

Media Statement

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National Policy Statement a Step in the Right Direction for Infrastructure

Infrastructure is being put where it belongs: at the centre of New Zealand's economic, environment and social decision-making. That's Infrastructure New Zealand's view as the Government introduces a National Policy Statement for Infrastructure. INZ welcomes it and calls it a fundamental building block of progress that finally places infrastructure where it belongs.

"This is a clear acknowledgement that infrastructure is not peripheral to national outcomes, it is essential to delivering them. To sustain this momentum, successive Governments should stick to the broad policy direction, rather than wild shifts in every time the government changes, " says Infrastructure New Zealand Chief Executive, Nick Leggett.

"For decades, infrastructure has been treated as an afterthought, and dealt with project by project, consent by consent - despite being fundamental to economic growth, environmental outcomes, and community wellbeing. A National Policy Statement changes that. It sends a clear signal that infrastructure is nationally significant, that its benefits must be properly recognised, and that the system must actively enable its timely and efficient delivery."

Infrastructure New Zealand emphasises the importance of enduring national direction for infrastructure. As New Zealand transitions through resource management reform, changes to the system architecture must place long-term infrastructure outcomes at the heart of decision-making. This NPS needs to be explicit and consistently carried through in the development of National Direction and Standards, which will be the top of the hierarchy in the new RMA system.

"The release of the National Policy Statement on Infrastructure is a step in the right direction. This sends a critical signal to communities, councils, investors, and delivery agencies that New Zealand is serious about lifting infrastructure performance over the long term, rather than responding to short-term pressures. Strengthening these connections will be essential to translating policy intent into infrastructure that can be delivered," says Nick Leggett.

If New Zealand wants better results as a nation, we must also accept that we need different attitudes and behaviours about what we build, where we build, and how we weigh local impacts against national benefits. Just as importantly, we must be clearer about why we are building - to support growth, improve resilience, reduce emissions, and lift productivity.

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Infrastructure New Zealand is the nation's leading infrastructure member association. Our core purpose is to advance best practice development of world-class transport, energy, water, telecommunications, and social infrastructure for all New Zealanders. We do this through research, advocacy, and public and private sector collaboration. Our membership is comprised of over 150 organisations, including central and local government agencies, consultants, contractors, financiers, utilities, and academics – collectively employing approximately 150,000 people in infrastructure-related roles. Together, we are committed to creating a better New Zealand through outstanding infrastructure.

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Infrastructure New Zealand also strongly supports the National Policy Statement on Renewable Electricity Generation. Mandating more carbon-free electricity generation is essential to New Zealand's future competitiveness and emissions reduction goals. Too many barriers have slowed or stopped the delivery of the right kinds of renewable projects to date. Clear national direction is a necessary reset to reduce carbon in our economy.