

Council: **Whangarei District**  
Res Population: **70,000 (approx)**  
Urban/Rural Mix: **70% Urban 30% Rural**



#### **Status of RMA Policy/Plans**

Proposed Whangarei District Plan as Amended by Council (notified in 1998).

#### **RMA Monitoring Approach**

##### **Monitoring strategy/framework(date, diagram, etc)**

Whangarei District Council Monitoring Strategy/Manual June 2001 (folder form).

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

Linkages between district planning process, consents and complaints monitoring, district plan monitoring and state of the environment monitoring and reporting are explicitly established in the Monitoring Strategy, which attempts to link these various aspects into an integrated monitoring system (see attached diagram).

#### **RMA Policy/Plan Monitoring approach**

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

District plan monitoring is treated as part of Council's wider monitoring duties under the RMA, i.e. consents and complaints, district plan and state of the environment monitoring and reporting. Our monitoring team comprises one Team Leader, two monitoring officers and a State of the Environment Coordinator. We do most of the resource consents and complaints monitoring, district plan monitoring, and state of the environment monitoring and reporting with input from other divisions within Council. Monitoring of subdivision conditions prior to issuing 224(c) certificates is carried out by consents staff. We also use other expertise for technical aspects of monitoring.

##### **Approach to policy and plan implementation/suitability/effectiveness monitoring**

Each issue of significance identified in the district plan is monitored using the anticipated environmental results (AER) outlined in the plan. For each AER a number of indicators are identified and these are used to evaluate the implementation, suitability and effectiveness of policies and methods in the plan. Suitability and effectiveness of resource consents (and conditions) are monitored and this information feeds into the district plan monitoring and reporting process.

#### **Key Issues/Provisions Monitored**

##### **Monitoring priorities**

Subdivision and Development; Financial Contributions; Road Transport; Network Utility Services; Whangarei Airport; Marsden Point Port; Amenity Values; Heritage Buildings, Sites and Objects; Heritage Trees; The Coast; Riparian and Coastal Margins; Water Bodies; Open Space; Landscape; Indigenous Vegetation and Habitat; Minerals; Natural Hazards; Contaminated Sites; Hazardous Substances; Tangata Whenua; Local Cross Boundary Issues.

##### **How key issues/provisions prioritised**

The above list is based upon issues identified in the district plan. They have not been prioritised. A number of indicators have been developed for each of these issues based upon the AERs outlined in the plan. These issues and indicators will be

prioritised when it comes to collecting data and reporting on them. Initially what we will report upon will depend upon what information is available. Over time we will establish new information gathering processes and report on a wider range of indicators.

#### **Information management/capture systems**

We have a Unix-based database package called Corporate Vision that allows us to record all documentation as well as track our processes such as resource and building consents, monitoring, etc. This is all tied to ArcView GIS. We also use Access and Excel for various other data (e.g. complaints, surveys, etc.), but these will eventually be tied into Corporate Vision.

#### **Costs and Benefits of Policy/Plan Monitoring**

##### **Costs/Benefits**

We have not yet started to formally monitor and report on the district plan. We have concentrated on cementing in place a comprehensive and effective consents and complaints monitoring module. In the next financial year we will be looking to formally monitor the plan and provide a plan evaluation report.

#### **Hot Tips for Policy/Plan Monitoring Success**

- Sufficient staff and resources
- Political support
- Start at the most basic level and work upwards, i.e. start with consents and complaints monitoring, feed this information into district plan monitoring, and then feed both into state of the environment monitoring and reporting. Don't do the reverse, i.e. start with state of the environment.

#### **Key Lessons Learnt and Pitfalls to Avoid**

- (a) Write a comprehensive strategy/manual, outlining what needs to be done and how to do it. Include all monitoring functions, i.e. consents and complaints, district plan, and state of the environment. Try to establish links between the various types of monitoring. Finally, establish feed back loops to policy and consents processing so as to make use of the information gained from monitoring.
- (b) Start with good AERs in the plan relating to the resource management issues in the plan; identify functional indicators based upon these; collect what information is available for these indicators including information from consents and complaints monitoring; report initially on those indicators for which you have adequate information; over time set up new monitoring and data gathering procedures; use the most useful indicators from district plan monitoring to feed into state of the environment monitoring and reporting.
- (c) Find out what other territorial authorities are doing in regard to monitoring and reporting. If what they are doing seems good, copy them.

#### **Future Needs**

- Examples of what other territorial authorities are doing.
- Less theoretical advice from MfE and more practical assistance.
- Greater political recognition of the value of monitoring.

Main Contact Person/Position:	<b>Kerry Grundy</b>
Phone:	<b>(09) 430 4200</b>
Email:	<b>kerryg@wdc.govt.nz</b>