



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

**KEY FACTS ABOUT LOCAL AUTHORITIES
& RESOURCE CONSENTS IN 2003/2004**

WHAT IS THE RMA SURVEY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES?

Every two years the Ministry for the Environment carries out the Resource Management Act (RMA) survey of the 86 local authorities in New Zealand. The survey includes questions about six key aspects of RMA process:

- numbers and types of resource consents processed
- the time taken to process resource consents
- the charges to applicants for resource consent applications
- Māori participation in the RMA processes
- monitoring, compliance and enforcement
- good practice by local authorities.

While the primary purpose of the survey is to monitor the effect and implementation of the RMA, the survey results have the added advantage of:

- promoting good practice and improved performance in local authorities
- providing a factual basis for analysing and responding to criticisms of the RMA
- allowing individual local authorities to compare performance with their peers.



The full report on the RMA: Two-yearly Survey of Local Authorities can be found on the Ministry for the Environment's website at:

<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/rma/annual-survey/index.html>

FIVE KEY FACTS FROM THE 2003/2004 FINANCIAL YEAR:

- 54,658 resource consents were processed through to a decision
- 0.7% (404) of resource consents were declined
- 4.8% (2,628) of resource consents were publicly notified (ie. public comment or submission was sought)
- 77% of all resource consents were processed within statutory time limits (ie. the standard timeframes set in the RMA)
- 56% of publicly notified consents were processed within statutory time limits.



RESOURCE CONSENTS

Local authorities provided the Ministry for the Environment with information about the resource consents they processed in 2003/2004.

- 0.7% (404) of resource consents were declined.
- 4.8% (2,628) of resource consents were publicly notified, compared to 6.0% (2,921) that were publicly notified in 2001/2002.
- 87% of resource consent applications were able to be processed by local authority officers, ie. without the need for direct councillor or commissioner input.
- 1.2% (651) of all resource consent decisions were appealed to the Environment Court over 2003/2004, compared to 1.8% (893) in 2001/2002.

RESOURCE CONSENTS PROCESSED IN 2003/2004

Type of resource consent	Subdivision consent	Land use consent	Coastal permit	Water permit	Discharge permit	TOTAL CONSENTS
Number of consents	12,957	34,321	1,405	2,533	3,442	54,658



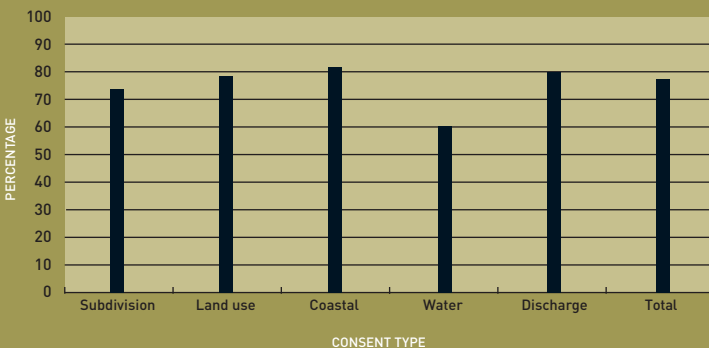
CONSENTS PROCESSED WITHIN TIME

The RMA sets standard timeframes (statutory time limits) for the processing of resource consents.

- 77% of all resource consents were processed within statutory time limits.
- 56% of publicly notified consents were processed within statutory time limits.
- 74% of all consents using the limited notification process were processed within statutory time limits.
- 78% of non-notified consents were processed within statutory time limits.
- Section 37 was used to extend statutory time limits for 12.6% of the total resource consents processed compared to 6% in 2001/2002.
- Further information was requested from 35% of resource consent applicants, to enable their consents to be processed.



PERCENTAGE OF RESOURCE CONSENTS PROCESSED WITHIN TIME 2003/2004

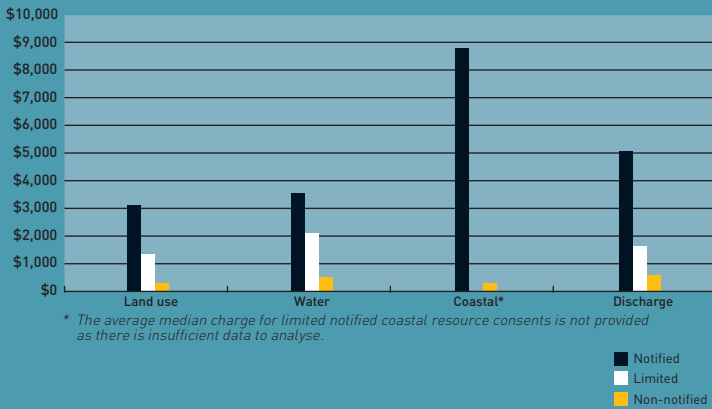




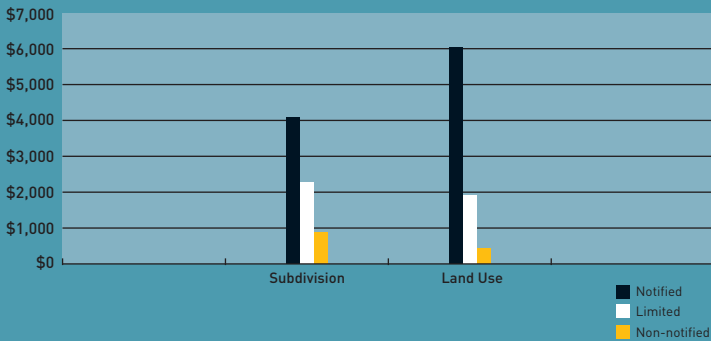
CHARGES TO APPLICANTS FOR RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS

Consent charges vary depending on the type of consent (eg. whether the consent is notified or non-notified) and which type of local authority issued the consent.

AVERAGE MEDIAN CHARGE FOR CONSENTS ISSUED BY REGIONAL COUNCILS AND UNITARY AUTHORITIES IN 2003/04



AVERAGE MEDIAN CHARGE FOR CONSENTS ISSUED BY TERRITORIAL AUTHORITIES IN 2003/2004



GOOD PRACTICE BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The results of the RMA survey are used to highlight and monitor the use of best practice by local authorities.

- 84% of local authorities formally receive resource consent applications within one full working day of their arrival at the council office, ie. the consent process began within one day of consent applications being lodged. This is a slight decrease from the 88% in 2001/2002.
- 79% (68) of local authorities formally monitor and report consent processing performance and make the results available to ratepayers.
- 90% (77) of local authorities in 2003/2004 define the environmental effects that must be addressed in consent applications for controlled and restricted discretionary activities. This compares to 81% (70) of local authorities in 2001/2002.
- 69% (59) of local authorities indicated that they follow a structured process (such as using checklists) to ensure that environmental effects are adequately identified and addressed in Assessments of Environmental Effects. This compares to 64% (55) of local authorities over 2001/2002.
- 65% (55) of local authorities indicated that guidance notes or checklists are available to staff making decisions on whether to notify an application compared with 73% (63) of local authorities in 2001/2002.
- 57% (49) of local authorities advised they have internal guidance notes or checklists available to staff on how to identify affected parties, the same as reported in the 2001/2002 survey.

MĀORI PARTICIPATION IN RMA PROCESSES



Under the RMA local authorities have an obligation to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

- 56% of local authorities made a formal budgetary commitment to Māori/iwi participation in resource management processes.
- 65% of local authorities provide their staff with guidance on matters of consultation and notification where Māori/iwi are likely to be affected parties in a resource consent application.
- 789 resource consent applications that affected statutory acknowledgements under the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 were received by twelve local authorities in 2003/2004 compared to 589 in 2001/2002.



MONITORING, COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Under the RMA, local authorities are required to monitor the state of the environment, the effectiveness of policy and plans, resource consents and complaints.

Local authority type	PERCENTAGE MONITOR AND REPORT				
	State of the Environment	Suitability and Effectiveness of Policies and Plans	Delegated/ Transferred Functions	Compliance with Conditions	Complaints Register
Regional	80	80	60	92	100
Territorial	31	29	32	71	66
Unitary	60	0	40	60	80
Total	39	33	36	73	72

- Those councils able to provide information on compliance indicated that 74% of all resource consents that required monitoring complied with resource consent conditions in 2003/2004, compared to 72% in 2001/2002.
- 58% of complaints were dealt with using informal means, compared to 75% in 2001/2002.
- 80 local authorities issued 1,157 infringement notices in 2003/2004. Within this 21 were defended (appealed) in the Environment Court and 194 were not proceeded with. The remainder were either paid directly or were still in progress at the end of the survey period.

NUMBER OF RESOURCE CONSENTS PROCESSED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities are grouped into family groups according to their authority type and, in the case of the 70 territorial authorities, the number of resource consents that they process.

LOCAL AUTHORITY FAMILY GROUPS AND RESOURCE CONSENTS PROCESSED

	1997/98	1999/00	2001/02	2003/04		1997/98	1999/00	2001/02	2003/04
LOCAL AUTHORITY GROUP 1					LOCAL AUTHORITY GROUP 4				
Buller D/C	56	57	86	88	Auckland C/C	9,324	6,183	5,649	7,215
Carterton D/C	52	82	49	66	Christchurch C/C	4,165	2,604	2,489	2,721
Clutha D/C	85	72	75	108	Dunedin C/C	942	832	780	1,073
Gore D/C	100	98	83	79	Far North D/C	1,003	795	763	827
Grey D/C	90	86	61	105	Hamilton C/C	1,806	963	588	782
Kaikoura D/C	73	58	104	103	Manukau C/C	2,620	2,013	1,808	1,901
Kawerau D/C	7	11	8	11	North Shore C/C	2,980	2,374	2,385	2,563
Opotiki D/C	59	58	40	49	Queenstown-Lakes D/C	613	745	964	1,029
Otorohanga D/C	71	69	54	87	Rodney D/C	1,427	1,319	1,403	1,603
Rangitikei D/C	74	91	96	66	Taupo D/C	502	457	511	659
South Waikato D/C	93	78	97	90	Waimakariri D/C	385	604	402	790
Stratford D/C	63	32	36	52	Waitakere C/C	2,473	2,092	1,506	1,815
Tararua D/C	57	55	59	64	Wellington C/C	1,451	1,550	1,323	1,423
Waimate D/C	52	48	47	56	Western Bay of Plenty D/C	737	421	414	655
Wairoa D/C	41	41	38	44	REGIONAL AUTHORITIES				
Waitomo D/C	52	55	51	66	Auckland R/C	961	721	1,042	997
LOCAL AUTHORITY GROUP 2					Environment Bay of Plenty R/C	495	393	732	1,022
Ashburton D/C	170	141	177	216	Environment Canterbury	2,032	1,801	2,390	2,420
Banks Peninsula D/C	187	160	137	206	Environment Southland	511	414	731	621
Central Hawkes Bay D/C	103	93	124	150	Waikato R/C	1,377	1,036	1,192	1,091
Hauraki D/C	158	173	126	134	Hawkes Bay R/C	541	540	811	629
Horowhenua D/C	253	222	186	239	Horizons R/C	369	490	450	284
Hurunui D/C	200	200	143	256	Northland R/C	732	632	931	1,076
Invercargill C/C	297	306	232	244	Otago R/C	898	620	675	784
Kaipara D/C	207	174	190	251	Taranaki R/C	322	261	478	568
MacKenzie D/C	N/A	74	43	113	Wellington R/C	829	665	691	748
Manawatu D/C	204	187	147	270	West Coast R/C	443	607	1,520	554
Masterton D/C	142	120	140	196	UNITARY AUTHORITIES				
Matamata-Piako D/C	216	193	214	184	Chatham Islands D/C	12	9	2	5
Papakura D/C	523	402	249	290	Gisborne D/C	658	610	576	676
Ruapehu D/C	100	92	69	121	Marlborough D/C	1,525	1,327	2,037	1,955
South Taranaki D/C	185	131	164	195	Nelson C/C	513	467	408	507
South Wairarapa D/C	127	192	170	191	Tasman D/C	867	816	1,187	1,165
Southland D/C	187	176	246	253	TOTAL CONSENTS PROCESSED	58,060	48,045	49,012	54,658
Timaru D/C	364	293	286	276					
Upper Hutt C/C	139	246	200	241					
Waitaki D/C	160	91	116	169					
Wanganui D/C	290	242	215	195					
Westland D/C	85	58	93	148					
LOCAL AUTHORITY GROUP 3									
Central Otago D/C	134	161	206	424					
Franklin D/C	475	422	314	536					
Hastings D/C	483	514	466	569					
Hutt C/C	856	738	622	641					
Kapiti Coast D/C	413	385	298	323					
Napier C/C	326	375	310	354					
New Plymouth D/C	382	402	414	600					
Palmerston North C/C	511	506	447	641					
Porirua C/C	285	318	358	305					
Rotorua D/C	812	675	536	530					
Selwyn D/C	491	515	529	591					
Tauranga C/C	1,061	696	526	607					
Thames-Coromandel D/C	528	472	565	602					
Waikato D/C	522	448	472	577					
Waipa D/C	566	453	484	645					
Whakatane D/C	290	294	229	313					
Whangarei D/C	1,090	820	747	570					

C/C City Council D/C District Council R/C Regional Council

NEXT SURVEY: The next RMA: Two-yearly Survey of Local Authorities will take place in the 2005/2006 financial year. The survey questionnaire will be released before 30 June 2005. Responses will be collected from local authorities after 31 July 2006.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: If you would like to know more about the RMA Survey of Local Authorities contact the Ministry for the Environment by phoning (04) 917 7400 or in writing to PO Box 10-362, Wellington.

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