

Information to be tabled in support of 2017/18 Annual Plan deliberations

As a result of discussions Councillors requested that urgent attention be given to increasing expenditure in environmental compliance and enforcement activities. This was reflected in more than thirty one submissions to our 17/18 Annual Plan, all essentially raised concerns over the effectiveness of our compliance and enforcement activities.

How we carry out our compliance activities and improve our effectiveness has been a focus for us in the establishment of the Operations Group and the zone team approach. While both initiatives are well embedded and progress and improvement is evident, compliance activity is still a work in progress. It was anticipated additional staffing would be required going forward. This was to be addressed as part of the 2018-2028 Long term Plan process.

While a number of submitters made suggestions as to how our activities in this area could be improved, Fish and Game specifically stated a need to be prepared to allocate more funding to immediate and follow up responses to land and water breaches and incidents. Fish and Game suggested that four additional staff be added in investigation officers and resource management officers. The Waihao Wainono Community Catchment Group, with whom we have closely worked in those catchments, also requested an additional field officer.

To bring three additional staff into our compliance teams, on the basis of no user pays recovery, will cost \$528k (total costs including salaries and overheads). To maximise the impact of these additional staff we need to ensure the flexibility exists for these resources to be targeted at proactive permitted activity monitoring, increased capability in incident response, (pollution hotline), and to be redeployed rapidly as new issues arise. To deliver this means the funding for these additional staff must be through general rates.

The increase of \$528k will be funded from general rates and will increase the total rate requirement from 2.94% to 3.5%.



Bill Bayfield
Chief Executive