

## ABOUT THE RMA SURVEY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Every two years the Ministry for the Environment carries out the Resource Management Act (RMA) survey of local authorities in New Zealand. The survey includes questions about key aspects of RMA implementation:

- the numbers and types of resource consent applications processed
- the time taken to process resource consent applications
- charges to applicants for resource consent applications
- good practice in resource consent processing
- monitoring, compliance, complaints and enforcement
- Māori participation in RMA processes
- the numbers and types of plan changes and variations.

The purpose of the survey is to:

- help the Minister for the Environment monitor how the RMA is being put into practice
- highlight trends over time in implementing the RMA, as well as areas where performance by local authorities may require greater attention
- promote good practice under the RMA and improve local authorities' performance
- enable each local authority to compare its performance with others
- provide local authorities with information so they can more accurately respond to enquiries about RMA processes.

This brochure highlights the key facts on RMA processes for the 2010/2011 financial year for the 78 local authorities that responded to the survey.

The full report on the *Resource Management Act: Survey of Local Authorities 2010/2011* can be found on the Ministry for the Environment's website at:

[www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/rma/annual-survey](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/rma/annual-survey).

## FIVE KEY FACTS FROM 2010/2011

- 36,154 resource consent applications were processed through to a decision.
- 0.56 per cent (203) of resource consent applications were declined.
- 6 per cent (2263) of resource consent applications were notified in some way (publicly notified and limited-notified).
- 95 per cent of resource consent applications were processed on time.
- 68 per cent of consents that required monitoring were actually monitored.



## RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS PROCESSED BY INDIVIDUAL LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities are grouped according to their authority type and, in the case of the 61 territorial authorities, the volume of resource consent applications they process.

### Resource consent applications processed by local authorities and the percentage processed on time and the use of section 37

Group	Local authority	2010/11		
		% on time	Use of s37 (2010/11) % of total consents processed	
Territorial authorities group 1	Carterton District Council	100	4	
	Central Hawke's Bay District Council	100	6	
	Clutha District Council	100	0	
	Gore District Council	98	4	
	Grey District Council	97	7	
	Hurunui District Council	98	3	
	Kaikoura District Council	96	7	
	Kawerau District Council	100	0	
	Mackenzie District Council	88	14	
	Masterton District Council	99	3	
	Opotiki District Council	97	6	
	Otorohanga District Council	99	5	
	Rangitikei District Council	100	0	
	Ruapehu District Council	98	3	
	South Waikato District Council	98	0	
	Stratford District Council	100	0	
Taranaki District Council	91	0		
Waimate District Council	78	2		
Wairoa District Council	100	3		
Waitomo District Council	100	0		
Territorial authorities group 2	Ashburton District Council	98	3	
	Buller District Council	100	12	
	Central Otago District Council	98	5	
	Hauraki District Council	99	15	
	Horowhenua District Council	98	5	
	Invercargill City Council	99	15	
	Kaipara District Council	93	72	
	Kapiti Coast District Council	93	4	
	Manawatu District Council	94	1	
	Matamata-Piako District Council	96	8	
	Napier City Council	93	0	
	Porirua City Council	99	3	
	Selwyn District Council	99	2	
	South Taranaki District Council	100	1	
	South Wairarapa District Council	92	0	
	Southland District Council	95	12	
Taupo District Council	100	5		
Timaru District Council	100	2		
Upper Hutt City Council	97	6		
Waimakariri District Council	74	4		
Waitaki District Council	98	5		
Wanganui District Council	99	17		
Western Bay of Plenty District Council	100	5		
Westland District Council	99	12		
Whakatane District Council	90	7		
Whangarei District Council	91	17		
Territorial authorities group 3	Far North District Council	95	3	
	Hamilton City Council	94	6	
	Hastings District Council	95	2	
	Hutt City Council	99	2	
	New Plymouth District Council	98	9	
	Palmerston North City Council	77	1	
	Rotorua District Council	98	3	
	Tauranga City Council	98	9	
	Thames-Coromandel District Council	98	13	
	Waikato District Council	96	16	
	Waipa District Council	96	7	
	Territorial authorities group 4	Christchurch City Council	90	10
		Dunedin City Council	99	5
		Queenstown-Lakes District Council	96	0
		Wellington City Council	99	9
		Regional councils	Bay of Plenty Regional Council	100
Environment Canterbury Regional Council			92	27
Environment Southland			92	8
Greater Wellington Regional Council			99	18
Hawke's Bay Regional Council			98	15
Horizons Regional Council			98	42
Northland Regional Council			99	46
Otago Regional Council			99	23
Taranaki Regional Council			100	28
Waikato Regional Council			90	40
West Coast Regional Council			98	14
Unitary authorities			Auckland Council	92
	Chatham Islands Council		100	0
	Gisborne District Council		96	13
	Marlborough District Council		95	6
	Nelson City Council		89	19
	Tasman District Council	99	32	

Source: 2010/2011 RMA survey data.

Note: The percentages for resource consent applications processed within time limits should be interpreted with caution. A resource consent application may be processed outside of the time limit at the request of the applicant, and in this situation does not reflect any inefficiency on the part of the local authority.



Ministry for the  
**Environment**  
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

### KEY FACTS ABOUT LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND RMA PROCESSES IN 2010/2011

#### FUTURE SURVEYS

The Ministry is working collaboratively with councils to develop an integrated framework to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the RMA. This will build on existing monitoring knowledge, processes and systems to improve reporting of RMA data. The project will help clarify what RMA data will be collected, from where and when, and will reduce the handling of data. Over the long term, the project will build on the existing RMA survey process.

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This document and the detailed survey results, *Resource Management Act: Survey of Local Authorities 2010/2011*, are available on the Ministry for the Environment's website:

[www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/rma/annual-survey](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/rma/annual-survey).

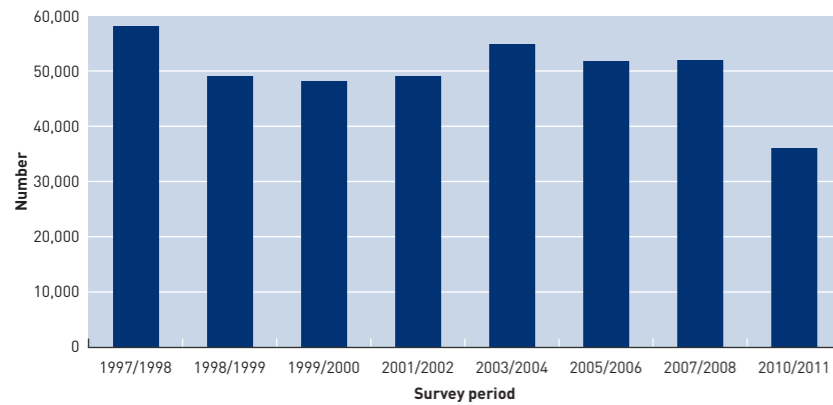
**Disclaimer:** Results presented in the 2010/11 survey were derived from data provided by local authorities. Data was collected through the Resource Management Act online survey. All reasonable measures have been taken to ensure the quality and accuracy of the information contained herein.

New Zealand Government

## RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATION PROCESSING

- 36,154 resource consent applications were processed through to a decision.
- 4 per cent (1414) of resource consent applications were publicly notified.
- 2 per cent (849) of resource consent applications were notified to affected parties only (limited notification).
- Local authority officers acting under delegated authority made 91 per cent of decisions on resource consent applications.
- 0.56 per cent (203) of resource consent applications were declined.
- 1 per cent (357) of resource consent decisions were appealed.

### Number of consent applications processed to a decision, 1997/98–2010/11



Note: There is no data for 2009 as the survey was not conducted that year.

### Resource consent applications processed, by notification and consent type

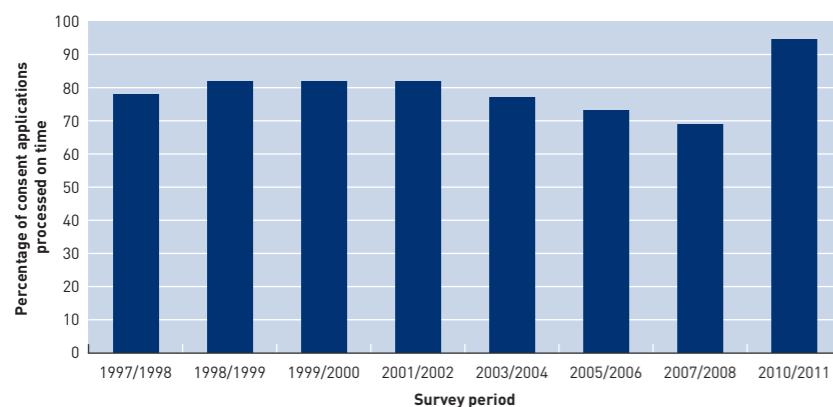
Type of authority	Subdivision	Land use	Coastal	Water	Discharge	Total
Regional	0	3,086	793	2,322	3,188	9,389
Unitary	1,830	9,233	438	496	594	12,591
Territorial	4,462	9,710	0	0	2	14,174
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,292</b>	<b>22,029</b>	<b>1,231</b>	<b>2,818</b>	<b>3,784</b>	<b>36,154</b>

Source: 2010/2011 RMA survey data.

## RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS PROCESSED ON TIME

- Overall, 95 per cent of resource consent applications were processed on time.
- 87 per cent of notified resource consent applications were processed on time.
- 86 per cent of limited notified resource consent applications were processed on time.
- 95 per cent of non-notified resource consent applications were processed on time.
- Section 37 was used to extend the time limits for 15 per cent of all resource consent applications.

### Percentage of resource consent applications processed on time, 1997/98–2010/11



Note: There is no data for 2009 as the survey was not conducted that year.

## Percentage of resource consent applications processed on time, by consent type

Consent type	Percentage of resource consent applications processed on time
Subdivision	93
Land use	95
Coastal	96
Water	95
Discharge	97

Source: 2010/2011 RMA survey data.

## CHARGES FOR RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS

The range of average median charges to applicants for resource consent application processing varied depending on the type of notification and issuing authority.

### Average charges to applicants for resource consent applications

Notification type	Territorial authorities	
	Subdivision	Land use
Notified	\$10,562	\$19,499
Limited notified	\$3,174	\$5,651
Non-notified	\$1,312	\$934

Notification type	Regional councils and unitary authorities <sup>1</sup>				
	Subdivision	Land use	Water	Coastal	Discharge
Notified	\$11,521	\$8,514	\$17,866	\$9,947	\$9,928
Limited notified	\$6,537	\$4,779	\$4,168	\$2,385	\$4,699
Non-notified	\$1,581	\$832	\$1,277	\$970	\$1,119

Source: 2010/2011 RMA survey data.

1: These are combined average median charges for regional councils and unitary authorities.

The total value of all discounts provided by local authorities in 2010/11 was \$204,109.

## MONITORING, COMPLIANCE, COMPLAINTS AND ENFORCEMENT

- 68 per cent of resource consents that required monitoring were monitored.
- 72 per cent of monitored resource consents complied with their conditions.
- 124,172 complaints about alleged breaches of the RMA were received.
- Excessive noise directions (81 per cent) were the most used formal enforcement option to resolve complaints, followed by abatement notices (11 per cent).
- 1800 infringement notices and 1290 abatement notices were issued.

### Percentage of local authorities monitoring and reporting on their responsibilities

Responsibility		Regional councils	Unitary authorities	Territorial authorities	All
State of the environment	Monitor	100%	83%	43%	54%
	Report	91%	83%	23%	37%
Suitability and effectiveness of policies and plans	Monitor	91%	33%	64%	65%
	Report	45%	17%	38%	37%
Delegated/transferred functions	Monitor	55%	50%	34%	38%
	Report	27%	33%	25%	26%
Compliance with resource consent conditions	Monitor	100%	83%	89%	90%
	Report	91%	67%	48%	55%
Complaints register	Monitor	91%	67%	46%	54%
	Report	82%	67%	15%	28%

Source: 2010/2011 RMA survey data.



## MĀORI PARTICIPATION IN RMA PROCESSES

- All councils provided advice to applicants that their resource consent application may be of interest or concern to iwi or hapū.
- 97 per cent of local authorities had standard resource consent conditions covering the discovery of sites or items significant to iwi/hapū.
- 15 per cent of local authorities involved iwi/hapū in resource consent monitoring.
- 54 per cent of local authorities made a budgetary commitment to iwi/hapū participation in RMA processes.
- 51 per cent of local authorities had written criteria or a set policy for staff to determine when iwi/hapū should be considered an affected party to resource consent applications.
- 24 per cent of local authorities had a policy requiring a cultural impact assessment as part of the resource consent application when a site, species or resource is of concern to iwi/hapū.
- 72 per cent of local authorities had formal memoranda of understanding, protocols, joint management agreements, or service-level agreements with iwi/hapū, and 63 per cent had informal agreements.

## GOOD PRACTICE BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The results of the RMA survey are used to highlight and monitor the use of good practice by local authorities to improve performance in resource management functions.

- 82 per cent of local authorities provided applicants with a checklist defining the environmental effects that must be addressed in resource consent applications for controlled and restricted discretionary activities.
- 77 per cent of local authorities followed a structured process to identify and address environmental effects.
- 68 per cent of local authorities had internal notes or checklists to guide staff on when to notify a resource consent application.
- 53 per cent of local authorities had internal guidance notes or checklists to help staff identify potentially affected parties.
- All local authorities check each resource consent application for completeness within 5 working days of its arrival.
- 82 per cent of local authorities ran customer satisfaction surveys. Of those providing full information, 91 per cent reported that most customers were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'.
- The average number of staff over the survey period was 943. Forty-three per cent of these staff are planners.

## PLAN CHANGES AND VARIATIONS

- 108 council initiated and 35 privately initiated plan changes to operative district or regional plans were completed.
- 35 variations to proposed district or regional plans were completed.