

**Rural Contractors New Zealand Submission**  
**Draft National Planning Standards**

**To:** Ministry for the Environment  
PO Box 10362  
WELLINGTON 6143

**Email:** [planningstandards@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:planningstandards@mfe.govt.nz)

**Name of Submitter:** Rural Contractors New Zealand Incorporated

**Address for Service:** Graeme Mathieson  
Mitchell Daysh Limited  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Telephone:** [REDACTED]

**Email:** [REDACTED]

I confirm that I am authorised on behalf of Rural Contractors New Zealand Incorporated to make this submission.

**1 OVERVIEW**

- 1.1 Rural Contractors New Zealand Incorporated (“Rural Contractors NZ”) generally supports the direction of the Draft National Planning Standards subject to the amendments which are outlined in this submission.
- 1.2 In this submission we have provided:
- General submissions on the Draft National Planning Standards (**Section 2**); and
  - Specific submission points on the Draft National Planning Standards, including relief requested (**Attachment A**).

**2 GENERAL SUBMISSION**

- 2.1 Rural Contractors New Zealand Incorporated (“RCNZ”) is the only national association and the leading advocate for rural contractors in New Zealand representing the interests of contractors engaged in a wide range of activities and is an Affiliated Member of Federated Farmers. RCNZ monitors central and local government policies and plans. It maintains close relations with a wide number of organisations, government departments and other bodies.

2.2 There has been a growing trend in the share of rural contracting in total agricultural production with an estimated 1100 rural contractors nationwide. This has been indicative of a trend toward greater specialisation and contracting out of the inputs to rural production. Contractors are used for the skills they have gained through specialisation, the machinery and technology they can offer, and as a substitute for other labour.

2.3 The main industry users of services from the rural contracting industry are horticulture and fruit growing, livestock cropping and farming, dairy and cattle farming, forestry, and services to agriculture and hunting and trapping. Specific examples of rural contractor services include:

- Aeration;
- Cultivation;
- Earth moving;
- Fertilising;
- Grain and seed harvesting;
- Land clearing and development;
- Park and reserve maintenance;
- Root raking;
- Spraying;
- Windrowing;
- Hay and silage making;
- Drilling;
- Farm drainage;
- Hedge and shelter cut;
- Mowing;
- Ploughing;
- Aerial and land spraying;
- Track maintenance;
- Cartage;
- Fencing;
- Forestry;
- Horticulture;
- Mulching;
- Viticulture.

2.4 Rural contractors make a significant contribution to rural communities, by providing off-farm work and casual workers for the farming sector and contributing to the economic and social health of local areas. Due to the nature of their business and the clients they serve, rural contractor depots are typically established in rural areas. The scale of rural contractor depots can vary from relatively small-scale seasonal operators, some of whom have established the business as a logical extension of an existing farming operation, to larger larger-scale businesses operating solely as a rural contractor depot.

2.5 Rural contractors are critical in ensuring the prosperity, security, and sustainability of New Zealand's pastoral and forestry sectors which are the backbone of our economy and their continued success is essential to this country's living standards. Sound planning is required to ensure that activities that are integral to the rural industry such as rural contractors are sufficiently recognised, provided for and protected for future generations in terms of key planning documents such as the National Planning Standards.

### 3 SPECIFIC SUBMISSION POINTS

3.1 Rural Contractors NZ's specific submission points are provided in Attachment A.

3.2 In respect of all of those submission points in Attachment A, Rural Contractors NZ seeks:

- Where specific wording has been proposed, words or provisions to similar effect;
- All necessary and consequential amendments, including any amendments to the provisions themselves or to other provisions linked to those provisions submitted on, and including any cross references in other chapters; and
- All further relief that are considered necessary to give effect to the concerns described above and in Attachment A.

**Signature:**

**RURAL CONTRACTORS NEW ZEALAND INCORPORATED**

by its authorised agents Mitchell Daysh Limited



---

G.J. Mathieson

**Date:**

17 August 2018

**ATTACHMENT A: RURAL CONTRACTORS NZ'S SUBMISSIONS ON THE DRAFT NATIONAL PLANNING STANDARDS**

REF	PROVISION	PAGE	SUPPORT OPPOSE	RURAL CONTRACTORS NZ COMMENTS	RELIEF SOUGHT
1	S-ASM: Draft Area Specific Matters Standard  Zone chapters (S-ZONES)  Discretionary Direction 8  Rural Zone and Rural Production Zone	43-44	Support in part	<p>Discretionary Direction 8 states that the local authority must choose at least one of the zones listed in a following table to use in their Plans, and that each zone contains a Purpose Statement which the zone provisions must fulfil. However, it is noted that the relevant table includes both a “Rural Zone” and a “Rural Production Zone”.</p> <p>The “Purpose Statement” for the Rural Zone is as follows: <i>The purpose of the Rural Zone is to provide primarily for primary production activities. The zone may also provide for a limited range of activities which support rural production.</i></p> <p>The “Purpose Statement” for the Rural Production Zone is as follows: <i>The purpose of the Rural Production Zone is to prioritise primary production activities that rely on the productive nature of the soils, intensive primary production, and also providing for associated rural industry.</i></p> <p>It is not clear why there needs to be both a Rural Zone and a Rural Production Zone. The Purpose Statement for each zone provides for primary production activities, however the Rural Zone also provides for “a limited range of activities which support rural production” while the Rural Production Zone also provides for “intensive primary production” and “associated rural industry”. It is not clear why it is considered appropriate to provide for “intensive primary production” and “associated rural industry” within the Rural Production Zone and not within the Rural Zone. Similarly, it is not clear why it is considered appropriate to provide for “a limited range of activities which support</p>	<p>Within the table in Discretionary Direction 8, delete the Rural Production Zone and retain the Rural Zone with the following amendments to the “Purpose Statement”:</p> <p><i>The purpose of the Rural Zone is to provide primarily for primary production activities and <u>intensive primary production, and also to provide for associated rural industry and.</u> <del>The zone may also provide for a limited range of activities which support rural production or have a functional need to locate in the rural area.</del></i></p>

REF	PROVISION	PAGE	SUPPORT OPPOSE	RURAL CONTRACTORS NZ COMMENTS	RELIEF SOUGHT
				<p><i>rural production</i>” in the Rural Zone but not the Rural Production Zone.</p> <p>Intensive primary production, rural industry and other activities which support rural production could have a functional need to locate throughout the rural area. For example, it is considered that a rural contractors depot would not be classified as “<i>associated rural industry</i>” but would likely fall within the ambit of “<i>a limited range of activities which support rural production</i>”.</p> <p>Accordingly, it is considered that there should not be a Rural Production Zone and Rural Zone, but only a single Rural Zone which provides for a full range of typical rural activities (via the Purpose Statement). This would avoid potential confusion and a situation where a Council selects either one of the two zones (which would then potentially exclude the subsidiary activities specified in the other Rural Zone), or both of the zones (where the location of the specified activities would be potentially restricted to one or the other of the zones for no apparent reason).</p> <p>Further, it is considered that the Purpose Statement should include activities which have a “<i>functional need</i>” to locate in rural areas. This would provide greater certainty to Rural Contractors NZ in terms of ensuring rural contractor depots would be adequately provided for. It is also noted that while the term “<i>functional need</i>” is defined within the Definitions Standard, it is not used anywhere in the Draft National Planning Standards (despite being a commonly used term in the policy frameworks of Regional Policy Statements, and Regional and District Plans in terms of providing direction on the sort of activities that can establish in rural areas).</p>	

REF	PROVISION	PAGE	SUPPORT OPPOSE	RURAL CONTRACTORS NZ COMMENTS	RELIEF SOUGHT
2	CM-1: Draft Definitions Standard Table 29: Definitions Table Definition of "functional need"	82	Support in part	<p>In the Draft Definitions Standard, the definition for "functional need" is:</p> <p><i>"means the need for a proposal or activity to traverse, locate or operate in a particular environment because the activity can only occur in that environment"</i></p> <p>The definition is potentially overly restrictive because it may still be <u>possible</u> for a proposal or activity to traverse, locate or operate within other environments, however there is typically an environment (or environments) that are best suited. For example, even though a rural contractor depot could potentially locate within an urban area (e.g. Industrial), there is more of a functional need to locate in rural areas due to the close association with primary production activities. In some cases, rural contractor depots have been established as a logical extension of an existing farming operation for seasonal work. Further, it is essential that rural contractor depots are in close proximity to the primary production market they service to minimise travel time and operating cost.</p>	<p>Amend the definition for "functional need" as follows:</p> <p><i>"means the need for a proposal or activity to traverse, locate or operate in a particular environment because the activity <u>has specific requirements to locate</u> can only occur in that environment"</i></p>