

## **Recommended Amendments to the RPS Implementation Plan**

### **1. Air Method 3 (1): Develop an ambient air quality monitoring programme.**

The Implementation Plan scheduled this method to be undertaken between 1996/7 and 1998/9. The current Long Term Financial Strategy, however, reduced our ambient air quality work from setting up a regional network immediately to a three year screening programme (see Facing the Future 1997-2007, p39). In fact, we will meet the letter of the RPS and the Implementation Plan's target of "developing" a programme this year because our screening programme includes a report on what will be required to undertake air quality monitoring in the Region long term. However, the "implementation" of the proposed programme will depend on the next Long Term Financial Strategy.

*Recommendation:* That the Implementation Plan be amended to read: "Implementation of the air monitoring programme to be determined by the Long Term Financial Strategy 1999/00".

### **2. Air Method 3 (2): Develop an emissions inventory.**

The Implementation Plan scheduled this method to be undertaken in 1996/7 and 1997/8. The current Long Term Financial Strategy, however, rescheduled this work over the three years to June 2000. The emissions inventory is being produced in three parts. Last year a report was prepared on industrial and mobile emissions. This year we will report on domestic emissions. Next year natural sources (forests, soils etc) will be inventoried.

*Recommendation:* That the Implementation Plan be amended to read 1999/00 as the year for the completion of this method.

### **3. Ecosystems Method 10: Identify and prioritise ecosystems of regional significance.**

The Implementation Plan's expectation that this work could be completed this year was unrealistic. It should indicate the project will be completed in 1999-2000. Thus far, considerable work has been undertaken identifying key native ecosystems and water bodies of high value. This information is being collected on a computer database this year. We plan to prioritise these ecosystems for management next year but the scope of the ecosystem work will need to be considered in the next reassessment of the Long Term Financial Strategy and this will have an impact on the prioritisation process.

*Recommendation:* That the Implementation Plan be amended to read 1998/9 – 99/00 for this method.

4. **Landscape and Heritage Method 9: Investigate the need for a regional heritage plan.**

The Implementation Plan scheduled this investigation for this year. However, for several reasons, this would be premature and the investigation should be delayed. Councillors will be aware from previous reports to the Committee that historic heritage management across the country is being reviewed and, associated with that, the Historic Places Trust.

Neither of these reviews has been finalised and legislation is still to come. The historic heritage review is considering a national policy statement under the Resource Management Act 1991, and fundamental changes to the way local authorities should manage heritage and archaeological sites. Moreover, the scope of matters to be covered by regional councils through policy statements and (by implication) plans is itself in question in the current reassessment of the RMA.

All of these factors could be expected to affect the place of heritage within the RMA framework and suggest it would be unwise to proceed with this investigation at this time.

*Recommendation:* That the Implementation Plan be amended to read 2002/03 for this method, with the comment that an earlier date would be possible pending the resolution of the above mentioned matters.

5. **Natural Hazards Method 5: Undertake scoping studies on wild fire, severe wind, tsunami, and drought.**

The Implementation Plan was overly optimistic in planning for these studies to be undertaken this year. Each of these studies is likely to be of a size which together would render their completion in one year impossible. We have already undertaken a study of the risks associated with wild fire in 1997/98, a year ahead of the Implementation Plan's requirement. To ensure that the remaining scoping studies are completed, we have reprogrammed the hazard investigations of the Resource Policy Department. The drought scoping study will be undertaken in 2000/01, and the tsunami and severe wind projects in the following year.

It is worth observing that tsunami risk information is already printed on our hazard maps and that considerable work on droughts and water shortage has been undertaken throughout the Council (for example, Report 98.26W: Hydrological Assessment of the Dry 1997/98 Summer; and Report 98.215: Drought Update; research is also currently underway on the impacts of changes in the southern oscillation index on river flows in the Region). In addition, the impacts of climate change on the Region and any associated hazards will be reported to the Committee shortly.

*Recommendation:* That the Implementation Plan be amended to reflect the programme of hazard scoping studies outlined in the above paragraph.

6. **Waste Management methods 5 and 6: Prepare waste minimisation policies and investigate incentives for waste reduction.**

The Local Government Amendment Act (No 4) 1996 devolved major new powers to territorial authorities to deal with waste management. These included the preparation and implementation of a waste management plan, the development of waste minimisation policies, and the adoption of the waste hierarchy in the district. This rendered method 5 – waste minimisation policies for the Region - obsolete. Territorial authorities have undertaken their own initiatives in this area. With no operational responsibilities for non-hazardous waste management under any statute, the investigation of incentives to reduce waste also ceased to be a concern of this Council.

*Recommendation:* That these methods be removed when the RPS is reviewed in 1999/00.

7. **Waste Management Methods 22 and 23: Co-ordinate database on unwanted agrichemicals and collect and dispose of unwanted agrichemicals.**

The Implementation Plan scheduled these methods to be carried out this year (1998/99). However, the Council chose not to allocate funding for these activities when it set the current Long Term Financial Strategy in 1997. They will therefore not be carried out this year nor any other year unless the Long Term Financial Strategy is suitably amended.

*Recommendation:* That the need for these methods be reassessed when the RPS is reviewed in 1999/00, or that they be reconsidered as part of the next consideration of the Long Term Financial Strategy.