005).

The full list can be viewed at http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/film/article6902642.ece

... & Albums of the Decade

UK newspaper "The Times" has published a list of what it considers to be the 100 best pop albums of the decade. They include: "12 Songs" - Neil Diamond (2005); "American III: Solitary Man" - Johnny Cash (2002); "Youth Novels" - Lykke Li (2008); "React or Die" - Butcher Boy (How Does It Feel to be Loved, 2009); "Flight of the Conchords" - Flight of the Conchords (2008); "The Radio Tisdas Sessions" - Tinariwen (2001); A "Lick on the Tip of an Envelope yet to be Sent" - Circulus (2005); "Invaders Must Die" - The Prodigy (2009); "For Emma, Forever Ago" - Bon Iver (4AD, 2008); "Black Holes & Revelations" - Muse (2006); "Elegia" - Paolo Conte (2005); "We Shall Overcome: The Seeger

Sessions" - Bruce Springsteen (2006); "The Marshall Mathers LP" - Eminem (2000); "Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not" - Arctic Monkeys (Domino, 2006); "The College Dropout" - Kanye West (Mercury, 2004); and "Kid A" - Radiohead (Parlophone, 2000).

The full list can be viewed at

http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/music/article6922991.ece The UK magazine NME has an "Album of the decade" list at <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/nme-names-top-50-albums-of-the-decade-1822046.html>, and "The Times" has 10 best jazz albums of the decade at http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/music/article6925488.ece, and the 10 best world music albums of the decade at http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/music/article6925503.ece

More is at www.wildrivers.org.nz

Science/Technology

Bird Census Via Birdsong

Ecologists from NZ and the US have at last worked out a way of using recordings of birdsong to accurately measure the size of bird populations. This is the first time sound recordings from a microphone array have been translated into accurate estimates of bird species' populations. Because the new technique, reported in the British Ecological Society's Journal of Applied Ecology, will also work with whale song, it could lead to a major advance in our ability to monitor whale and dolphin numbers.

More is at <http://www.voxy.co.nz/national/ecologists-sound-out-solution-monitoring-birds/5/31575>

Fish & Ships

NZ Top in Fisheries Management

International scientists have once again ranked this country best in the world at managing its marine and fisheries resources. The research, just published in the journal "Marine Policy", evaluated 53 countries and rated NZ best overall against 14 indicators of marine resource management. The countries in the study account for more than 95 percent of the world's fisheries catch.

You can purchase the original article at

http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6VCD-4XMC07C-1&_user=10&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&_docanchor=&view=c&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=5437c2b64388cd9691fd88aed09c2f4

Early Birds' & Night Owls' Brains

Canadian scientists have found that there are significant differences in the way our brains function depending on whether we are early risers or night owls. They found that morning people's brains were most excitable at 9 am. This slowly decreased through the day. It was the polar opposite for evening people, whose brains were most excitable at 9 pm. The study also found that evening people became physically stronger throughout the day, but the maximum amount of force morning people could produce remained the same.

Managing High Seas Fisheries

A South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) has been formed to manage deep sea fish stocks such as orange roughy and jack mackerel - in the high seas. Its convention addresses one of the world's last remaining governance gaps for high seas fisheries.

SPRFMO will not be dealing with tuna and other highly-migratory species, because these fisheries are managed by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

NZ is to will host the commission secretariat. SPRFMO has also agreed on interim measures prohibiting deepwater gillnetting on the high seas.

Protecting Wild Rivers

Eight conservation and outdoor recreation groups have combined to advocate for stronger protection for NZ's wild rivers. The groups are Fish & Game, Federated Mountain Clubs, Forest & Bird, Whitewater NZ, the Council of Outdoor Recreation Associations of NZ, the NZ Rafting Association, the NZ Federation of Freshwater Anglers, and the Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ.

South Island: Dinosaur Footprints Discovered

GNS Scientists have found 70 million-year-old dinosaur footprints in northwest Nelson. They are the first dinosaur footprints to be recognised in NZ and the first evidence of dinosaurs in the South Island. There are six locations over an area about 10km in length where footprints appear. At one location there are up to 20 footprints. Further details of the discovery will be published in the December issue of the NZ Journal of Geology & Geophysics

More, including photos and video footage, is at <http://www.gns.cri.nz/news/release/20091106footprint.html>

General

Climate Outlook to January 2010

According to NIWA, the El Niño in the equatorial Pacific has strengthened during October and November, and is expected to persist at moderate intensity through the summer of 2010 before weakening during the autumn. Mean sea level pressures are likely to be higher than normal to the north of the country and lower than normal to the south, resulting in stronger than normal south-westerlies over NZ.

Summer rainfall totals are likely to be in the normal or below normal range in the north and east of the North Island, and in Nelson-Marlborough, but near normal in other regions.

Temperatures for the coming 3-month period (December, January and February combined) are likely to be below average or average in all regions.

Rivers flows and soil moistures are likely to be in the below normal or normal ranges in all regions.

The Nation's Wish List

Kiwis young and old dream a lot, and quite differently too, according to a survey done to find out what was on the nation's wish list.

When the adult survey respondents were asked what their top three wishes were as a child, 22% wanted a pet, 15% wanted to go to Disneyland, 15% wanted a new bike, 11% wanted to go on holiday, and 9% wanted to "become rich".

As an adult, the top three wishes on their list are quite different, with a third (36%) wishing for more money or to win Lotto, 30% wanting good health for themselves and their families, 27% wanting to travel, 18% wanting their own home, and 6% wanting to give to charities and for world peace.

The top wishes for NZ as a country were: 18% of survey respondents wished for a Kiwi sports team to win their respective World Cups, 12% wished for less crime and violence, 11% wanted NZ to be a more prosperous nation, and 10% wanted NZ to be a top international tourist destination.

Population Projections: 2009–2061

Currently, there are 550,000 people aged 65+ and 890,000 children. But, by the late 2020s those aged 65+ will number over 1 million and comprise one in five kiwis (exceeding the number of children aged under 15 years in the process). These trends largely reflect the higher fertility rates of the 1950s and 1960s, the much lower fertility rates since, and the continuing gains in life expectancy.

NZ's population overall is projected to reach 5 million in the mid-2020s and 5.75 million in 2061. However, population growth will slow because of the narrowing gap between births and deaths.

More at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/population/estimates_and_projections/NationalPopulationProjections_MR09base61.aspx

Global Gender Gap Index 2009

Iceland (1) has claimed the top spot of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2009 from Norway (3) which slipped to third position behind Finland (2). Sweden (4) completed the Nordic countries' continued dominance of the top four. NZ took 5th place. The report's Index assesses countries on how well they are dividing their resources and opportunities among their male and female populations, regardless of the overall levels of these resources and opportunities.

More is at <http://www.weforum.org/en/Communities/Women%20Leaders%20and%20Gender%20Parity/GenderGapNetwork/index.htm>

New "Silver Fern" Visa

A new "Silver Fern" visa is aimed at attracting young highly-skilled people to come to NZ for up to nine months to seek skilled employment. Once they find employment, they will be able to stay for a further two years, while they apply for residence. There will be an initial limit of 300 places and the policy specifically targets people aged between 20 and 35 years old.

The visa will be available in April 2010.

NZ is Migrants' Choice...

NZ's adult population would balloon to more than 11 million if it were to take in all adults who wish to settle here, a global survey by Gallup shows. Using what it calls the Potential Net Migration Index (PNMI), NZ registered third, behind only Singapore and Saudi Arabia, as immigration destinations.

The index is calculated on the number of adults wishing to leave a country permanently subtracted from the estimated number who wish to immigrate to the country, as a proportion of the total population. A higher positive PNMI value means the larger the potential for net population gain proportional to the country's population size.

More at <http://www.gallup.com/poll/124028/700-Million-Worldwide-Desire-Migrate-Permanently.aspx>

... & Immigrant Effects on NZ Economy

The Department of Labour (DOL) has released a new report discussing simulations of the economy-wide impact of immigration into NZ. In general, it was found that increased immigration:

reduces production costs;

improves the competitiveness of NZ goods and services, benefiting exports;

benefits domestic investment and/or consumer spending, depending on the skills composition of the immigration inflow; and

results in higher revenues to government, which outweigh the impact on spending, so translate into an improvement in the balance of the government's accounts.

Download "Economic Impacts of Immigration: Scenarios Using a Computable General Equilibrium Model of the NZ Economy" from <http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/research/cge/index.asp>

Broader Human Rights Issues

More than half the complaints coming to the Human Rights Commission (HRC) from kiwis seeking help and advice are now about broader human rights issues. The Commission's 2009 annual report reveals that of the 3489 complaints, 1405 were about potential unlawful discrimination. The balance of 2084 complaints involved broader human rights issues, such as the rights of seasonal workers and the right to education for children.

Of the unlawful discrimination complaints, it's that noted the area of employment and pre-employment continued to be the most prominent source of complaints, accounting for 43% of approaches.

Download the annual report at <http://www.hrc.co.nz/home/hrc/newsandissues/broaderhumanrightscomplaintsontherise.php>

Babyboomers Retiring – Not!

Sharon Buckland has conducted research called "The NZ Babyboomer Dreams Study" that outlines the intentions and aspirations of NZ babyboomers. A thousand soon-to-retirees were interviewed online, and the results were contrary to what many may think. For instance:

- babyboomers are young-thinking and technologically savvy – "80 is the new 65" for many of these people;
- many don't plan to stop working in some way when they reach 65 (28% of those surveyed plan to start a new business, and 38% plan to continue working in their existing field);
- work/life balance is particularly important to this group – so while they will continue to work if they can it won't be full-time; and
- health concerns rank hugely, and because they want to keep active for as long as they can, 75% say they will take active steps to improve their health in the next 5-10 years.

More information on this is available as a Radio NZ podcast downloadable at <http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/ninetoon/20090915>

NZ's Top Chip Shops

Oceanz in Silverdale, Auckland has been named NZ's top chip shop after taking out the number one spot in this year's That's Life! Best Chip Shop Competition. The six regional winners are as follows:

- **Northland to North Shore Region:** Oceanz – Silverdale – regional winner and grand national winner, Corner of East Bays Road and State Highway, Silverdale;

- **Rest of Auckland Region:** The Chip Shop, 711 Manukau Road, Royal Oak;
- **Waikato to Hawkes Bay Region:** Oppie's Fish & Chips, 259 Fenton Street, Rotorua;
- **Manawatu to Wellington Region:** So Fine Seafoods, 2 Tennyson Ave, Avalon, Lower Hutt;
- **Nelson to Christchurch Region:** The Sands Fish & Chips, Shop 1 623 Rocks Road, Tahunanui, Nelson; and
- **Timaru to Southland Region:** Portobello Store & Takeaway, 1 Harington Point Road, Portobello, Dunedin.

Auckland Governance Update

A third Bill dealing with the reform of Auckland's governance will: transfer Auckland's assets and liabilities to the new Council; protect staff who move from the old councils to the new Council; and enable the new Council to be up and running on 1 November 2010.

A statutory board will represent the interests of Maori, with specific recognition of the rights of the mana whenua of Auckland, and a Pacific advisory panel and an ethnic advisory panel will also be set up to have input into the new Auckland Council's decision making.

Cabinet papers covering these decisions are at http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Legislative-Reviews-Royal-Commission-on-Auckland-Governance-Index?OpenDocument

Some Conferences/Events

Watch out for A&P Shows

The following A&P shows are being held around the country between January to mid-March 2010: 16 January: Winton A&P Show; 6 February: Gore A&P Show; 13 February: Waiau A&P Show; 20 February: Mt Bengier A&P Show - Roxburgh; 5-6 March: Southland A&P Show - Invercargill; and 12-13 March: Upper Clutha A&P Show - Wanaka.

NZ Rural General Practice Network Conference

Advance notice that this conference will be held in Christchurch next year at the city's Convention Centre from 11-14 March 2010. The conference theme is "Rural Health – No.8 Wired".

Registration details are at <http://www.rqpn.org.nz/Events/Conference-2010-registration-open.aspx>

Parihaka Peace Festival

Organised by the Parihaka Management Trust, this festival is being held in Parihaka, Taranaki from 7-11 January 2010.

More is at www.parihaka.com

National Not-for-Profit Sector Conference

"The Way Forward: Inspiration + Skills", 11-12 March 2010, Waipuna Conference Centre, Auckland. The conference will focus on management and governance of the not-for-profit sector.

Further information at <http://nfpconference.co.nz/> or contact events@grow.co.nz

Community Economic Development Conference

This one, the first of its kind, is being held at the Unitec Waitakere campus in Auckland from 9-11 February 2010. It is aimed at people from not-for-profit organisations, government agencies, and councils who want to explore best practice in community-led local economic development, social enterprises, social finances, asset transfer, and enabling support systems.

For more information go to http://www.csbec.org.nz/index.cfm/Community_Economic_Development_Conf

2010 International Gambling Conference

Called "The Implications of Technology for Policy, Practice and Research" this conference is being held on 24-26 February 2010, at the Crown Plaza Hotel, Auckland.

Registration details are at <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-institutes/niphmnr/gambling-and-addictions-research-centre/conferences-and-other-events>

Funding/Awards Opportunities

United Way Grants

2009 United Way grants are aimed at helping children and youth succeed, strengthening families, supporting the vulnerable and elderly, and promoting wellness, independence and self sufficiency. Applications are sought from charities in greater Auckland, Manawatu, Horowhenua, Marlborough, Tasman, Canterbury, Otago, and Southland areas.

Applications close on 31 December 2009. More information including application details are at <http://www.unitedway.org.nz/>, or tel 09 3772544, or email Patsy@unitedway.org.nz

SKIP Local Initiatives Fund

The SKIP Local Initiatives Fund supports communities to explore innovative ways of promoting positive parenting and effective non-physical discipline to all parents and caregivers of birth to five year olds - not just those who traditionally seek it out. Maximum grant size for a project up to 12 months is \$70,000 (excluding GST). The maximum grant size for projects of 12 to 18 months duration is \$90,000 (excluding GST). Organisations that have delivered three or more successful SKIP Local

Initiatives can apply for up to \$195,000 spread across three years of funding.

Applications close on 26 March 2010. They go to SKIP LIF, MSD, PO Box 1556, Wellington 6011. More is at <http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/our-work/strong-families/skip/local-initiatives-fund.html#information>

Prime Minister's Science Prizes

Five prizes worth a total of \$1 million will be awarded annually, with the 2009 winners to be presented with their prizes early in 2010. Awards and prizes for two – the Prime Minister's MacDiarmid Emerging Scientist and Future Scientist Prizes - have already closed. The three still open are: the Prime Minister's Prize for Science (\$100,000/\$400,000 for research); Prime Minister's Science Teacher Prize (\$50,000/\$100,000 to their school); and Prime Minister's Science Media Communication Prize (\$150,000 covering secondments to media organisations).

Nominations for these three close on 18 December. More details about eligibility and applying are at www.pmscienceprizes.org.nz

The Cyril Bassett VC Speech Competition

Year 12 and 13 secondary school students are invited to pay tribute to the men and women who made sacrifices, and in many cases died, in the service of NZ.

Registrations close on 26 February 2010. For more information email stephen@rnzrsa.org.nz or visit http://www.rsa.org.nz/remem/speech_comp.htm

Maori Excellence in Farming Award

The 2010 Ahuwhenua Trophy celebrates business excellence in the NZ pastoral sector. It alternates year by year between sheep and beef farms and dairy farms and this year is open to Maori farming dairy properties either owned individually, or managed by Maori Trusts and Incorporations.

Entries close on 29 January 2010. Entry forms are available from all offices of Te Puni Kokiri and the Maori Trustee or from Joan Nathu, ph 04 819 9205 or joan.nathu@maoritrustee.co.nz. Copies of the entry form are also available on: www.maoritrustee.co.nz

Two Lottery Board Funds

Lottery Individuals with Disabilities Subcommittee: this committee allocates grants for mobility and communication equipment to help people with disabilities achieve independence and gain access to the community;

Lottery Minister's Discretionary Fund: this fund accepts applications from individuals and groups for community projects that are not the responsibility of any of the other Lottery distribution committees or subcommittees. These purposes include, but are not limited to overseas travel, volunteer fire fighting services, and animal welfare.

Applications to both these funds are considered at various times throughout the year. Using Grants Online at (www.cdgo.govt.nz) For support to make an application freephone 0800 824 824 or email grantsonline@dia.govt.nz

Transpower CommunityCare Fund

This fund makes one-off grants for projects in communities along the existing National Grid route, as well as communities affected by new Transpower projects. Any independent, local, non-profit organisation or community group, school, iwi or regional or district council can apply.

Applications close on 31 January and 31 July each year. They go to Transpower CommunityCare Fund Corporate Affairs, Transpower NZ Ltd, PO Box 1021, Wellington 6140. More information is available at communitycare@transpower.co.nz, or tel 04 495 7005

IPANZ Awards

These public sector awards include excellence in: Working Together for Better Services, Crown Maori Relationships, Excellence in Networked Government, Public Sector Communications, Improving Public Value through Business Transformation, and Improving Performance through Leadership. The Prime Minister's Award for Public Sector Excellence will be awarded to one of the winners of the above categories. It will recognise outstanding achievement and a sustained commitment to excellence.

Closing date for nominations is 1 February 2010. They go to IPANZ GEN-I Public Sector Awards, Excellence Awards, Room 508, Level 5, Railway Station Building, VUW School of Government, Pipitea Campus, Wellington. More is at www.ipanzawards.org.nz or email awards@ipanz.org.nz

Community Irrigation Fund

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's Community Irrigation Fund (CIF) is now open for applications for the 2010/11 funding round. This fund provides grants to promoters of community water storage and/or irrigation schemes for generating investor and community support. Applicants need to have completed a feasibility study for the irrigation scheme before applying. The CIF also provides funding for local government-led water strategies.

Applications close on 22 February 2010. More information/application forms can be found on the MAF website link: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/cif/> or contact L Dobbs, CIF Project Adviser, tel phone: 04 894 0632 or email: CIFund@maf.govt.nz

Appointments

NZ's next *Ambassador to Germany* will be career diplomat Peter Rider. Frances Jean Elvers has been appointed a *District Court Judge*. Roger Murray Bell has been appointed as a *temporary Associate Judge of the High Court* for a period of 12 months.

Keita Walker, John Baird, Sir Hirini Mead, Professor Ranginui Walker and Dr Angela Ballara have been *reappointed* to the *Waitangi Tribunal*, each for a term of three years. Retired High Court judge Sir John Hansen is the new *Legal Service Board*

chair, and John Spencer is a *new board* member. Diana Crossan has been confirmed as *Retirement Commissioner* until January 2013. The *Chief of Defence Force*, Lieutenant General Jerry Mateparae, and the *Chief of Air Force*, Air Vice Marshal Graham Lintott, have been reappointed for a further year from 1 May 2010. *Te Ohu Kaimoana, the Maori Fisheries Trust*, confirmed Ngati Kahungunu's Ngahiwi Tomoana as its new *chair*. The *NZ Law Society* (NZLS) has elected Jonathan Temm to be the *society's next president*. The *NZ Institute of Chartered Accountants* has elected Dinu Harry as *President* and Ross Jackson as *Vice-President*.

Neil Walter has been reappointed *chair* of *NZ On Air* until 2012, and Nicole Hoey is also reappointed for another 3-year term. Trustees have elected ex-MP Ann Hartley as the new *chair* of *ASB Community Trust*. Neil Walter is the new *chair* of *NZ On Air* and Nicole Hoey is a *member* of the *board*. *Members* appointed to the new *National Health Board* (working within the Ministry of Health) are Dr Virginia Hope (*deputy chair*), Dr Jeff Brown, Rob Cooper, Mary Gordon, Professor Des Gorman, Marion Guy, Dr Bev O'Keefe, Graeme Osborne, Hayden Wano, Dr Margaret Wilsher, and Dr Murray Horn (*chair*).

Researchers James Belich and Timothy Naish have been appointed to the *Marsden Fund Council*. The *chair* of the *Shared Services Establishment Board* (set up to help reduce the cost of DHB back office functions) is Michael Cashin. *Members of this board* are Paula Rebstock, Lester Levy, Brent Esler and Chris Lowry. David Warburton has been appointed to *Palmerston North's MidCentral DHB*, Phil Sunderland has been appointed to the *Whanganui District Health Board*, Keith Hindle has been appointed to *Capital and Coast DHB*, and Debbie Chin has been appointed to *Hutt Valley DHB* and as a *Crown Monitor to Capital and Coast DHB*. Lex Henry, has been appointed *chair* of the *Researched Medicines Industry*. Murray Lynch is the new *Director for Playmarket*. *Members of a new Gifted & Talented Advisory Committee* set up to provide advice on education for gifted and talented students include Clive Sharpe, Jenny Horsley, Kate Niederer, Peter Tashkoff, Sarah Farquhar, Nikki Fraser, Enosa Auva'a, Rose Blackett, Tracy Riley, Susan Hassall, and Chris Harwood. *Reviewers reviewing Environment Canterbury's resource management functions* include Wyatt Creech, Doug Martin, and Greg Hill. Tracy Watkins is to be *head* of the new Fairfax bureau in the *Parliamentary Press Gallery*.

Retired District Court Judge Michael Hobbs has been appointed to chair the *new Real Estate Agents Disciplinary Tribunal*. *Members of this tribunal* include Mary Peters, Gary Denley, John Gaukrodger, and Jennifer Robson. Catherine Savage and Stephen Moir have been appointed to the *Board of the Guardians of NZ Superannuation*, and existing board member David Newman has been appointed *deputy chair*. The *NZ Red Cross* has re-elected Penny Mason as *National President* for another three years and has also re-elected *Vice President* John Evans for a further one year term. Simon Moutter has been appointed to the *Racing Board* and Michael Stiassny has been re-appointed as *independent chair*. Ray O'Connor was also *re-appointed*. Hon Justice Hugh Williams QC has been appointed by the Governor-General as *President of the Electoral Commission* for a term of two years.

The *Angel Association of NZ* has appointed Colin McKinnon as its new *executive director*. Dr Dave Morgan, Hilton Collier, Allison Dodds and Jenifer Prattley have been *reappointed* to the *National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee*, and there are three *new appointees*: Dr David Scobie, Dr Peter Larsen, and Dr Kathryn Bicknell. The CEO of Heart Children NZ, Lara Syddall, was recently elected as *President of the International Congenital Heart Disease Coalition*. The *NZ Ready Mixed Concrete*

Association (NZRMCA) has appointed Jon Hambling as *President*. Consultants Mark St Clair and Brent Cowie have been appointed as the *review team investigating Far North District Council's performance processing applications for resource consents*. Peter Radich is the new *chair of the Broadcasting Standards Authority* and Leigh Pearson is a new *board member*. Tina Wehipeihana-Wilson has been appointed to the *Lottery Grants Board*. Members of a *taskforce set up to review Crown research institutes (CRI)* are Neville Jordan, Dr Ron Sandland, John McKenzie, and Dr Rod Carr.



Rural Bulletin is a free publication produced by Rural Women New Zealand. Its aim is to build community capacity by circulating relevant information, so people in rural and other communities have an opportunity to make informed decisions about, and have their say on, issues and changes that may affect them.

Rural Bulletin may be copied in full and circulated, and individual items may be reproduced providing the source is acknowledged. If you would like more information about Rural Bulletin or its contents, please contact:

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Membership of Rural Women New Zealand is open to all people who are interested in issues affecting rural communities. To become a member, contact Belinda Hunt at

enquiries@ruralwomen.org.nz

Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to ensure the information in Rural Bulletin is accurate, Rural Women New Zealand does not accept liability for error of fact or opinion which may be present, nor for the consequences of any financial decision based on the information. Any views or opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of Rural Women New Zealand.

**Together Rural Women NZ, the Lottery Grants Board, and Rural Bulletin's other generous supporters make it possible to provide timely information to people in rural and other communities so they have the opportunity to make informed decisions about, and have their say on, issues and changes that may affect them.

Messages from Our Supporters



Renewing Your Agrichemical Approved Handler Certificate

ChemSafe is an Agrichemical Approved Handler renewal service, brought to you by FarmSafe. We have recently introduced a quick and easy system where you can choose to renew your Agrichemical Approved Handler Certificate online, or request a Home Pack be sent to you in the post. Our renewal service will outline the changes since your last certificate was issued. After paying the fee, follow a few simple steps and answer some questions relating to the changes. You can complete the renewal process, either:

- **Online** - for those on broadband or fast dialup speed (this should take under 30 minutes); or
- **Home Pack** - request a Home Pack (either online or by calling 0800 545 747).

For further information go to <http://www.farmsafe.co.nz/ourproducts/agrichemical-approved-handler-renewal.aspx> or call 0800 545 747



Telecom and Tivo

As part of Telecom's strategy to keep New Zealanders better connected, we've joined together with TiVo to bring New Zealand an innovation that will change the landscape of television as we know it.

This partnership provides Telecom broadband customers with the ability to download movies and the latest shows to their TV with no impact to their monthly broadband data allowance as well as access to all of the Freeview|HD channels.

With the TiVo™ media device (a set top box) you can record two different channels while watching a third, so no more worrying about missing your favourite shows. Another great benefit is the ability to automatically record every episode of a favourite programme with Season Pass™. You can also pause, rewind and slow motion live television so you never miss the juicy bits with Pause Live TV.

Anyone can purchase a TiVo media device through Telecom, but they will not enjoy the whole TiVo experience such as unmetered content and services (e.g. movies & TV shows) without Telecom broadband.

You need the following:

1. TV (Standard or high definition)

2. Broadband connection, preferably with Telecom to get the most from the TiVo service. Ideally with a wireless modem (including your wireless password). It is possible to use a standard PC modem with multiple ports, and connect to your TiVo device with an Ethernet cable, however these will need to be in close proximity to each other).
3. TV antenna connection (rooftop UHF aerial)

You will also need to be in the Freeview|HD® coverage area; see http://www.freeviewnz.tv/all_about_freeview/coverage for more. Telecom is offering a launch promotion package of a TiVo Media Device and the Wireless Adaptor for \$920.00 (incl. GST), plus we're also offering a deferred payment option of 24 monthly payments of \$30 plus an upfront initial payment of \$200 (incl. GST) which can be placed on the customer's Telecom bill. This payment option will only be available to our broadband customers.



Steady Commercial Building Shows Rural and Industrial Strength

While the residential building sector is only now starting to show signs of recovery, steady demand for light industrial and farm buildings underscores the strength in the local rural and commercial sectors, according leading farm building supplier Totalspan.

"There's no denying that the economy has created a tough operating environment over the past year," says Totalspan brand manager Aaron Yorke.

"However, we've seen a steady pattern of demand for our farm and commercial buildings over the period – with some significant increases in demand more recently."

Aaron Yorke says that while export conditions and the local economy have been challenging, Kiwi farmers – and the trades and businesses that support them – seem to have been managing their way through the recession.

"We find our customers around the country in the rural and light industrial sector are very careful investors and managers. They tend to plan their business over the long term, taking into account seasonal variations, and invest when they need to in quality equipment, materials and buildings."

That approach aligns perfectly with Totalspan's approach to the market, says Aaron – one of the reasons he believes the range has remained popular through the recession and is seeing growing demand now that the economy is improving.

"We have a fundamental commitment to quality – backing all our buildings with a 25 year structural guarantee. So an investment

in a Totalspan building is one that businesses can be confident in for the long term.”

“We also work very hard to understand the requirements of Kiwi farmers, rural contractors and businesses – to provide them with a wide range of options that are not only hard wearing, but also tailored to their needs, and capable of evolving as those demands change.”

Totalspan’s dedicated range of steel buildings and sheds includes a selection of widths, and the option of open or lock-up bays – ideal for storing equipment securely. The range also includes a choice of building heights, to accommodate all types of machinery, equipment and vehicles.

Totalspan can also work with businesses to design a building to fit their individual operation – with nationwide experience in creating everything from a dairy shed to a helicopter hangar – with the unique open structure of Totalspan’s steel frame design offering unobstructed internal space and total flexibility.

“Our commitment to using all Kiwi-made materials has also made Totalspan the popular local choice,” says Aaron.

“Because we choose to work with so many local suppliers – our buildings are all New Zealand designed to our country’s unique conditions and produced by our factory in Christchurch – buying a Totalspan building is an investment back into the local economy.”

Find out more at www.totalspan.co.nz



Use Christmas to Check for Tax Refunds

Yes, you’d rather be stoking up the barbecue than thinking about tax. However, the holiday break is a good time to look at getting back any tax refunds you may be due if you’ve earned a wage or salary in NZ in the past five years. TaxRefunds.co.nz offers a free, no-obligation online refund estimate service that quickly calculates your chances of a refund - based on the 1 million plus applications we’ve processed to date. You get an estimate only for the years you request.

The types of taxes that can be claimed through the website include overpaid personal taxes or Working for Families Tax Credits for any of the previous 5 tax years (if you earn income from sources other than NZ wages or salary you may be referred to our accounting services – see our website for more details). If you are due for a refund, our fees are 12.5% of your refund, at a minimum of \$12.50 and a maximum of \$500 per return (the lowest commercial rates in the country). We only claim refunds once you give us permission.

For more information visit our website at <https://www.taxrefunds.co.nz/Home.aspx>



Access Homehealth

Access Homehealth supports kiwis of all ages with personalized quality healthcare – at home and in the community. Established in 1927 by Rural Women NZ, we are now a national provider (Whangarei to Invercargill) of home and community health services - and we pride ourselves on our commitment to NZ 's rural communities.

Our aim is to help people maintain their independence so that they can live successfully in their own home and within their local community.

Our skilled professional team supports more than 13,000 people nationwide with healthcare services including:

- aged and disability support;
- rehabilitation and recovery;
- long-term condition management;
- clinical and assessment services; and
- respite care.

We specialise in providing personalised care and support that’s relevant and based on an individual’s particular health needs. This includes short- and long-term assistance with daily living activities such as showering and grooming, household assistance, meal preparation, skilled and qualified nursing, socialisation, and general companionship.

You can find out more by phoning 0800 161 444, emailing us at info@access.org.nz, faxing (0)3 366-0344, or by visiting our website, www.access.org.nz

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