

Rural Bulletin

May 2009



Rural Women

NEW ZEALAND

www.ruralwomen.org.nz

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Consultation

Ethnicity of NZers: Statistics

Statistics NZ (SNZ) is looking for feedback on the way official ethnicity statistics are collected and reported. These statistics count the number of people in different ethnic groups in NZ, such as Maori, Pacific peoples, Chinese, and Indian.

During the 2006 Census there was a lot of debate about ethnicity, including a high-profile public campaign for the inclusion of a 'New Zealander' tick-box in the census ethnicity question. In the Census itself, 140,000 people chose to answer "NZer" to this question.

Initial consultation and research suggests that including such a tick-box would alter the meaning of the question, making it more about nationality and less about ethnicity. SNZ says this could affect the accuracy and usefulness of the data collected.

It has now released a discussion paper, which looks at the issues and considers possible ways to address them. The paper recommends no changes to the ethnicity question for the 2011 Census.

Submissions close on 25 May 2009. Comments go to ethnicity.review@stats.govt.nz, or to: Ethnicity Statistics Review, Statistics NZ, PO Box 2922, Wellington. More is at <http://www.stats.govt.nz/people/review-of-the-ethnicity-standard-2009/default.htm>

Education: National Standards Consultation...

A programme of public consultation on the shape of national education standards for primary and intermediate schools gets underway at the end of May. National Standards are statements of what a child should be able to achieve in literacy and numeracy (reading, writing, and mathematics) at each year of primary and intermediate school. They will be used by all English and Maori-medium primary and intermediate schools from 2010.

Assessments will show where each child sits against the standard and what progress they have made. Students' performance against these standards will be reported to their parents.

Final decisions on how students are to be assessed will be made after consultation, but it's intended that teachers and schools will use a mix of the assessment tools they are already using.

The Ministry of Education staff will consult with schools, parents and the community between 25 May and 3 July 2009. Education sector meetings are being held in a number of centres throughout the country, and around 45 meetings will be held with parents throughout NZ (these will be organised with schools). More, including the meetings timetable is at <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/Consultation/NationalStandards.aspx>. Submissions can be made online at www.minedu.govt.nz, in writing, or at meetings. For more information on assessment in schools see www.tki.org.nz/r/assessment/index_e.php

...& Education Amendment Bill

This Bill proposes changes to the police vetting of non-teaching staff and contractors. The aim is to minimise compliance costs for schools while retaining the requirement to police-check people with unsupervised access to children.

The Bill would set up a system of information matching to compare teacher information held on the Ministry of Education's payroll database with information contained in the Teachers Council's Teachers Register.

It would also allow an entity such as a board of trustees from another school to be appointed as a limited statutory manager or a commissioner for a school, so under-performing schools can work directly with successful neighbouring schools.

Submissions close on 10 June 2009. Two copies go to the Education and Science Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2009/0025-1/latest/DLM1956401.html#DLM1956401>

Foreshore and Seabed Act Review

A Ministerial Review Panel is reviewing the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004. The "foreshore and seabed" is the area between the line of mean high water springs on its landward side and the outer limits of the territorial sea on its seaward side (12 nautical miles). Dry land next to the intertidal zone is not "foreshore and seabed".

The panel has been asked to provide advice on:

- the nature and extent of the mana whenua and public interests in the coastal marine area before the Attorney-General v Ngati Apa [2003] 3 NZLR 643;
- the options that were available to the government to respond to the Court of Appeal decision in the above case;
- whether the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004 effectively recognises and provides for customary or aboriginal title and public interests (including Maori, local government, and business) in the coastal marine area, and maintains and allows for the enhancement of mana whenua; and
- if the Panel has reservations that the Foreshore and Seabed Act does not provide for the above options for the best way to have customary and public interests in the coastal marine recognised and provided for.

The Review Panel is particularly looking for comment on the following matters:

- whether the tests and procedures in the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004 are appropriate;
- whether the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004 should be i) retained unchanged; ii) amended; iii) wholly repealed; or iv) repealed but replaced with something new, e.g., a new kind of title or investigation process; and
- how well the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004 relates to the rest of the law relating to the management of coastal areas.

Submissions close on 19 May 2009. They go to Foreshore and Seabed Review, Ministry of Justice, C/- PO Box 180, Wellington 6140, email foreshorerereview_submit@justice.govt.nz. An issues paper is at <http://www.justice.govt.nz/ministerial-review/issues%20Paper.pdf>

Improving Workplace Health and Safety

The Department of Labour reviewing the Workplace Health and Safety Strategy and it is looking for answers to the following questions:

- What progress has been made in workplace health and safety in NZ over the last three years?
- What is working well and should be continued or expanded?
- What are the main barriers to achieving the goal of "healthy people in safe and productive workplaces"?
- What should the current and future priorities for workplace health and safety in NZ be?

Submissions close on 15 May 2009. They go to WHSS review team, Department of Labour, Health and Safety Policy team, PO Box 3705, Wellington. More is at <http://www.dol.govt.nz/News/Media/2009/whss-review.asp>

Meat and Wool NZ Consultation

In August this year meat and wool farmers will have the opportunity to vote on whether or not to continue to support the levy investments that fund the work of Meat & Wool NZ (M&WZN), which was formed in 2004.

The organisation has produced a discussion paper outlining the types of activities it believes are needed to manage, maintain and expand markets, and give returns to farmers. It is also holding consultation meetings between 12 May and 24 June. Farmer submissions at these meetings will be incorporated into a final M&WZN proposal which will then be mailed out with voting papers to farmers.

The discussion paper, the consultation timetable, and a farmer registration form are at <http://www.meatnz.co.nz/>

Legal Services Amendment Bill

This Bill amends the Legal Services Act to:

- ensure that victims of crime attending a parole board hearing or coronial inquest are not subject to financial eligibility testing;
- enable the Legal Services Agency to write off legal aid debt at the end of any legal proceedings in these circumstances;
- allow the Agency to decide not to recover legal aid debt at any time during the process; and
- introduce a regulation-making power to enable the Governor-General to exempt particular classes of persons and proceedings from financial eligibility tests and repayment conditions.

Submissions close on 22 May 2009. Two copies go to the Justice and Electoral Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. This Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2008/0218-1/latest/versions.aspx>

Wanganui or Whanganui?

The NZ Geographic Board Nga Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa is consulting the public about a proposed place name change from Wanganui to Whanganui. As the national place naming authority, the Board is required by law to consider proposals to assign, alter, approve, or discontinue names for geographic features and places, including cities.

The consultation period runs for three months from mid-May. More information is at <http://www.lin.govt.nz/placenames/find-out/have-your-say/index.aspx>

Superannuitants' and Veterans' Pensions

You are invited to have your say on the Social Assistance (Payment of NZ Superannuation and Veterans Pension Overseas) Amendment Bill. This Bill amends the NZ Superannuation and Retirement Income Act 2001 and the War Pensions Act 1954 to make it easier for superannuitants and veteran's pensioners to travel or retire overseas.

Submissions close on 29 May 2009. Two copies go to the Social Services Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2008/0301-1/latest/versions.aspx>

Contract Management of Prisons

The recently introduced Corrections (Contract management of Prisons) Amendment Bill would enable competitive tendering of prison management to occur. Under the proposed Bill any contractor would have to comply with all relevant international obligations and standards, to make sure that all NZ prisons meet international standards on the treatment and welfare of prisoners. The Bill would also require contractors to comply with instructions and guidelines issued by the chief executive.

Submissions close on 22 May 2009. Two copies go to the Law and Order committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2009/0020-1/latest/versions.aspx>

Invasion of Privacy: Penalties/Remedies...

The Law Commission has published an issues paper called "Invasion of Privacy: Penalties and Remedies". This looks at the adequacy of NZ's civil, criminal, and regulatory law to deal with invasions of privacy. In particular, it looks at the tort of privacy and surveillance, asking:

- Is there a value in tort of invasion by publicity given to private facts? If so, should it be left to the common law?
- Are any new criminal offences needed to deal with specific types of intrusion?
- Should there be a tort of intrusion into a person's seclusion? If so, should its development be left to the common law or should it be introduced by statute?
- Should closed circuit television be regulated?

Submissions close on 29 May 2009. They go to General Manager, Law Commission, PO Box 2590, Wellington 6140, or email privacy@lawcom.govt.nz. The paper is at http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/UploadFiles/Publications/Publication_129_428_Press%20Release%20060309.pdf

...& Privacy (Cross-border Information) Bill

The Privacy (Cross-border Information) Amendment Bill would amend the Privacy Act in relation to cross-border information transfers so that the likelihood of NZ being used as an intermediary for the avoidance of other states' privacy laws is reduced.

Submissions close on 14 May 2009. Two copies go to the Justice and Electoral Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2008/0221-1/latest/DLM1362804.html>

Religious Diversity Statement: Review

The Statement on Religious Diversity, which was developed two years ago, is being reviewed and your comments are sought.

There has been widespread endorsement of the statement, which is included in a booklet called "Religious Diversity in NZ" (10,000 copies of this have been distributed). The reviewer is therefore focusing on the commentary and on how the booklet's usefulness as a handbook can be increased.

Your comments are sought by 31 May 2009. They go to nzdiversity@hrc.co.nz. The booklet is at http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/18-Oct-2007_09-30-04_Booklet_2.pdf

Dairy Export Standards...

The NZ Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) has published a discussion paper on the dairy sector's Independent Verification Programme (IVP), which ensures that dairy exports meet the compliance standards of the country they are being exported to.

NZFSA says that the programme needs to be simplified because it:

- is too inflexible to cope with the modern diversity of dairy industry manufacturing operations;
- cannot be centrally monitored, which means that estimates of compliance or failure rates can't be easily determined; and
- costs too much relative to the benefits it offers.

In a draft paper, NZFSA says the IVP needs an independent sampling/testing programme to support the official assurance programme. It also needs to be more efficient and effective for the dairy industry, and be able to withstand third-party scrutiny internationally.

Submissions close on 27 May 2009. You can download the consultation paper at <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/dairy/publications/consultation/ivp-discussion-paper-final-28042009.pdf>

...& Live Animal Exports

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) Biosecurity has published a paper on the rules for the export of live animals and germplasm (genetic material). The paper proposes standards that will need to be followed when a laboratory is conducting tests in support of official assurances for the export of live animals/germplasm.

Submissions close on 12 June 2009. They go to animalexports@maf.govt.nz, or you can make an online submission. The paper is at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/files/biosec/consult/export-lab-programme.pdf>

"Upstream Takeovers" Consultation

The Takeovers Panel has published a consultation paper on the implications of the Takeovers Code in relation to "upstream takeovers" in order to make the rules about these kinds of situations clear to the market.

Upstream takeovers happen when a takeover, in NZ or overseas, results in an acquirer controlling voting rights in a NZ Code company (i.e., a NZ company or co-operative company that is regulated by the Takeovers Code) because the target (the company being taken over) holds or controls voting rights in that Code company.

Voting rights are attached to shareholders' shares in the company. An acquirer may be allocated seats on the target's board because of the significance of their shareholding in the target company as a result of a takeover. If the target company itself owns or partially owns the shares of a NZ Code company, then the acquirer may control those voting rights in the NZ Code company.

The paper discusses and compares how upstream takeovers are dealt with elsewhere, and outlines a range of options (there is no preferred option as yet) for addressing the problems that upstream takeovers have caused.

Submissions close on 12 June 2009. The consultation paper is available on the Panel's website at www.takeovers.govt.nz

Competence of Financial Advisers: Standards

A discussion paper called "Staff Paper on Authorised Financial Adviser Competence" outlines some preliminary suggestions for competence standards financial advisers will need to meet before they can become authorised advisers under the Financial Advisers Act (passed last year). The standards are designed to lift the professionalism and accountability of financial advisers and give investors greater confidence in the advice they receive.

Submissions close on 29 May 2009. They go to faa.consultation@seccom.govt.nz or you can post them to AFA Competence Discussion, Securities Commission, PO Box 1179, Wellington. The paper is at <http://www.seccom.govt.nz/downloads/seccom-staff-paper-afa-competence.pdf>

Securities Regulations: Proposed Changes

A recently released discussion paper proposes a number of changes to the securities regulations following the Securities Commission's review of the Securities Regulations 1983, and recommendations from the Capital Market Development Taskforce (CMDT). The CMDT is an industry-led group made up of private and public sector participants that was established last July.

The regulations set out what the prospectuses for equity, debt, participatory securities, unit trusts, life insurance policies, and superannuation schemes should contain. They also set out what is required in investment statements, and provide rules on the material that may be included in advertisements.

The changes in the discussion paper are designed to:

- improve disclosure by issuers (of prospectuses and other related documents);
- remove unnecessary compliance costs;
- provide more flexibility in the contents of prospectuses; and
- modernise outdated aspects of the regulations.

In addition, the paper asks for submitters' views on a separate matter relating to regulations required under the Securities Disclosure and Financial Advisers Amendment Bill 2008 to produce a plan to develop NZ's capital market.

Submissions close on 8 May 2009. The discussion paper is at http://www.med.govt.nz/templates/StandardSummary_15398.aspx

India-NZ Free Trade Agreement?

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) is calling for submissions on a possible NZ-India free Trade Agreement (FTA).

In 2007, the NZ and Indian Trade Ministers agreed to a joint study on the possibility of an FTA. The resulting report concluded that an FTA would increase both countries' real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and welfare. It also highlighted the potential an FTA would offer for growth in NZ exports to India and in the bilateral trade relationship more generally.

India's economic growth in recent years has been strongly positive. GDP is expected to continue to grow at around 8% per annum until 2020, and India could become the second largest economy in the world by 2050.

Submissions close on 29 May 2009. More, including an online submission form, is at <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Trade-and-Economic-Relations/Trade-Relationships/NZ-India-FTA.php>, or email joanne.dow@mfat.govt.nz

IRD: Charities Fringe Benefit Tax...

An Inland Revenue Department (IRD) draft ruling looks at when charitable organisations' exclusion from fringe benefit tax in section CX 25 of the Income Tax Act 2007 will apply. The draft discusses what activities are non-charitable activities of a charitable organisation, and what it means for a benefit to be provided "mainly in connection with a non-charitable business activity".

Submissions close on 15 May 2009. Email them to public.consultation@ird.govt.nz, or post them to Team Manager, Technical Services, Office of the Chief Tax Counsel, National Office, Inland Revenue Department, PO Box 2198, Wellington. The draft ruling is at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/resources/717171b39804da9c58da93bf47b571814d/xpb0019.pdf>

...& Draft Response to GST Question

IRD has been asked to clarify the relationship between section 113 of the Tax Administration Act 1994 and the second provision relating to section 20(3) of the Goods and Services Tax Act 1985 when a registered taxpayer has not claimed a goods and services input tax deduction in an earlier taxable period.

Submissions close on 12 June 2009. Email them to public.consultation@ird.govt.nz, or post them to Team Manager, Technical Services, Office of the Chief Tax Counsel, National Office, Inland Revenue Department, PO Box 2198, Wellington. The draft IRD response is at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/resources/8/d/8d26a4804da682a1a749f747b571814d/ed0105.pdf>

Canterbury Water Management Plan

Environment Canterbury is developing a 20 year plan to ensure water is managed fairly and sustainably. The draft Water Management Strategy has been put together by a Mayoral Forum representing all Canterbury's councils. The Forum has identified a set of fundamental principles and four alternative options for how the region's water can be managed and your views are sought. After the consultation a strategy paper will be presented to territorial authorities between July and October.

Submissions close 5 June 2009. Submissions can be posted to: Freepost 1201, Canterbury Water Management Strategy, PO Box 345, Christchurch, or emailed to: info@canterburywater.org.nz, or made online at www.canterburywater.org.nz. You can download the discussion paper at <http://www.canterburywater.org.nz/downloads/Discussion-Documents-Long-Version.pdf>

Current ERMA Consultations

Current Environmental Risk Management Authority consultations are:

- RC07002 - a reassessment of the broad-spectrum insecticide azinphos-methyl and its formulations; closing date for submissions is 15 May 2009;
- HSR09032 - to import or manufacture Aramo, containing tepraloxymid, as a herbicide for the control of grass weeds in annual crops (Category C): closing date is 21 May 2009;
- HSR09024 - to import or manufacture Eurogel as a horticultural fungicide (Category A): closing date is 4 June 2009;
- NOR08003 - to import and release from containment the lace bug Gargaphia decoris (Hemiptera, Tingidae) as a biological control agent for the weed woolly nightshade: closing date is 9 June 2009; and
- HSR09042 - to import or manufacture Crest 520 as a post emergence herbicide for the control of grass weeds in many broadleaf crops, orchards and forestry (Category A): closing date is 15 June 2009.

More, including submission forms, is at <http://www.ermanz.govt.nz/consultations/consult-apps.html>

Standards NZ: Draft Standards

Current draft standards in which you can comment include:

- DZ6806: Acoustics - Road traffic noise - New and altered roads: closing date for comments: is 12 June 2009; and
- DZ4514: Interconnected smoke alarms for single household units, with a closing date of 25 May 2009.

More is at <http://www.standards.co.nz/draft-standards/> and click on "Public Comment"

Electricity Commission Consultations

- **Systems Operator Draft Policy Statement** The Electricity Commission published a draft System Operator policy statement in April and it is now seeking public submissions on the changes proposed; including costs and benefits of each. Submissions close on 21 May 2009.
- **Electricity Market Compliance Framework Review - Update** The Commission is also seeking feedback on this paper, which provides an update on the actions the Commission has taken to put in place the results of the compliance framework consultation. Submissions close on 15 May 2009.

Electronic submissions preferred. Email them to submissions@electricitycommission.govt.nz putting the title of the consultation in the subject line. More on both consultations is at <http://www.electricitycommission.govt.nz/consultation>

Reminder: Waste Minimalisation

The Ministry for the Environment has released a discussion paper called Waste Minimisation in NZ so it can gather feedback from interested parties on:

- revising the targets for the NZ Waste Strategy;
- identifying products that are priorities for product stewardship; identifying funding criteria for the Waste Minimisation Fund, and
- monitoring waste in NZ

Submissions close on 15 May 2009. An electronic submission form is at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/survey/x09wastediscdoc.htm>. More information is at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/waste/consultation.html>, or email waste@mfe.govt.nz

Rural

NZ Wine Industry Doing Well

The growing economic impact of the NZ wine industry has been highlighted in a report prepared for NZ Winegrowers, the national grape growers' and winemakers' organisation. Some facts about the industry are:

- the wine industry contributes more than \$1.5 billion to NZ's GDP;
- wine exports now represent 2.2% of total goods exports;
- it supports more than 16,500 full-time jobs, and for every new fulltime position created in the industry, 1.79 full time equivalent positions will be generated in related industries; and
- it generates more than \$3.5 billion through its own direct sales and the sales it generates in related sectors.

The report is at www.nzwine.com/news

Carbon Footprint of a Kiwifruit

ZESPRI has completed a carbon footprint study of its kiwifruit that is based on a kiwifruit destined for Europe. It reports that:

- orchard operations make up 17% of total emissions for EU exports;
- packhouse and coolstore processes account for 11% of total emissions;
- shipping accounts for 41% of total emissions;
- repacking and retailer emissions amount to 9% of total emissions; and
- consumer consumption and disposal comprises 22% of total emissions.

For the study government, primary sector and academic researchers used an internationally recognised way of measuring carbon footprints. The method is now able to be used by producers and suppliers across NZ to assess current business practices.

More is at <http://www.zespri.com/about-zespri/newsroom.html>

Dairying/Clean Streams Accord Update

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry recently released the 2007/08 Dairying and Clean Streams Accord: Snapshot of Progress. This shows (among other things):

- continued progress being made towards targets over 2007/08;
- the level of full compliance with regional council dairy effluent rules varies widely; and
- nearly 99% of Fonterra suppliers now have a nutrient budget.

For the 2008/09 season, Accord Partners will continue to support suppliers to:

- increase the percentage of waterways with total stock exclusion;
- raise suppliers' understanding of the benefits of nutrient budgeting;
- accelerate uptake of full nutrient management plans;
- achieve higher levels of compliance with regional plan and resource consent requirements; and
- strengthen Accord coverage of significant wetlands.

Go to <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/sustainable-resource-use/resource-management/> and scroll down to "Dairying and Clean Streams Accord"

Fonterra Payout Boost ...

Fonterra's forecast shareholder payout will be lifted 10c per kg of milksolids to \$5.20/kg for the 2008/2009 season (an increase worth an estimated \$120 million to the economy). That is 35% less than the record \$7.90 its 10,700 farmers received last season and down on initial forecast for this season of \$7/per kg. Fonterra is NZ's largest company, and last year dairy accounted for 20% of all NZ's export earnings.

... & Fonterra Goes to Egypt

Fonterra has signed an agreement with Arab Dairy Products Co., one of the leading dairy companies in Egypt, to manage the franchising, processing and distribution of Anchor throughout Egypt. The partnership includes the manufacture, packing, and marketing of Anchor triangle processed cheese and jar cheese, as well as the future distribution of Anchor milk powder products.

Fonterra's entry into Egypt follows news that the company has also recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Saudi Arabia's leading food distribution company, Arrow, to distribute Fonterra's Foodservice products throughout Saudi Arabia.

Hazard Whiteboard & Emergency Procedures Calendar

FarmSafe has two products to help people put in place what is learnt at FarmSafe workshops. Both the Hazard Whiteboard and Emergency Procedures Calendar are also very useful for encouraging a team approach to health and safety, where everyone is working together and protecting each other.

The Hazard Whiteboard is a simple-to-use and effective way of recording hazards on the property. The board is designed to be displayed in a highly visible place so farm staff can record any hazards that require attention. If a hazard is identified on the farm by anyone, they immediately write the details on the Hazard Board, and steps can then be taken to minimise or eliminate the hazard.

The Emergency Procedures Calendar is designed to be displayed in farm buildings and homes. You can use it for recording emergency contact details, GPS coordinates and other general procedures in the event of an emergency. The calendar is a tool for ensuring that all staff are aware of what to do in an emergency.

The white board costs \$50 (GST inclusive) plus \$7 post and packaging. The calendar is sent out free with the whiteboard. However, if you would like to buy just the calendar, they cost \$10 (GST inclusive).

For further information and to place an order, please call 06 323 0071 or email shop@farmsafe.co.nz

Environment

Kyoto Liability Turns to Surplus

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) has reported that NZ's estimated liabilities under the Kyoto Protocol are looking a lot better than they were last year. The report indicates the liability has swung from an estimated deficit of \$546 million last year to an estimated surplus of \$241 million this year.

The liability is an estimate of how much NZ will have to spend to buy carbon credits if climate change emissions are not reduced to levels agreed under the Kyoto Protocol, or how much its credits would be worth if its emissions reduce. The cost is based on Kyoto Protocol units – a unit is equivalent to one tonne of greenhouse gas converted to its carbon dioxide equivalent.

The main reasons for the swing from deficit to surplus were the 2007/08 drought and improved information on carbon storage

in forests. Deforestation emissions are also down due to new data showing smaller trees being felled in land use changes. Another improvement was the result of more accurate data on nitrous oxide agricultural emissions.

However, the Government expects the figures to continue bouncing around until the day of reckoning arrives in 2015. It says that the figures do not signal any progress in abating NZ's gross greenhouse gas emissions, which are 23% above 1990 levels, and that NZ still faces a major challenge to reduce its gross greenhouse gas emissions.

The Net Position Report (Projected balance of emissions units during the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol) is on MfE's website at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/climate/about/qa-net-position.html>

Managing Climate Change: Survey Results

NZers overwhelmingly support a range of policies to manage climate change in addition to the emissions trading scheme (ETS). This is according to the latest ShapeNZ survey, which looked at people's views on climate change, its management, and a wide range of policy options. The policies (many already used overseas) ranked most popular, in terms of managing climate change, are:

- more incentives for households to improve energy efficiency, 87% support - 2% oppose;
- incentives for businesses developing renewable energy projects (like wind, solar, wave, geothermal, hydro power), 82% - 2%;
- lower vehicle registration fees for fuel efficient and low-emission vehicles, 80% - 6%;
- a cash incentive to encourage replacement of energy inefficient home appliances with energy efficient ones, 78% - 8%;
- financial incentives to purchase fuel efficient, low emission vehicles 75% - 8%;
- incentives for landowners to plant more carbon sink forests, 74% - 4%;
- new Government investment funds to help quickly commercialise new lower-emission technology invented in NZ (e.g., biofuel made from industrial process emissions, biofuel made from algae, biofuel made from wood waste and woody residues), 74% - 3%;
- lower road user charges for diesel vehicles using lower-emission biofuels, 73% - 8%;
- a Government information programme to advise businesses and households about climate change policies and ways to help manage it, 71% - 7%;
- increasing goods transportation by rail and coastal shipping, 71% - 4%;
- increased spending on research to produce technology to help reduce emissions, 70% - 5%;
- subsidies for farmers to use fertilisers which inhibit the release of nitrogen, lowering emissions and improving water quality, 67% - 8%;
- assistance to sell NZ emissions reduction technology to other countries, 66% - 5%;
- replacing road user tax with a lower vehicle licensing levy for light diesel vehicles, including cars, 65% - 7%;

- allowing forest owners to cut their trees and replant substitute carbon-sink forests on other marginal land without incurring any emissions penalty, 63% - 6%;
- higher road user charges for vehicles which are not fuel and emissions efficient, 54% - 18%; and
- higher road user charges for diesel vehicles which do not use lower-emission bio fuels, 53% - 19%.

The survey, of 2,851 people, was commissioned by the NZ Business Council for Sustainable Development and carried out from 9-11 February 2009.

The full report on "NZers' attitudes to climate change" is available at www.nzbcscd.org.nz

International Climate Change Initiative

The NZ Government is to become a founding member of the Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute (GCCSI - an Australian initiative) which aims to accelerate the commercial use of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology internationally.

CCS is a technology option for lessening the impacts of climate change. The process involves capturing carbon dioxide (CO₂) from large sources of emissions for storage underground rather than emitting it to the atmosphere.

PCE Report on Tenure Review

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) has released a report called "Change in the high country: environmental stewardship and tenure review".

For many decades most of the high country of the South Island has been leased by the Crown to farmers (who mainly run merino sheep). Over recent years, many of these leases have been terminated in the process called "tenure review". In almost all cases, this has resulted in a splitting of the leased land into productive land owned by the former lessee, and conservation land still owned by the Crown and managed by the Department of Conservation (DoC).

The report looks at the allocation, use and preservation of this Crown pastoral lease land by Land Information NZ (LINZ), the Department of Conservation (DoC), regional councils, and territorial authorities.

It summarises the findings of an investigation that began in May 2006 when the PCE was requested to investigate the tenure review process by the High Country Accord, a group representing those who farm Crown pastoral land, and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society (Forest and Bird).

While the report stresses that tenure review has led to some good outcomes, and has not been without innovation and improvement, it also recommends nine changes relating to:

- proceeding with tenure review under the current legislation; and
- the establishment of a High Country Commission to advise on significant aspects of the public interest in the high country.

You can download the 96-page report from http://www.pce.parliament.nz/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/3724/Change_in_the_high_country.pdf

New Environmental Footprinting Initiative

The country's first professorship in the carbon footprint and environmental impact of NZ's primary industries has been given the green light. The professorship in life cycle assessment and management will be based at Massey University. It will be 95% government-funded in 2010, reducing to 25% by 2015, and self-funding after that.

With the professorship comes the NZ Life Cycle Assessment Centre. The centre will be based at Massey University's Palmerston North campus, but act as a virtual centre reaching across NZ.

New Canterbury Conservation Park

A new conservation park in Canterbury was recently opened. Te Kahui Kaupeka is made up of 11 tracts of public land, including a large segment of the renowned Mesopotamia Station, the historical home of English writer Samuel Butler. It is the fifth conservation park established in the Canterbury high country and is host to a number of outdoor activities, including guided walks, horse-trekking, cross-country skiing, and mountain biking.

Tourism

Domestic Travellers Spending More

Ministry of Tourism research shows that spending by domestic travellers increased by 6.2% to \$8.1 billion in the year to December 2008. The amount spent by travellers taking day trips increased by 14.5% to \$2.9 billion - and this had a big influence on the overall increase in spending. Spending on overnight trips also increased, by 2.0% to \$5.1 billion.

There were a number of things influencing the domestic travel industry during the 2008 year. Early on, high fuel prices were a factor in reduced travel activity, but as prices eased travel picked up. Travellers visiting friends and relatives increased their spending by 15.5% to reach \$2.5 billion. Holiday travellers also increased their spending by 4% to \$3.2 billion. However, spending by business travellers declined by 1.3% to \$2.1 billion.

Overall, its reckoned that the positive domestic spend result reflects the resilience of the tourism industry, and that taking a holiday or a short break is an important part of the Kiwi lifestyle.

Health and Welfare

What to Do if You Have Flu

The Ministry of Health advises that the best things you can do to stop the spread of any type of influenza virus is to:

- stay at home and away from others if you are sick;
- cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue;
- put used tissues into a rubbish bin;

- avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth – germs spread that way;
- be careful to wash hands often with soap and dry them thoroughly – hand hygiene is critical: even when you start to feel better there is still a risk of infecting others, so keep to the 20/20 rule – 20 seconds washing and 20 seconds drying; and
- keep surfaces clean at home, school and work.

The Ministry also advises travellers returning from Mexico or parts of the United States that have been affected by the flu virus who have symptoms of influenza to contact their GP or an after hours medical centre by phone before returning to work or school, for advice about what to do and how to get checked out.

Anybody experiencing warning signs of severe influenza illness such as rapid breathing, difficulty breathing, chest pain, severe vomiting or if a child is not responding or is difficult to wake up, should get urgent medical attention.

More information about the Influenza A (H1N1) virus is at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/media>

Ministerial Committee on Disability Issues

Members of this new committee are: the Minister for Disability Issues (chair) and the Ministers of Finance, Justice, Health, Education and Transport; the Associate Minister of Education; and the Associate Minister of Disability Issues. One of the first tasks of the committee will be to look at how to give disabled people greater choice and control over the supports they receive. The move follows last year's Social Services Select Committee enquiry into the quality of supports and services for people with disabilities. One in five NZers has some form of disability.

Pre-school Asthma Pilot Programme

A new Space to Breathe – He Tapu Te Ha asthma programme is to be delivered to 20 kohanga reo and early childhood education centres in Taranaki between April and September 2009. The aim is to promote better awareness of asthma and how to manage it, so families can avoid the need for hospitalisation. For parents and caregivers, the programme will provide education, support, and personalised asthma management plans. It will also include resources such as story books, posters, and reference manuals. For doctors, there will be access to a new decision support tool developed by the Best Practice Advocacy Centre (BPACNZ).

The programme was developed by PHARMAC, in conjunction with regional health providers (Tui Ora, Tihi and Piki Te Ora) in New Plymouth, and BPACNZ. If it is successful, a nationwide roll out will be considered.

The website of the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation of NZ (ARFNZ) is at <http://www.asthmanz.co.nz>. ARFNZ is a non-government charitable organisation with 25 affiliated Asthma Societies and branches throughout NZ that can offer one-to-one education, tips, techniques, and support for dealing with asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), and other respiratory conditions.

Marae Food Safety Guide

A new food safety guide called Te Kai Manawa Ora has been published by the NZ Food Safety Authority (NZFSA). It includes information on how to buy, store, cook, and serve food safely, and it also gives food safety tips for some traditional Maori food practices. This includes gathering puha, watercress and kaimoana, making a hangi, and serving recreationally caught meat.

The guide is on the NZFSA's website www.nzfsa.govt.nz

New Stroke Research Centre...

A new National Research Centre for Stroke, Applied Neurosciences and Neurorehabilitation is the first of its kind in NZ. It will carry out research aimed at to improve health and outcomes in people with major neurological disorders. In particular it will be investigating stroke, traumatic brain injury, multiple sclerosis, and other disorders commonly affecting older adults. Stroke is the number-two killer in the world and is the most common cause of adult disability in NZ.

... & Tai Chi Helps Stroke Survivors

Stroke can impair balance, heightening the risk of a debilitating fall. However, a US researcher has found that stroke survivors can improve their balance (which all reaching tasks require) by practicing the Chinese martial art of tai chi. Tai chi consists of constant coordinated movement of the head, trunk and limbs, and it requires concentration and balance control.

The study used 136 subjects in Hong Kong who had suffered a stroke more than six months earlier. Participants were randomly assigned to a tai chi group or a control group that practiced breathing, stretching and other exercises that involved sitting, walking, memorising, and reasoning.

The tai chi group received 12 weeks of training, learning a form of tai chi shown to be beneficial to arthritis patients. They were then tested for their ability to maintain balance while shifting weight, leaning in different directions, and standing on moving surfaces to simulate a crowded bus. In these tests the tai chi group out-performed the control exercise group.

Source: "ScienceBlog"; URL: <http://scienceblog.com/cms/stroke-survivors-improve-balance-tai-chi-19720.html>

Comparing NZ Hospitals

The Ministry of Health has released the latest Hospital Benchmark Information (HBI) report for the last quarter of 2008. These quarterly reports track the performance of all public hospitals in NZ. They can help hospitals measure their performance against one another and look for ways to improve, and they also inform the public about local hospital services. Among the performance measures are triage rates (emergency department waiting times), patient satisfaction, average length of stay, and acute readmissions.

Note: you need to be careful when comparing DHBs using the report data. There are lots of differences between the 21 DHBs: they are of different sizes, they meet different needs, and provide different services. The ages, ethnicities, and health of their populations are unique. Some DHBs only have one hospital; others have several. For the report, the information from all hospitals in the DHB is combined to give one result for each DHB.

The report is on the Ministry of Health website at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/dhb-hospital-benchmark-information-report-octdec08>

Developing Countries: Food Emergencies

High food prices persist in 32 developing countries despite an improved global cereal supply and a sharp decline in international food prices, the UN agricultural agency has warned in a new report. The latest Crop Prospects and Food Situation report produced by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) says that high food prices are creating further hardship for millions of poor people already suffering from hunger and under-nourishment.

The FAO said that the food crisis of 2008 has not ended in developing countries as cereal prices in most remain generally very high, in some cases at record levels. The report stressed that the worst affected are the urban poor and food-deficit farmers who are dependent on the market to access food.

The good news is that poverty eradication efforts in developing countries are to receive a cash injection of over \$200 million from the United Nations rural development arm to help off-set the impact of the global financial crisis. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) board has approved more than \$131 million in loans and \$63 million in grants, along with around \$9 million in grants to international research centres and intergovernmental organisations. The grants and loans will finance rural micro-finance projects, livestock support initiatives and natural resource management schemes among others.

Projects in Afghanistan, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, China, the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, India, and Mali will benefit from the funding, as well as institutions, including the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

You can download FAO reports from <http://www.fao.org/Giews/english/cpfs/index.htm>. More on the new funding for these countries is at <http://www.ifad.org/>

Education

ERO Evaluation of Toddler Centres

A recent Education Review Office (ERO) report on infant and toddler centres indicates that:

- there was an evident infant and toddler focus in most of the centres, with emphasis placed on developing relationships, establishing partnerships with families, and providing a safe and nurturing environment;
- the learning environment in most infant and toddler centres was attractive and well resourced. However, some centres needed to improve their outdoor environment and increase children's access to resources and equipment;
- interactions between teachers and children in most centres were warm, caring, and nurturing. Most teachers made good use of interactions to foster children's oral language develop social skills and respond to children's

interests and ideas. However, in some centres teachers were more focused on routines and tasks than on interacting with children;

- of the teachers' qualifications that were evaluated (33 of the 74 centres) most met the current qualification requirements, or were in a good position to meet the 2007 requirement for 50% qualified and registered staff;
- the approach to self review was often informal, and very few centres had a planned approach to reviewing their programme and the environment; and
- ERO had concerns about aspects of compliance in about half of the 74 centres, including: monitoring of sleeping children; hazard management systems; fire and earthquake trial and safety provisions; and some aspects of record keeping for excursions.

This report and reports on individual services are at <http://ero.govt.nz/publications/pubs2009/ece-mono-infant-toddler-jan09.pdf>

Young Parent Childcare Payment

The Government is funding the Young Parent Childcare Payment for teenage parents under 18 years who are continuing their secondary schooling. This covers childcare centre costs (of \$6 per child up to a maximum of \$180 a week for 40 weeks a year) in situations where young parents don't qualify for other assistance.

New applicants can apply via the Work and Income website: <http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/newsroom/index.html>

ITO Trainees: More Time to Find a Job

The time-frame for Industry Training Organisation (ITO) trainees to find work while still being eligible for government training subsidies has been extended from 6 weeks to 12 weeks.

Employment

Job Support Scheme Expands

The Government has extended the Job Support Scheme (which lets private sector businesses, workers, and unions negotiate voluntary agreements to reduce their hours of work to a nine-day fortnight) to include medium-sized businesses with 50 to 100 workers. Under the scheme the Government will pay employers \$12.50 (the adult minimum wage) an hour per worker, for up to five hours a fortnight.

Work Stoppages Decrease

According to Statistics NZ, twenty-two work stoppages ended in the December 2008 year, involving 4,993 employees, and losses of 8,587 person-days of work and an estimated \$2.4 million in wages and salaries. In comparison, the 31 stoppages in the December 2007 year involved 4,090 employees, and losses of 11,439 person-days of work and an estimated \$1.9 million in wages and salaries.

Transport

Roads of National Significance

The Government has announced seven roads of national significance (these are essential routes requiring priority treatment). They are: Puhoi to Wellsford - SH1; completion of the Auckland Western Ring Route - SH20/16/18; Auckland Victoria Park bottleneck - SH1; Waikato Expressway - SH1; Tauranga Eastern Corridor - SH2; Wellington Northern Corridor (Levin to Wellington) - SH1; and Christchurch motorway projects.

Aviation Security Review Results

A summary of an aviation security review carried out last year has now been released.

This assessed the risks in NZ's domestic aviation environment to see if current levels of security were adequate. The report identifies enhanced passenger, crew, and carry-on baggage screening as the best option for bolstering aviation security.

It notes that the costs associated with this would likely be around \$5 per passenger on each additional screened flight. That cost would likely be passed on to passengers on those flights. Other possible measures include strengthening cockpit doors, security committees at airports, and enhanced training and education for airport and airlines workers.

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

Housing

Mortgage Applications Up in March

Mortgage applications in March 2009 were up 38% compared to the same month last year, and were the highest monthly total since November 2007, according to credit information provider Veda Advantage.

Baby boomers (44-62 years old) in particular appear to be showing a disproportionate interest in the housing market, with a 45% increase in mortgage applications on March 2008. Generation X (28-43 years old) experienced a 34% increase, while Generation Y (less than 28 years old) had the smallest growth with a 16% increase on March last year.

Housing Consent Numbers Down

Building consent statistics for the month of March 2009 show the trend for the number of new housing units authorised, excluding apartment units, has continued to fall since June 2007. The trend has fallen by more than half since June 2007, and is currently at its lowest level since this series began 17 years ago. The number of new housing units authorised, excluding apartments, fell 1.3% in March 2009. In March 2009, there were 1,091 new housing units authorised, including 104 apartment units.

The value of non-residential building consents fell 6.4% in March 2009 compared with March 2008. However, for the year

ended March 2009 compared with the year ended March 2008, the value of non-residential building consents rose 6.3% while the value of residential building consents fell 26%.

Energy

Geothermal Energy in the Pacific?

NZ scientists are to assess the potential for geothermal electricity generation within a number of Pacific Island nations. Geothermal resources have the potential to provide base load electricity at a fraction of the cost of diesel generation, which is the main source of electricity in many Pacific Island nations.

The research is being carried out under the international Partnership for Energy Development in Island Nations (EDIN)

State Sector

Defence Review Underway

A review of Defence, currently underway, aims to address the following questions:

- How does the present and potential future strategic environment impact on the security of NZ?
- How does and can Defence contribute to the security of NZ, Australia, the South Pacific, the Asia-Pacific region and globally?
- How does Defence advance NZ's foreign policy and the relationship between Defence and other Government agencies to enhance a "whole of Government" approach?
- How well do the current Defence outputs meet the needs now and in the near future, and how do the capabilities including those under consideration or development, fit with those outputs?
- Looking to the medium and longer term, what are the capabilities needed against requirements in the future and what are the implications arising from that analysis?
- What are the key issues around Defence personnel, including training, retention, recruitment, and the role of Reserves?
- What is the best organisational structure for the Ministry of Defence and the NZ Defence Force?
- When and how should military capabilities be used for non-military purposes to support the work of other (civilian) government agencies?
- How best can procurement, defence infrastructure, and real estate be managed?
- What are the best financial management procedures to meet the long term defence funding requirements?

A discussion paper will be released at the end of this month, so the public can have its say.

More information, including the terms of reference for the review, is at <http://www.defence.govt.nz/review09/terms-reference.html>

NZAID Changes Focus

The Government has removed the semi-autonomous status of NZAID (NZ's aid agency) which is to be re-absorbed into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Previously the agency reported directly to the Minister. It will also now focus on sustainable economic growth. The Pacific will take a greater share of the budget, which will rise from \$471.9 million to \$500 million this year, then to \$525 million in 2010/11, \$550 million in 2011/12, and \$600 million in 2012/13.

Justice/the Law

Bouncers' & Bodyguards' Bill

This recently introduced Bill proposes three main changes to the current law:

- an obligation to be licensed or hold a certificate of approval will be extended to a wider range of security-related activities. In particular, crowd controllers such as bouncers, and bodyguards and private security staff guarding people in legal custody, would have to be licensed or hold a certificate of approval;
- it will be possible to make regulations requiring private security staff to undertake training; and
- an enforcement body, the Complaints, Investigation and Prosecution Unit, would be created to investigate complaints and improve compliance with the new legislation.

There would also be heavier penalties for breaches of the regulatory regime.

The Bill is at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2008/0297-1/latest/DLM1594608.html>

Criminal Proceeds (Recovery) Bill Passed

This new law makes it easier for police to seize the assets and profits that gangs obtain illegally - including from the manufacture and supply of methamphetamine. Until now, criminals have retained the wealth they have accumulated by avoiding the conviction required under the current legislation, before property can be forfeited. In contrast, under this new law, a conviction is not required to trigger forfeiture proceedings for criminal proceeds. It will be sufficient to prove on the balance of probabilities that a person has unlawfully benefited from significant criminal offending.

Changes to Parole Hearings

Prison Unit Managers will now attend Parole Board hearings. In the past, custodial staff would attend Parole Board hearings with a prisoner. In some instances, the custodial staff member was not familiar with the prisoner who might have been from a different unit. Under the new system, the unit manager will attend with prisoners from his or her own unit.

Not-for-Profits

Surviving in Tough Times (No 1)

The NZ Council of Social Services (NZCOSS) has developed a list of ways not-for-profit groups can prioritise so they manage in tough times:

- identify core activities in statements of purpose and mission, and focus on maintaining them;
- look at securing existing funding sources and look for new and different sources;
- work closely with associated/compatible organisations on points and programmes of common purpose and concern;
- (in association with other organisations, where you can) present proposals and solutions for social service as well as community responses to the current situation to local and central government/other relevant authorities. Push hard for the ones that gain serious support and traction;
- care for workers. Organisations may not be able to lift pay rates for a while; but you can show an active concern about work loads, new and extended challenges, and new pressures on personal and family budgets;
- gather and use good information from your organisations and communities you work with so that you are aware of the impact and effect of the crisis and can develop effective responses; and
- keep focused on the individuals and communities around you – those you work with and those you support.

CommunityCentral Update

CommunityCentral is an online space for people working in tangata whenua, community and voluntary organisations, public health workers, advocates and others in Aotearoa NZ. It is run by five partner organisations: the Association of Non-Government Organisations of Aotearoa, NZ Council of Social Services; NZ Council of Social Services, NZ Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations; SHORE (Centre for Social and Health Outcomes Research and Evaluation), and Volunteering NZ.

Set up five months ago, the partners report that:

- there have been 3,300 visits by 1,800 visitors viewing over 16,000 pages;
- there are now 280 members;
- 18 groups and nine networks have expressed interest in private workspaces; and
- 5 e-newsletters are being distributed from the site.

CommunityCentral is free to browse and for individuals to register as members.

More is at <http://communitycentral.org.nz/>

Parliament

Mt Albert By-Election

The by-election for the vacant seat of Mt Albert (created by the resignation of Helen Clark) will take place on Saturday 13 June. The last date for candidate nominations can be received is Tuesday, 19 May.

National Party/Green Party MoU

The National Party and the Green Party have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) where areas of work on energy efficiency and home insulation have been agreed.

Business

Surviving in Tough Times (No 2)

Survival in a recession is all about balancing risk and opportunity according to research carried out by NZ Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) into successful company survival strategies in a recession. The ability to be grounded but to have the confidence to take opportunities is highlighted in the research findings. Seven key factors were identified as impacting on companies' ability to emerge strongly from recessionary periods:

- focus on core business - apply resources to core business to create opportunities to gain market share from competitors who diversify and split focus;
- improved process and efficiency – be flexible and take fast action when executing recession strategies such as trimming costs through putting in place more efficient processes or correcting wrong turns;
- strategic divestment – shed non-core operations to improve liquidity and/or focus on the core strategy;
- contingency planning – it is never too late to prepare for a downturn. Quickly assemble a plan and put in place a strategy for dealing with adverse conditions;
- acquisitions and strategic alliances – these help strengthen, re-focus, and position the company for increased growth and profitability. Acquisitions can also help accelerate access to new markets, products, technologies, customers, and talent;
- increased advertising and marketing – spend more to increase market share and take advantage of greater advertising reach, possibly at more competitive rates; and
- research and development – carry out R&D to create new value in core products and services to sway recessionary customers.

Read the full research report at www.nzte.govt.nz/develop-knowledge-expertise/Advanced-Exporter-Guides/Changing-the-game-recession-survival-strategies/

Review of Business Assistance...

The government is reviewing government business assistance programmes. The review (due to be completed early next month) will cover business assistance provided by the Ministry

of Research Science and Technology (MORST), the Ministry of Economic Development (MED), NZ Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) and the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST). It will also cover the work of the NZ Venture Investment Fund (NZVIF).

You can download the terms of reference for the review at http://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/all/files/Brownlee_TOR.doc

... & NZTE Grant Schemes Combined

The Government has combined three of NZ Trade and Enterprise (NZTE)'s current grant schemes into one fund. This fund will be targeted at businesses (irrespective of size) that have the potential for high growth in new markets, and those which already have a global presence but want to expand. Businesses using the fund will need to match NZTE's funding contribution.

By 1 July 2010 a total of \$30.447 million will be available to businesses through the fund.

NZTE's Market Development grant will continue for one more year and then be phased out. The Capability Building grant will be phased out over the next year. The Growth Services Fund, which supports firms to develop skills and resources so they can expand, will be altered to form the new fund.

More information is on the "Find Funding Assistance" section of NZTE's website at www.nzte.govt.nz

Business Skill Shortages/Broadband Use

Last year Statistics NZ's (SNZ) Business Operations Survey 2008 asked businesses about reasons for skill shortages and vacancies for the first time, covering the financial year ending August 2008. In the resulting report:

- 47% of businesses said they found it hard to fill skilled vacancies;
- the most common reason for vacancies being hard to fill was applicants lacking the "desired attitude, motivation, or personality" (34% of all businesses);
- the most common skill reported by businesses that existing staff most needed to improve was customer service or sales skills (27% of businesses);
- the range of skills varied across different types of industries;
- levels of broadband Internet connection for businesses were high (89% of all businesses);
- the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries used broadband the least (68% of these businesses); and
- finance related activities (such as online banking, invoicing, or making online payments) were the most common business use of the internet (85% of businesses).

For more go to <http://www.stats.govt.nz/products-and-services/media-releases/> then scroll down to "Business Operations Survey"

NZ Food Research Goes Global

A group of food research and development organisations is establishing an international brand to market NZ skills to the world under the name of Food Innovation NZ (FINZ). They include Massey University, AgResearch, Fonterra, Plant & Food Research, the Riddet Institute, and the BioCommerce Centre.

To be launched in July, Food Innovation NZ aims to provide one point of contact for potential global research customers, formalise collaboration between the partners, bring teams together to meet customer needs, work together on global marketing efforts where appropriate, and help upskill NZ's food experts through career and research opportunities here and abroad.

Source: Main Report's Profitable Agri-Business Letter, Monday, April 20, 2009

China: New Food Safety Law

China's National People's Congress has passed its first Food Safety Law which will become effective on 1 June 2009. The law sets up a state-level Food Safety Commission, which will oversee food-safety monitoring. It covers supervision, monitoring, enforcement, recall, trace back, licensing, registration, and development of standards and regulations. It also sets out rules on the supervision of imported food products, which will need to meet both national standards and the criteria specified in the contracts signed between the exporter and the Chinese importer.

Chinese importers are required to make detailed records of domestic distributions for imported food products and keep them for at least two years. Inspection and quarantine authorities will be establishing a blacklist for foreign exporters and punish domestic importers who introduce food products which do not meet required standards.

For more information go to <http://www.nzte.govt.nz/> then click on "Food Safety Law Passed in China" under the latest export intelligence/press releases section

NZ-Japan Officials Group

A NZ-Japan Joint Officials Group has been set up to examine ways to further develop trade and investment between the two nations. The group will look at trade and investment issues from a free trade agreement (FTA) perspective, and provide both governments with the information they need to decide whether to move to FTA negotiations in the future. Japan is NZ's third largest export destination and fourth largest trading partner. In the year to June 2008 two-way trade totalled NZ\$7.4 billion.

Money Matters

CPI up 0.3% in March

Statistics NZ says that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased 3.0% from the March 2008 quarter to the March 2009 quarter. The food group (up 8.8%) accounted for half the increase, driven by grocery food prices (up 8.9%). The housing and household utilities group (up 3.6%), with higher prices for electricity (up 7.5%), also made a significant contribution. The transport group (down 2.6%) made a significant downward contribution, reflecting lower prices for petrol (down 9.3%).

Spending is on Food, Not Big Items

The latest figures from Paymark show that Kiwis appear to be more content than ever to dine at home, as supermarkets retain their position at the top of the consumer spending sector for the month of February. Food spending was up 6.9% in volume and 6.6% in value compared with the same month in 2008. Conversely, spending on big ticket items such as furniture and appliances remains weak, as does spending on "luxury" items including travel.

Regions where spending remained strongest were South Canterbury and Taranaki/ Taupo. Nelson, Otago, and the West Coast regions represented the slowest year on year growth rate during the month.

Bigger Tax Credits for Donations

Recent tax changes offer individuals, companies, and Maori authorities greater incentives to make donations to approved non-profits by increasing the levels of tax credits (formerly called rebates) that they can claim – and extending the ability to claim.

The key points are:

- individuals can claim a tax credit of one-third (33.33%) of all donations they make, limited only by the level of their annual taxable income (previously there was a rebate limit of \$630);
- companies are entitled to a deduction for all donations made to donee organisations, limited only by the amount of the company's net income (previously there was a 5% limit on deductions that companies could claim for cash donations);
- the donation deduction is also extended to companies with five or fewer shareholders; and
- Maori authorities are entitled to a deduction for all donations made to donee organisations, limited only by the amount of their net income (previously there was a 5% limit on deductions that Maori authorities could claim for cash donations).

More is at <http://www.ocvs.govt.nz/work-programme/promoting-generosity.html#Generosityinformationfromtheproject3>. Check the IRD website for a list of approved donee organisations at <http://www.ird.govt.nz/donee-organisations/donee-organisations.html>

Record Drop in Imported Goods

According to Statistics NZ figures for the March 09 quarter the seasonally adjusted trade balance was a deficit of just \$65 million - the smallest deficit recorded since June 2002.

The last five years of quarterly deficits have generally been in excess of \$1 billion. This smaller deficit is the result of a record decrease in imports, coupled with a smaller fall in exports.

Imports in the March 2009 quarter were down 12.8% (\$1.6 billion) compared with the December 2008 quarter. There was a \$1.3 billion decrease in intermediate goods, as falling crude oil prices coincided with a drop in the amount of oil imported into the country. Passenger motor car imports also fell, down \$195 million (this was less than half of the March 2008 value).

Exports fell 4.0% (\$449 million) in the quarter, because of a price-led fall in milk powder, butter and cheese exports, and falls in crude oil, and aluminium and aluminium articles (both

quantities and prices decreased).

Merchandise exports for March rose above 4 billion for the first time (they were up 17.7% on March 2008). There were strong increases in meat and edible offal, and export of large aircraft. The value of merchandise imports also rose in the March 2009 month (up 6.9%) because exports of mechanical and electrical machinery and equipment increased.

The trade balance for the March month was a surplus of \$324 million.

Plastic Card Spending Down

According to recent figures from Statistics NZ, the (seasonally adjusted) value of total electronic card transactions decreased 0.5% in March 2009 compared with February 2009. During the same period, the value of transactions in the core retail industries (which excludes the motor vehicle-related industries) increased 0.7%.

The value of transactions in the retail industries was up 0.3% in March 2009, following a 0.5% increase in February 2009. There were small rises in all retail industries except automotive fuel retailing and durables.

Trend series for transactions in the total, retail, and core retail industries are all currently flat. The trends for the total and retail series had been declining since August 2008 but appear to have flattened since January 2009. The core retail trend series has been flat since October 2008.

Pokie Spend Drops 10%

Gaming machine expenditure in pubs and clubs in the first three months of this year was almost 10% down on the previous quarter, according to figures released by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). Spending dropped from \$230.7 million at 31 December 2008 to \$208.7 million at 31 March 2009. Twelve months ago the first quarter spend of 2008 showed a similar drop of 11% but rose in the following two quarters. Expenditure in the year to 31 March 2009 at \$902.7 million was 4.5% lower than the \$945 million recorded for the year to 31 March 2008.

NZ-Bermuda Agreement

A Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) between NZ and Bermuda has been signed at the NZ Embassy in Washington DC. The agreement provides for full exchange of information on criminal and civil tax matters between the two countries.

Buying Second-hand Goods

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs says that buying second-hand can save you money and help to save the environment, but different laws apply depending on where you buy your second-hand goods from.

Second-hand dealers

If you are buying from a second-hand dealer then the Consumer Guarantees Act applies. So you can expect the goods to be fit for purpose, safe, free from defects, look acceptable, and last for a reasonable amount of time.

If the product breaks then you can take it back to get either a refund, repair or replacement if the problem is minor, or a full refund if the problem is major or causes a safety risk.

Since you know the product is second-hand then factors like price, information about the products and general wear and

tear, will affect how long you can expect it to last, or what is acceptable in appearance.

At auction

You will need to agree to the terms of the auction. These terms should be made available to you before the auction; they might be on signs or posters in the auction room. They will often include extra money to be paid to the auction house, when the goods have to be collected by. Check the terms carefully – because if you are buying goods at auction the Consumer Guarantees Act doesn't apply – and auctioneers are allowed to contract out of the Sale of Goods Act (this requires that the goods be of 'merchantable quality' and that the seller has the right to sell the goods).

The Fair Trading Act does apply, so that means that goods have to be the same as they were described to you. If anything goes wrong, the Contractual Remedies Act may be used to get your money back.

Goods sold at auction can be seized if there is money owing on them and the item has been used as security.

You can check the Personal Property Securities Register to check if the item has money owing, or if a creditor has a security interest in the item.

Internet auctions

The same laws that apply to auctions, also apply to online auctions when the seller is a trader (in this case "trader" means someone who sells a lot of items). When you buy from a trader at a "buy now" price then the same laws apply as when buying from a second-hand dealer. But if the seller isn't a professional trader, then it is classed as a private sale.

Private sales

Private sales include buying at a garage sale, from a neighbour, from an ad in the paper and also private internet sales or auctions. These sales are not covered by the Consumer Guarantees Act or the Fair Trading Act. This means you have less consumer law protection and it is important to check out what you are buying.

See if mechanical or electrical items work, and get them checked out by an expert if you can. For a car, get an independent pre-purchase check by a mechanic and check for money owing on the car. If the item has a manufacturers warranty on it, it may still apply after the sale so make sure you get that off the seller.

Get a receipt from the seller saying when you bought it and giving the name and address of the seller. Also write down anything that the seller has told you about the item. If anything turns out not to be true you may use the Contractual Remedies Act to get money back.

The Personal Property Securities Register is at <http://www.ppsr.govt.nz/cms>

Internet/ICT

NZ Telecommunications Market in 2008

The Commerce Commission has released its 2008 telecommunications monitoring report analysing the state of NZ telecommunications markets. The key findings from the

report's fixed lines section include:

- average calling prices continued to fall in 2008, although list prices have not shown much movement. Better deals for consumers have largely emerged in the form of new bundled offers, often incorporating calling, line rental and broadband;
- the broadband market continued to grow strongly through most of 2008. Telecom lost a further 7% of the retail broadband market, and its share of the market is now 57%. Total broadband connections, including fixed wireless connections, reached 915,000 by 31 December 2008;
- the latest statistics comparing the total number of broadband connections in NZ with the rest of the OECD are for 30 June 2008. The OECD estimated there to be 20.4 broadband subscribers per 100 population in NZ, which is 96% of the OECD average, giving NZ a ranking of 19 out of 30 in the OECD.

Key findings for the mobile include:

- despite some positive developments in the mobile services market, the competitive environment remains relatively unchanged from previous years. The entry of a third operator, NZ Communications, into the market and Telecom's launch of its new 3G network later in 2009 are likely to drive further competition in the mobile market;
- mobile phone usage continues to increase. By 30 September 2008, mobile phone penetration had reached 108% of the population. Mobile calling minutes increased by 16% for the 2007/08 financial year; and
- OECD benchmarking of NZ's mobile calling plans indicate that average NZ performance across all "baskets" has improved during 2008, from 127% of the OECD average cost to 84% (the main reason for this change is the inclusion of Vodafone's Base plans into the calculations).

However, NZ's mobile calling volumes still remain low by international standards, making up only one quarter of total calling minutes compared to at least one third to one half in comparable countries.

The 2008 report is available on the Commission's website www.comcom.govt.nz under Industry Regulation /Telecommunications/MonitoringandReporting

“Twitter” Explained

Does Twitter mystify you? If so, you are not alone. But the best way to overcome anxiety about twitter is to try it out yourself. The following questions and answers about Twitter (courtesy of the Main Report Group) may help you do so.

What is Twitter? A social networking and micro-blogging service that prompts users to answer the question, “What are you doing?” in just a few words. Messages, called “tweets,” can be viewed by your friends, or “followers.” All your tweets are visible on your personal page (www.twitter.com/yourusername), though your follower generally will read your tweets on their home page, along with a constant stream of updates from other tweeters they're following. Your tweets are also visible on the Twitter Public Timeline, which shows tweets by all tweeters. Anyone can opt out by adjusting his or her account settings.

How much room do I have? You have 140 characters total, so be succinct. That counts letters, numbers, spaces, punctuation, links — everything. Abbreviate words and sacrifice punctuation in the interest of concentrated content.

Can I tweet from my Web site? My cell phone? You can

tweet on the Twitter Web site, from your iPhone or BlackBerry, by texting from your cell phone (if you set up your Devices under the “Settings” tab), or from a third-party Web site or application.

What's a “follower”? **How do I get people to follow me? Whom should I follow?** A follower is essentially a friend on Twitter, and you can read what the people you follow have to say on your home page. You follow people whose tweets you want to read — friends, family, amusing strangers, those with specific knowledge in your business or other field of interest to you. Similarly, others will follow you for your insights, wit, wisdom, and expertise, or maybe just for the heck of it. Attract followers by starting conversations and posting engaging and relevant tweets for your target audience. Or you can use e-mail and other exchanges to invite people to follow you.

How can I find people or companies on Twitter? Use the “Find People” link at the top right of your Twitter homepage. Type in the names of your friends, family members, colleagues, and customers to find their usernames. A lot of celebrities, organisations, newspapers, blogs, TV channels, and Web sites also have accounts. Follow them by clicking the Follow button.

What should I tweet about? Anything you want. Individuals use it to stay updated on friends' happenings or the news. Businesses use it to develop their brand and connect with customers.

Information for this article comes from “A Twitter Primer For Managers”, produced by the Main Report Group. If you are keen to get into the twitter action for your business, or just want to find out more about it and would like a simple guide, email tdoe@themainreport.co.nz for a PDF document which will take you through the basics.

Telecom: 3G Mobile Network

Telecom has launched a new 3G mobile network with services available to customers from 13 May. The company is investing over \$574 million in the core network, retail stores and services and fibre. The 3G mobile service will be available across 97% of NZ. Telecom's current mobile network will continue to operate as normal.

A Handful of Websites

A collection of bike trails and cycle paths from all over the world contributed by a growing and incredibly dedicated community of cyclists is at <http://www.bikely.com/>. The site allows you to browse and add to the collection of routes and offers some simple and down to earth information about popular bike brands.

Online support for people experiencing depression is on the Ministry of Health (MoH) website at www.depression.org.nz. This site has been designed to be user-friendly for people experiencing depression. Visitors are guided with prompts and questions so they get an experience relevant to their own situation. The site includes information on depression signs and symptoms, tips on self-help strategies, a list of help services, and also video clips from several NZers who talk about what worked for them. Note: you can also call 0800 111 757 between 8am – midnight 7 days a week for advice or support.

To try a different kind of photographic technique go to <http://tiltshiftmaker.com/>. Tiltshift is a technique that changes the focus of a picture, often making real life scenes look as though they are photographs of a model. The website includes a tool which allows you to replicate this technique.

A new guide to 90-day trial employment periods is at <http://www.community.net.nz/communitycentre/news/national/90daytrial.htm>. From 1 March 2009, employers who employ 19 or fewer employees are able to employ new employees on a trial period of up to 90 calendar days. To help answer questions about the new legislation, the Department of Labour's Employment Relations Service has published an information web page for employers and employees.

To kick start a bit of good feeling go to www.givealittle.co.nz. The site gives NZers the chance to make a difference in the lives of a friend in need, a family, a local school, favourite charity, or community organisation. You nominate who you would like to give to, what you want to give, and why it is deserved. Givealittle.co.nz then shortlists 10 submissions to become Givealittle Friends in Need projects, and gives the finalists advice about how to use the web to reach a wider audience. Each page has one month to gather a crowd of givers. The page with the largest number of givers (but not necessarily the most raised) will be given \$1 for every giver up to a maximum of \$10,000.

Information on the re-vamping of Statistics NZ's website is at <http://www.stats.govt.nz/new-website-coming.htm>. Changes include: an advanced search functionality using more than just keywords; a better browsing experience; new look and feel to aid navigation and readability; and easier access to tables and data. Note: URLs will change, so you will need to update your bookmarks and links.

Treaty Matters

Te Urewera Treaty Claim

The Waitangi Tribunal has released part one of its report into the Treaty claims of the iwi and hapu of Te Urewera district (it is releasing the report in parts at the request of claimants).

This part of the report describes the tribes, their origins and settlement, their beliefs, and the way they exercised authority over their lands. Te Urewera tribes did not sign the Treaty of Waitangi (they were not offered the opportunity to do so).

The first part of the report examines the situation up until 1865. It finds that in that period the tribes were not in any real sense governed by the Crown, and it looks at the implications of this. It also examines the confiscation of Tuhoe land by the Crown in the 1860s. The confiscation was designed to punish other iwi but it also included much of Tuhoe's best land. Largely in response to this some Te Urewera iwi supported Te Kooti in attacks on Mohaka and other places in 1869, with about 80 Maori and Pakeha being killed. The Crown responded by sending an armed force into Te Urewera, killing non-combatants and destroying homes, food supplies, and taonga. Many people died, either as casualties, or from hunger and disease, and this created a lasting legacy of pain and grievance. The report examines the impact of these actions on the relationship between the Crown and Te Urewera Maori.

The report is at <http://www.waitangi-tribunal.govt.nz/news/media/default.asp>

Improving the Treaty Settlement Process: Hui

At a recent hui called Te Kokiri Ngatahi the Crown presented seven proposals for improving the Treaty negotiation and settlement process. They focused on ways in which claimant groups could organise themselves and their claims, and how the Crown could assist groups to find their own solutions in

areas where there could be sticking points preventing settlement, like disputes over mandates and over-lapping claims.

The Crown and claimant groups will now begin more detailed work on how to put the preferred proposals into practice, in advance of a follow-up hui in mid-June in Wellington.

More information, including details of the seven proposals is at <http://www.ots.govt.nz/>

Arts & Culture

How We View the Arts

Creative NZ has launched a report called "NZers and the Arts: Attitudes, attendance and participation in 2008". This 2008 study has been designed to update 2005 findings and also to extend understanding in some specific areas, including:

- participation in digital artforms;
- use of the internet to engage with the arts;
- attendance at paid and unpaid arts events;
- more detailed information on attendance and participation in various performing arts genres, specifically theatre, music and dance;
- the relationship between childhood arts experiences and attendance and participation as an adult; and
- involvement of Asians in the arts.

Some key stats around attitudes and feelings towards the arts include:

- 79% of those surveyed said the arts help define who we are as NZers (up from 75% in 2005);
- 79% agreed that the arts should receive public funding (up from 77% in 2005);
- 51% said they can't live without the arts. (up from 41% 2005);
- 65% now agree that the arts are "part of their everyday life" (up from 57% in 2005);
- 72% of NZers say that the arts are "for people like me" (up from 67% in 2005); and
- 63% of adults, who say they were taken to arts events regularly as a child, are now active participants.

In terms of attendance and participation, key stats include:

- 86% of NZers aged 15+ are involved in the arts as attendees and/or participants;
- consistent with 2005, 83% of NZers aged 15+ attended at least one art event in the past year;
- 34% regularly attended arts event in the past year (once a month or more);
- around half of the population aged 15+ (48%) are actively participating in the arts in NZ (this is consistent with the overall level of participation in 2005);
- just over one-quarter (26%) of the population participate in the arts regularly – (more than 12 times in the past 12 months);
- the survey points to higher than average attendance and participation for Maori and Pacific Peoples (in total, 88% of

Maori and 86% of Pacific peoples attended at least one arts event in the past 12 months); and

- the frequency of childhood art experiences is an important predictor of adult attendance and participation of the arts.

In terms of the arts online:

- almost a quarter of the populations (23%) say they have created original works of art using a computer;
- those aged 15 to 24 are particularly likely to create digital art, and 43% have done so in the past 12 months;
- the internet is acting as a "teaser" for attending live arts events (38% of the population have watched online performances or other online artworks over the past 12 months, and this proportion is likely to grow with improved access to broadband internet); and
- 47% of those who paid to attend their last performing arts event said they have used the internet to book their tickets.

Among Asian NZers there is:

- particularly high uptake of digital arts and use of the internet to view art forms: Asian NZers are more likely than all others to create art with a computer (30%, vs. 23% of others), and are more likely than NZ Europeans use the internet to watch art forms (48% vs. 34% of NZ Europeans);
- higher participation in the performing arts: Overall participation is consistent with other NZers, but Asian participation in the performing arts is higher than for NZ Europeans (21% vs. 14%); and
- higher attendance at Pacific arts events: Overall attendance is slightly lower than other NZers (76% vs. 83% of others), but attendance at Pacific arts events is higher than for NZ Europeans (30% vs. 21% NZ European). Asian non-attendees are more likely than all others to say they "don't know enough about the arts" (13% vs. 3% of others).

A fact sheet is at

<http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=4vzCczhbOC8%3d&tabid=59&language=en-NZ>. You can download the full report from <http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=pRkk%2fS6T4Qo%3d&tabid=59&language=en-NZ>

NZ Screen Industry: Lots of Dosh

Total funding, sales, and royalties for the NZ screen industry increased 11% to \$2.74 billion in the 2008 financial year, according to Statistics NZ (SNZ). The increase was mainly due to a 59% increase in funding received by screen production companies who received \$644 million, up from \$406 million in 2007. Expenditure in the Wellington region more than doubled from \$128 million in 2007 to \$285 million in 2008.

In 2008, the majority (55%) of funding was used to produce feature films. This contrasts with 2007, when over half of the funding was used to produce television programmes.

Funding is sourced from both NZ and overseas. The United States sources increased their funding contribution more than any other country – up to \$340 million from \$161 million in 2007, making the United States the largest contributor to the NZ screen production sector. NZ was the next largest contributor with \$276 million.

A New Fund for NZ-made TV

Platinum Television Fund of \$15.1 million has been established to fund NZ-made television content. To be administered by NZ On Air, the fund will be available on a fully contestable basis to the six free-to-air national television broadcasters, from 1 July. It is being ring-fenced off from NZ On Air's other funding to specifically support content which may currently be difficult to find on our screens, and which requires a high level of subsidy to be made. For 2009/10, priority will be given to high-end drama, documentaries, specialist current affairs, and special events programming.

Pacific Is. Heritage Photo Competition

Amateur photographers are invited to submit up to three unpublished photos in the Pacific Island Heritage in Focus international photo contest. Images need to have been taken in the Pacific Islands within the past 10 years. They should explore the relevance/value of Pacific heritage to contemporary socio-economic, environmental, or health challenges, or grassroots efforts for community-based heritage management and preservation. Entries that best represent the theme will be published in a Pacific Island Heritage 2010 Calendar. The contest, which is not open to professional photographers, is part of the Pacific Island Archaeology in the 21st Century: Relevance and Engagement conference to be held in Palau from 1-3 July 2009.

Entries must be postmarked by 31 May 2009. They go to Archaeology 2009 Conference, Attn. Calendar Committee, P.O. Box 666, Koror, Republic of Palau 96940. Go to <http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/WhoWeAre/News.aspx> then scroll down to "Photo Competition..."

Words of the Year

Since 1990 the American Dialect Society (ADS) has been electing a "word of the year." The word may be a single word, or it may be a phrase. It doesn't necessarily need to be a brand-new word, either, but it must have been notable or prominent in the previous year.

The ADS is no fly-by-night. It was founded in 1889 and its members include linguists, lexicographers, etymologists, historians and other scholars dedicated to the study of the language.

Here are the words that have come out on top, along with some words/phrases considered to be "most useful", and a few considered "most likely to succeed":

*2008 word of the year - **bailout***: refers to the rescue by the government of companies on the brink of failure, especially auto, banking and insurance companies;

*2007 word of the year - **subprime***: an adjective used to describe a risky or less-than-ideal loan, mortgage or investment;

*2007 most useful word - **green-prefix/compounding form***: designates environmental concern, as in greenwashing, when companies hype their products' environmental credibility;

*2006 word of the year - **to be plutoed***: as in to pluto, to demote or devalue someone or something, as happened to the former planet Pluto when the General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union decided it no longer met the definition of a planet.

2006 most useful word - **climate canary**: an organism or species whose poor health or declining numbers hint at a larger environmental catastrophe.

2006 most likely to succeed word - **YouTube (verb)**: to use the free online video site YouTube or to have a video of one's self be posted on the site.

2005 word of the Year - **truthiness**: what one wishes to be the truth regardless of the facts. Popularized by Stephen Colbert on his mock news show The Colbert Report.

2005 most useful word - **podcast**: audio or video file for downloading onto a music player such as an iPod.

2004 word of the year - **red/blue/purple states**: red favoring conservative Republicans and blue favoring liberal Democrats (as well as the undecided purple states) on the political map of the United States.

2004 most useful word - **phish**: to induce someone to reveal private information by means of deceptive e-mail.

2003 word of the year - **metrosexual**: a fashion-conscious, heterosexual male.

2003 most useful word— **flexitarian**: vegetarian who occasionally eats meat.

2003 word most likely to succeed - **SARS**: Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, viral disease first reported in Asia.

2002 word of the year - **weapons of mass destruction or WMD**: which were being sought for in Iraq.

2002 most useful word - **google (verb)**, as in "to google someone," to search the Web using the search engine Google for information on a person or thing.

2002 most likely to succeed word - **blog**: from "weblog," a Web site of personal events, comments and links.

2001 word of the year - **9-11, 9/11 or September 11th** : in reference to the terrorist attacks on the U.S. on that date.

2001 most useful word, a tie between **facial profiling**: using video "faceprints" to identify terrorists and criminals; and **second-hand speech**: cellphone conversations overheard in public places.

2000 word of the year - **chad**: a small scrap of paper punched from a voting card.

2000 most useful word - **civil union**, a union confirming many of the same rights as marriage. In 2000, Vermont was the first U.S. state to legally recognize civil unions between gay or lesbian couples.

1999 word of the year - **Y2K**: the "millennium bug" caused by the belief that early computers would not be able to switch from representing the year with two digits, causing a national-even global-computer meltdown. (Also word of the year in 1997.)

1999 most likely to succeed and also most useful word - **dot.com**: a company operating on the Web.

Source: Forbes Magazine:
http://www.forbes.com/2009/04/23/new-word-year-opinions-books-ads_slide.html?thisSpeed=15000

“Well, They're Very Good Citizens...”

This is the title of an article that considers NZers' perceptions of Asians in NZ. From Asia:NZ's director of research, it looks at how NZers' perceptions of Asians have changed over time and what the characteristics of these perceptions are, in terms of geography and age. The article concludes by asking to what

extent Asians will be involved in the “making of NZ” in the twenty-first century.

The article is available in “Sites” at
<http://sites.otago.ac.nz/index.php/Sites/issue/current Vol. 5 No. 2 2008>

Pikihua Maori Writers Awards

The Pikihua Awards for Maori Writers 2009 are now open. There are five award categories: best short story in Maori, best short story in English, best novel extract (up to 5,000 words), best short film script, and best short story in English or Maori by a secondary school student.

Entries close on 15 May 2009 (entry is free). Entry forms can be downloaded from Huia Books' website at <http://www.huia.co.nz/>

Fishing

Fisheries Management: Changes Coming?

The Ministry of Fisheries is proposing changes to the way it is structured, in particular to the number and location of fisheries management positions (locating them in Wellington and Auckland). The proposal would impact on the number of fisheries management roles in Dunedin, Nelson, Wellington, Napier and Auckland. However, it is not considering changing number of fishery surveillance and investigator roles and their locations. The Ministry is seeking feedback on the proposal from its staff and unions.

New Aquaculture for Northland?

The Government is to investigate finfish and oyster farming opportunities in Northland. The main objective of the investigation is to determine the feasibility of potential Aquaculture Management Areas (AMAs) for oyster and finfish farming and related aquaculture activities. The investigation will allow 19 possible AMA sites identified by the Northland Regional Council to be evaluated for their potential as marine farms, as well as investigating whether other promising sites exist around the Northland coast.

General

“North Island”? “South Island”?

The NZ Geographic Board/Nga Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa is looking to formalise the currently used and recorded English names for the North and South Islands of NZ (the “North Island” and the “South Island”), as well as considering official alternative Maori names. The Board will be writing to iwi seeking their known traditional Maori names for both islands. It expects to be able to publicly consult with all NZers on the names in 2010.

The board notes that “North Island” and “South Island” are actually not official names under our legislation, despite their common long-term usage. It is considering alternative naming – where either the English names, or the Maori names could be used individually or together. This is different from dual naming where both names are used together in official

documents, such as maps.

The Board's job is to assign, approve, alter or discontinue the use of names for geographic features, undersea features and Crown protected areas in NZ, its offshore islands, and its continental shelf and the Ross Sea region of Antarctica. It is a body of government, operating under statute and reporting to the Minister for Land Information.

More is at <http://www.linz.govt.nz/placenames/about-geographic-board/nzgb-news-notice/index.aspx>

Auckland Local Body Reform

Modification of the proposals for an Auckland "super-city" recommended by the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance includes:

- a single unitary council of 20 elected members and an elected Mayor;
- eight of the 20 elected councillors would be elected at large and 12 from wards;
- community representation would come through 20 or 30 second-tier boards; and
- there would be no separate Maori representation on the council; instead there would be a Maori Advisory Board.

The new structure is to be in place by the time the next local body elections are due in 2010.

Quality of Life in World's Cities

NZ cities have ranked among the best in the Mercer 2009 Quality of Living survey, which covered 215 cities and was based on criteria including political, social, economic, and environmental factors.

Auckland jumped one place from last year to join Canada's Vancouver in fourth place, and Wellington stayed 12th on the list.

Austrian capital Vienna took the No 1 spot, knocking Switzerland's Zurich and Geneva into second and third places, respectively. Paris (France), Tokyo (Japan), London (England) and New York (United States) were in places 33, 35, 38 and 49, respectively. Baghdad, in war-torn Iraq, claimed last place.

More information is at http://www.mercer.com/qualityofliving#Top_5_ranking_cities_by_region

Are NZers Holiday-deprived?

NZers are among the western world's most holiday-deprived workers, according to a survey by an online travel company. Forty-five percent of NZers leave some of their annual holidays untaken, second only to Japan where 92% fail to take, on average, almost half of their annual holidays, according to the annual global Expedia Vacation Deprivation survey. The survey was conducted in 11 countries and included NZ workers for the first time this year.

Other findings from the survey include:

- NZers received an average of 21 annual leave days from their employer in the past year, but took only 18 days;
- of the surveyed countries, NZers were given the fifth-fewest annual leave days by their employers (workers in Australia and Canada were given 19 days, Japanese workers 15 days, and workers in the United States only 13

days);

- 35% of NZ workers were changing their holiday plans due to economic worries, with half saying they wanted to carry over their holidays to use the following year, while a third said work commitments were too great to take a break; and
- France was found to be the world's most "holiday-rich" nation, with an average 38 days annual leave per year, and French workers also took the most leave each year - 36 of those days - double that of NZ workers.

A Most Precise Clock!

A joint effort in researching ultra cold atoms by scientists in the United States and Denmark has produced a clock that is so precise that it loses only a second every 300 million years. This is a big improvement on the previous version (which lost one second every 150 million years).

The clock is an atomic clock. It consists of gas atoms captured in a magnetic field where they are held stationary with laser light and are cooled down to near absolute zero, minus 273 degrees Celsius. In this state the researchers can use the properties of the atoms and get them to function as a clock movement with a pendulum.

Even though the improvement in accuracy is only a small fraction of a second, it has enormous potential in areas having to do with determining great distances, for example, measuring the distance to distant galaxies in space.

Ocean Drilling Programme Membership

NZ has formally joined a major international scientific drilling programme that will collect sediment cores from beneath the seabed in NZ waters later on this year.

The Integrated Ocean Drilling Program (IODP) is the largest and longest-running geoscience programme in the world, operating two scientific drilling ships, the "JOIDES Resolution" and the "Chikyu".

There are 23 other member countries. Membership gives a country the right to plan and participate in drilling expeditions that can be up to six months long.

Samoan Language Week

Samoan Language Week will be held from 25-29 May 2009. Schools are encouraged to celebrate this week by, for example, children having a show and tell of their experiences of things Samoan or being Samoan; and parents sharing their experiences in NZ and in Samoa.

For more information email iosua@petone-central.school.nz

Multi-language Human Rights Forms

Enquiry/complaint forms in Maori, Samoan, Tongan, Simple Chinese, Traditional Chinese, and Hindi are now available on the Human Rights Commission's website. They can be printed out, filled in and returned to the Commission by post or email.

More is at
<http://www.hrc.co.nz/home/hrc/enquiriescomplaints/enquiriescomplaints.php>

Some Conferences/Events

Rural Women NZ: National Conference 2009

This conference is being held from 15-17 May 2009, at the Duxton Hotel, Wellington. The conference will be opened by her Excellency Lady Susan Satyanand, followed by guest speaker John Key.

The winner of the Enterprising Rural Woman Award will also be announced at the conference. She will be chosen from finalists Jan Bolton of Kaingaroa Roding Contractors Ltd, Murupara; Beverley Forrester of Blackhills in North Canterbury; and the three principals of Tora Coastal Walk in South Wairarapa – Jenny Bargh, and Kiri and Kath Elworthy.

More information on conference workshops and speakers is at www.ruralwomen.org.nz. Conference registration forms are at http://www.ruralwomen.org/documents/ConferenceRegistration_000.pdf

HortNZ Conference

The Horticulture NZ Conference is on 21-23 July, in Christchurch. This year the theme is "Powered By People", in recognition of the need to capitalise on the skills and talents of all the people working in NZ's horticulture industry.

Find out more at <http://www.hortnz.co.nz/2009programme/index.html>

Safekids NZ Workshops

Safekids NZ is holding half-day workshops with themes of "Improving child car passenger safety" and "Reducing cutting and piercing injuries".

Venues, dates and contact details are: Gisborne: 27 May – email kiri@turangahealth.co.nz; Napier: 28 May, email Linda.Anderson@hbrc.govt.nz; New Plymouth: 10 June, email Eloise.pollard@tdhb.org.nz; Palmerston North: 11 June, email Nigel.fitzpatrick@midcentraldthb.govt.nz; and Wellington: 12 June, email uenuku.kane@huttvalleydthb.org.nz

Standards Plus & Up2date Workshop

This is being held in Whakatane from 23-24 May. It is a free workshop sponsored by the Ministry of Health for people with disabilities, their families and the people who support them. It has a theme of "How to make a Good Life Happen".

More information/registrations: www.imaginebetter.co.nz/MOH_index.php

ZFDIC Annual Training Conference '09

The NZ Federation of Disability Information Centres Inc (NZFDIC) conference "Movers and Shakers" is being held at the Napier War Memorial Conference Centre from 18-19 May.

More is at <http://www.nzfdic.org.nz/TCbrochure09.pdf> or email carol@drcsouth.co.nz

Tane Ora - National Maori Men's Health Conference

This conference is being held in Blenheim from 17-19 June.

The theme of the conference is "Ko wai au – Who am I?"

More information: <http://www.taneora.co.nz/index.htm>

Adult & Community Education (ACE) Aotearoa Inc

The ACE conference is to be held in Christchurch from 12-14 June. Its theme is "Embracing the Future - Kia whakapumau te wai kai te heke".

For more visit:
<http://www.aceaotearoa.org.nz/index/ACE%20Conferences/Details/Upcoming%20Conferences>

NZ Climate Change Centre

A conference with the theme of "Climate Change Adaptation: Managing the Unavoidable" is being held from 20-21 May in Wellington.

More is at <http://www.morst.govt.nz/about/calendar/Climate-Change-Adaptation-Managing-the-unavoidable---Conference-09/>

Funding/Awards

Lottery Community Sector Research Fund

Lottery Community Sector Research Fund committee is currently considering Research Idea applications from community organisations to carry out research and/or evaluation projects that offer community benefits. This is the first stage of a two-stage process. Applicants whose Research Ideas are selected by the Committee will be invited to submit a Full Research Proposal.

Applications close on 5 June 2009. More is at http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_url/services-lottery-grants-index, email lcsr@dia.govt.nz or freephone 0800 824 824

Horticulture: Nominations for Bledisloe Cup

Horticulture NZ is calling for nominations for the Bledisloe Cup for 2009. The Bledisloe Cup is presented every year to a person judged to have made a significant contribution to NZ's horticulture industry. Nominations can be made by "active grower members" of HortNZ and they need to be accompanied by a CV for the person being nominated, along with reasons for the nomination.

Nominations close on 8 June 2009. More is on the HortNZ website at <http://www.hortnz.co.nz/>

PM's Awards for Literary Achievement

Readers, writers and organisations are invited to nominate outstanding NZ writers of poetry, fiction and non-fiction for the Prime Minister's Awards for Literary Achievement 2009. These awards, worth \$60,000 each, recognise writers who have made an enduring contribution to NZ literature.

The closing date is Friday 5 June 2009. Recommendations go to the Council of Creative NZ. More is at <http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/tabid/59/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/156/Default.aspx>

Newman's Own Foundation

The Newman's Own Foundation is donating \$100,000 to NZ charities from the profits of Paul Newman's Own products sold here, making charitable grants of up to \$20,000 each. Any charity, big or small, with a specific project can apply to the foundation.

Expressions of interest close on 22 May 2009. Visit <http://www.paulnewmansown.com.au> for more details

Elsie Locke Award...

The New Horizons for Women Trust (NHWT) offers an annual or biennial award of up to \$4000 to a woman or group of women researching or writing (fiction or non-fiction) in an area of Elsie Locke's concerns: social justice, Maori, peace, women's health, NZ history, or the environment. The funds of the award may be used for spending related to the research, the study or publication, or family requirements.

Applications close 31 May 2009 (postal applications only please). For information on the award visit www.newhorizonsforwomen.org.nz or enquiries@newhorizonsforwomen.org.nz

...Second Chance Awards for Women...

New Horizons for Women Trust's (NHWT) second-chance awards assist women who are returning to education or training. They are valued at \$2,000 or more.

Applications close on 31 May 2009 (postal only please). They go to The Second-chance Awards Secretary, New Horizons for Women Trust (Inc.), P O Box 12 498, Wellington 6148. More information is at <http://www.newhorizonsforwomen.org.nz/assets/2009-2nd-chance-application.pdf>, or email enquiries@newhorizonsforwomen.org.nz

...NHWT Research Awards...

NHWT (see above) Research Awards, which may be up to the value of \$5,000 each, are to assist a woman, a group of women or a community group to undertake, within NZ, research on issues of importance to women and girls. The number of research awards available each year varies depending on sponsorship.

Postal applications close on 31 May 2009. Application forms are at <http://www.newhorizonsforwomen.org.nz/assets/09-Research-Application.pdf>. More is at <http://www.newhorizonsforwomen.org.nz/research-awards/>

... & Sonia Davies Peace Award

NHWT also has the Sonja Davies Peace Award, which was established to promote women's initiatives to advance the cause of peace. Women who are seeking more knowledge and skills, or developing an activity, which will help them build a more peaceful world - through the home, in the school, in the workplace, and in the community are eligible. The award is worth \$2,500.

Applications close on 31 May 2009. An application form is at <http://www.newhorizonsforwomen.org.nz/sonja-davies-peace-award/>

Wood Energy Grant Scheme

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority's (EECA) Wood Energy Grant Scheme offers help to people interested in

using wood residue as an energy source. Businesses can apply for financial assistance for demonstration projects or feasibility studies on use of wood residue, and EECA also provides information to sawmills, forestry owners and the general public on the use of wood residues.

More is at <http://www.eeca.govt.nz/renewable-energy/bioenergy/woodenergy.html>. You can also email woodenergy@eeca.govt.nz, or tel freephone 0800 358 676

Grants to Establish New Forests

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) is calling for applications in the second public tender round of its Afforestation Grant Scheme (AGS). The AGS involves grants for landowners of non-forested land to establish Kyoto compliant forests. The grants are one way NZ can improve its net greenhouse gas emissions.

For more on the AGS scheme/to download a tender form go to <http://www.maf.govt.nz/climatechange/forestry/initiatives/ags/>

2009 AMP Scholarships

Applications have opened for the 2009 AMP Scholarship Programme. NZ residents of any age, background and ethnicity, who can demonstrate the ability and attitude to succeed in their field, can apply. Scholarship recipients share in a pool of up to \$200,000 including a "premium pool" of up to \$80,000. Last year 15 recipients received scholarships of \$10,000 each and one premium scholarship winner was announced. Recipients also receive the opportunity for mentoring and support from within the AMP business. Applicants living in certain regions can also apply for regional scholarships offered by AMP Adviser Businesses (these are valued at between \$1000 and \$7,500 each).

Applications close on 31 May 2009. Winners will be announced in late August. Full details of the AMP Scholarship Programme are available on www.amp.co.nz

NZ International Business Awards

The second round of these awards is now open. Formerly known as the Export Awards, they recognise NZ companies who are successfully growing their businesses in international markets. General categories include: best business operating internationally – under \$10m; best business operating internationally - \$10m to \$50m; and best business operating internationally – over \$50m. There are also special awards, and leadership awards.

Entries close on 29 May 2009. For more information/entry details go to <http://www.nzte.govt.nz/awards>, or email nziba@nzbef.org.nz

Sovereign Sponsorship: Children's Charities

Sovereign has a new sponsorship programme called Sovereign Sunshine, which welcomes applications from all registered NZ-based children's charities. Each year, Sovereign Sunshine rotates through nine different groupings of NZ-based children's charities, according to charity type. Each month, Sovereign's staff select a shortlist of up to six charities from the featured charity type, and people vote online for one of these six charities. The charity with the most votes receives a donation from Sovereign of up to \$15,000.

The Sovereign Sunshine website is at www.sovereignsunshine.co.nz

Appointments

Commodore Tony Parr, who will be promoted to Rear Admiral, has been appointed *Chief of Navy* and Major General Rhys Jones the *Chief of Army*. NZ's current Ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Dr David Walker, is the *new chair of the WTO Doha Round Agriculture Negotiations*. Stephen John Coyle has been appointed a *District Court Judge with a Family Court warrant*.

John Ombler is the new *Deputy State Services Commissioner*. Retiring National Party president Judy Kirk has been appointed to chair the board of the *NZ Lotteries Commission*. Brian Cunningham has been appointed as *Deputy Judge Advocate General of the Armed Forces*. William Rolleston and Phil O'Reilly have been appointed to the *board of the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology*. Lewis Holden has been appointed as the *chief executive of the Ministry of Culture and Heritage*. Sue Sheldon and Keith Taylor have been appointed to the *Reserve Bank's board of directors*.

Members of an Expert Panel on Veterans' Health are: Professor John Campbell (chair), Dr Marie Bismark, Associate Professor Brian Cox, Professor Des Gorman, Professor Timothy Maling, Dr Sandy Macleod, and John Campbell. *Appointments to the Mental Health Commission's new advisory group* are Te Kani Kingi (Independent Chair), Elliot Bell, Monique Faleafa, Leo McIntyre, Simone Molenaar, Claire Moore, Taone O'Regan, Gavin Pilkington, Graham Roper, Lealofi Sio, Christine Taua, Hayley Theyers, Lynda Thoumine and Robert Warriner. Recent *Charities Commission appointments* include Chris Winstanley (General Manager Registration and Compliance), Barry Hayman (General Manager Corporate), and Philip Kearney (General Manager Education). James West has been appointed to the role of *Group General Manager of Wool Equities*. *Nine new advisors to NZ Trade and Enterprise's global Beachheads programme* include: Erik Dijkstra (Netherlands), Peter Methven (UK), Alan Munro (UK), Dr Shane Reti (Middle East), Trevor Burt (Christchurch), Steven Carden (Auckland), Mike Devonshire (Havelock North), Keith Jackson (Auckland), and Tony McNeil (Wellington). [For more about the Beachheads programme go to www.nzte.govt.nz/beachheads]. Brent Layton, David Russell, Lewis Evans, Stephen Franks, Toby Stevenson and Miriam Dean have been appointed as the *Technical Advisory Group reviewing electricity market performance*.

New appointments to a number of *SOE boards* are: *Airways Corporation of NZ Ltd* (Terry Murdoch); *AsureQuality Ltd* (John Ashby, Dean Nikora); *Genesis Power Ltd* (Joanna Perry [deputy chair], Graeme Milne, Denis Wood); *Kordia Group Ltd* (David Clarke - chair); *Landcorp Farming Ltd* (Jane Mitchell); *Meridian Energy Ltd* (Chris Moller, Brett Shepherd*); *Meteorological Service of NZ Ltd* (Sarah Astor [chair], Polly Schaverien [deputy chair] – elevation); *Mighty River Power Ltd* (Keith Smith, Joan Withers *); *NZ Post Ltd* (Dr Michael Cullen, Temuera Hall); *NZ Railways Corporation* (Paula Rebstock

[Deputy Chair], Mark Tume, Bob Field); *Quotable Value Ltd* (Phil Lough [chair], Christine Southey, Gary Traveller); *Transpower NZ Ltd* (Ian Donald [deputy chair], Dr Don Brash, Mike Pohio, Abby Foote).

- *Subject to due diligence.*



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.

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If you would like more information about Rural Bulletin or its contents, please contact:

Craig Matthews/Paddy Twist

Editors Rural Bulletin
Tel: 04 473 5524
Fax: 04 472 8946
Email ruralbulletin@ruralwomen.org.nz

Noeline Holt

Executive Officer
Rural Women New Zealand
Tel: 04 473 5524
Fax: 04 472 8946
Email: enquiries@ruralwomen.org.nz

Jackie Edkins

Communications Officer
Rural Women New Zealand
Tel: 04 473 5524
Fax: 04 472 8946
Email: enquiries@ruralwomen.org.nz
Website: www.ruralwomen.org.nz

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

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