

management of the coastal marine area² and which was subject to approval by the Minister of Conservation.

In the coastal marine area the regional coastal plans had to address the following:

- 1 control of the extraction of sand, shingle, shell or natural material from any part of the foreshore and seabed vested in the Crown or regional council;
- 2 control of taking, use, damming and diversion of water;
- 3 control of the discharge of contaminants in or onto land, air or water and discharges of water into water;
- 4 control of dumping and incineration of waste and other matter and the dumping of ships, aircraft and offshore installations;
- 5 control of activities on the surface of the water;
- 6 prevention or mitigation of adverse effects of the storage, use, disposal and transport of hazardous substances.

Thus regional councils had extensive plan-writing requirements, which had to be undertaken at the same time as they were creating their governance and administrative structures.

THE DISTRICT LEVEL

The narrowest remit was given to city/district councils, which were to focus on 'integrated management of the effects of the use, developments or protection of land and associated natural and physical resources of the district' [S31(1)(a)]. As such, city/district councils largely retained their traditional planning role of controlling the use of land, particularly in urban areas, as well as dealing with associated concerns such as noise and subdivision. The inclusion of the latter, which was previously controlled through a combination of provisions in the Local Government Act 1974 and the planning legislation, was an uncomfortable fit in the RMA. Its inclusion was disputed by the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors, the professional body for surveyors, throughout the reform process. In 2005 subdivision became a means of achieving sustainable management rather than a duty. The reasons for this are somewhat arcane and in practice little has changed in terms of how subdivisions are dealt with in the planning system. In New Zealand, subdivision is a somewhat different area, derived from this country's adoption of the Torrens system of guaranteed land titles. This is a system that is used in South Australia and some Canadian provinces, and means that every parcel of land has a legal description and surveyed boundaries that are recorded in a land