

Council: **Taranaki Region**

Res Population: **102,800**

Urban/Rural Mix: **67%/33%**



Status of RMA Policy/Plans

- Regional Air Quality Plan for Taranaki; operative 7 April 1997
- Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki; operative 1 October 1997
- Regional Fresh Water Plan for Taranaki; operative 8 October 2001
- Regional Soil Plan for Taranaki; operative 8 October 2001

RMA Monitoring Approach

Monitoring strategy/framework (date, diagram, etc)

Yes:

- State of the environment monitoring; largely from 1995. Various physical, chemical and biological parameters.
- Resource consent compliance monitoring; various dates. By consent holder. Some area wide programmes.
- Incidents/complaints monitoring.

Links between policy/plan, SoE, resource consent and complaints monitoring

State of environment monitoring, resource consents and incident monitoring all form an important part of policy and plan monitoring.

RMA Policy/Plan Monitoring approach

Policy/plan monitoring capacity (dedicated staff, budget, etc)

No separate budget for plan monitoring as it is built into other monitoring activities.

Approach to policy and plan implementation/suitability/effectiveness monitoring

Based on monitoring strategies and frameworks listed in 2. above together with stakeholder review/feedback on plan suitability and effectiveness, and occasional community surveys.

Next State of the Environment report (in preparation) will attempt to link RPS and regional plan objectives to the findings in the SoE report in a table format to try and establish policy and plan effectiveness from SoE monitoring.

Key Issues/Provisions Monitored

Monitoring priorities

Freshwater quantity, flows, levels and use; freshwater quality (physicochemical, biological, bathing); riparian management water quality; wetlands; air quality; coastal water quality (ecological, bathing); soil erosion; soil health; groundwater levels and quality; natural hazards (rainfall, flooding, earthquake etc); info from district councils on natural features and landscapes, heritage and amenity, esplanade reserves and strips etc); info from DoC on threatened species; info from MaF on sustainable forest plans and permits; info from QE11 National Trust on covenants.

How key issues/provisions prioritised

Dictated by Regional Policy Statement and regional plans.

Information management/capture systems

- Staff assigned project management responsibilities for monitoring programmes.
- Information systems comprise paper files, annotated maps, site cards, excel and Word formats; in-house consents, compliance monitoring and incidents database (R2D2); GIS; LABSYS (freshwater chemistry database); marine biological database; freshwater biological database; hydrology database and systems; 'Hilltop' hydrology database and adapted to air quality monitoring; seismographs; property database; videotapes (for monitoring plumes from outfalls and emissions from smokestacks).

Costs and Benefits of Policy/Plan Monitoring

Costs

- Staff time, resource costs, info system setup and running costs.

Benefits

- Increased plan efficiency(reduced bureaucracy and compliance costs) and effectiveness (better environmental outcomes), reduced plan review costs.
- SoE, compliance monitoring and incident monitoring information was used recently in the interim review of the Regional Air Quality Plan and was found to be cost effective.

Hot Tips for Policy/Plan Monitoring Success

- Clear/explicit objectives or anticipated environmental results against which to measure progress
- Correct choice of parameters to measure what you want or intend to measure
- Cost effective monitoring methods – not too time or data hungry
- Recognition of the need for plan monitoring
- Appropriate organisational support

Key Lessons Learnt and Pitfalls to Avoid

- State clear and measurable outcomes in plans - this helps in the selection of appropriate monitoring parameters and methods
- Include community acceptance or otherwise of the plan as part of plan monitoring

Future Needs

- Guidance on appropriate monitoring frameworks/ approaches
- Info sharing among councils

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