

OC260157

1 April 2026



Tēnā koe 

I refer to your email dated 6 March 2026, requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *“Bishop OC260009 21/01/2026 Aide Memoire: Updating you on the Independent Review of the NZTA 10-Year Forecast*
- *Meager OC260021 28/01/2026 Aide Memoire: Summary of Maritime Security and Surveillance Advice*
- *Bishop OC251152 29/01/2026 Seeking your Review of the Draft GPS 2027 And MTPP Cabinet Paper*
- *Bishop N/A 22/01/2026 Transport Portfolio Weekly Report Week Commencing [most recent available]*
- *Meager N/A 22/01/2026 Associate Transport Portfolio Weekly Report Week Commencing [most recent available]*

May I also please have a briefing list from the Ministry for all briefings sent to Ministers in February and up until March 5.”

Of the five documents you requested, three are released with some information withheld and two are withheld in full.

The document schedule outlines how the documents you requested have been treated under the Act. Certain information or full documents have been withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 6(a) | as release would be likely to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government |
| 6(c) | as release would be likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation, and detection of offences, and the right to a fair trial |
| 9(2)(a) | to protect the privacy of natural persons |

- 9(2)(b)(i) to protect information where the making available of the information would disclose a trade secret
- 9(2)(b)(ii) to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information
- 9(2)(f)(iv) to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials
- 9(2)(g)(i) to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty
- 9(2)(h) to maintain legal professional privilege
- 9(2)(i) to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities

With regard to the information that has been withheld under section 9 of the Act, I am satisfied that the reasons for withholding the information at this time are not outweighed by public interest considerations that would make it desirable to make the information available.

In regard to your request for a list of briefings between 1 February and 5 March 2026, I am refusing this part of your request under the section 18(d) of the Act as the information requested will soon be publicly available. The Ministry looks to proactively release a list of all briefings provided Ministers each month, which is published in the following month. The Ministry will notify you once the February and March briefing lists respectively are published.

If you would like to discuss this decision with us, please do not hesitate to contact us at OIA@transport.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

The Ministry publishes our Official Information Act responses and the information contained in our reply to you may be published on the Ministry's website. Before publishing we will remove any personal or identifiable information.

Nāku noa, nā



Hilary Penman
Manager, Ministerial & Executive Services

Annex 1: Document Schedule

Doc #	Reference number	Date	Title of Document	Decision on request
1	OC260009	21/01/2026	Aide Memoire: Updating you on the Independent Review of the NZTA 10-Year Forecast	Withheld in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv). This Aide Memoire refers to information relating to Budget 2026 is under active consideration until it is publicly announced on Budget Day, which is 28 May. Budget information will be proactively released approximately eight weeks after Budget Day.
2	OC260021	28/01/2026	Aide Memoire: Summary of Maritime Security and Surveillance Advice Attachments: OC250201 Maritime Security Briefing 2025 OC250895 Resilience and Security of New Zealand's Critical Underwater Infrastructure and Improvement Options OC250358 Observing the Indo-Pacific Regional Information Sharing Platform Regional Exercise OC250490 Visit to Restore Lab OC250991 Opening Starboard Maritime Intelligence's New Office OC251082 Meeting with Dean Veverka on Critical Underwater Infrastructure	Released with some information withheld under sections 6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(a), 9(2)(b)(i), 9(2)(b)(ii), 9(2)(f)(iv) and 9(2)(g)(i). Please note OC260021 was mistakenly dated 2025. The date this briefing was provided to the Minister was 28 January 2026. Six related briefings and aide-memoires are attached to this briefing. Refer to Annex 1 on page 7 for a list of the documents provided. OC250895 is withheld in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv).
3	OC251152	29/01/2026	Seeking your Review of the Draft GPS 2027 And MTPP Cabinet Paper	Withheld in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv). GPS 2027 is now part of Budget 2026. Information relating to Budget 2026 is under active consideration until it is publicly announced on Budget Day, which is 28 May. Budget information will be proactively released approximately eight weeks after Budget Day.
4	N/A	5/03/2026	Transport Portfolio Weekly Report Week Commencing 2 March 2026	Released with some information withheld under sections 6(c), 9(2)(a), 9(2)(b)(ii), 9(2)(f)(iv), 9(2)(g)(i), 9(2)(h) and 9(2)(i)
5	N/A	5/03/2026	Associate Transport Portfolio Weekly Report Week Commencing 2 March 2026	Released with some information withheld under sections 6(a), 9(2)(a), 9(2)(b)(ii) and 9(2)(f)(iv)

**AIDE MEMOIRE**

28 January 2025

OC260021

Hon James Meager
Associate Minister of Transport

**AIDE MEMOIRE: SUMMARY OF MARITIME SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE
ADVICE****Purpose**

- 1 You have requested a summary of maritime security and surveillance advice we have provided in the last year, with progress updates on:
 - 1.1 Critical underwater infrastructure (CUI) (subsea data and power cables) and data centres.
 - 1.2 Critical Maritime Routes Indian Ocean programme (CRIMARIO) and the related IT platform, the Indo-Pacific Regional Information-Sharing platform (IORIS).
 - 1.3 Maritime security and the ongoing Methamphetamine Action Plan.
- 2 A selection of maritime security briefings and aides memoire on these topics has been provided in Enclosure 1. Titles of these papers are listed in Annex 1 of this aide memoire.
- 3 We have also prepared a short forecast of upcoming maritime security engagements in 2026.

Critical underwater infrastructure (CUI)

- 4 We briefed you in October 2025 on CUI, making eight recommendations to improve New Zealand's CUI regime (OC250895 refers).^{s 9(2)(f)(iv)}

- 5 A table summarising these recommendations, a progress update, and statement on next steps is included in Annex 2.

- 6 ^{s 9(2)(f)(iv)}

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

7

CRIMARIO/IORIS

8 You met with the European Union (EU) Ambassador in May 2025 and received a demonstration of the EU funded Critical Maritime Routes Indian Ocean programme (CRIMARIO) and their IT platform, the Indo-Pacific Regional Information Sharing platform (IORIS). Since then, the EU has agreed to fund a third iteration of the programme to 2028. This iteration includes a focus on further uptake in Latin America which will further support New Zealand efforts to combat Transnational, Serious and Organised Crime.

9 There is an opportunity for you to witness a multinational Navy exercise in April, which will use the IORIS platform (see paragraph 16 for information on this exercise).

Surveillance and the ongoing Methamphetamine Action Plan

10 The Maritime Security Strategy has a layered investment approach focused on People, Systems, and Tools. The People investment was completed in 2023. The Budget 2024-funded Data Fusion System (DFS) – which provides government with maritime domain awareness - is now fully implemented. The sector's focus is now on coordinated investment in surveillance and response tools.

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s 9(2)(f)(iv)

12

so the sector has continued to work proactively with New Zealand companies developing world-class solutions to our surveillance problems (eg Wanaka-based Restore Labs' space-based surveillance solution which you visited last year; OC250490 refers).

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s 9(2)(f)(iv)

s 6(a), s 6(c)

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14.1

14.2

14.3

2026 engagements

- 15 **Exercise Bell Buoy 2026:** You have an opportunity to witness part of the Royal New Zealand Navy-run Exercise Bell Buoy; a multinational maritime security exercise being hosted by New Zealand in April. Bell Buoy will see eleven partner navies practice their use of IORIS, Starboard, and other maritime domain awareness platforms and conduct training focused on safety of merchant shipping, maritime security, and communication between military forces and the shipping industry.
- 16 **Continued advocacy for world-class companies to support exports:** the Strategy’s Tools investments approach is looking at New Zealand companies already providing export-ready solutions to surveillance challenges. You visited Restore Lab in Wanaka, and you attended the Starboard headquarters opening with the Prime Minister, last year. We can arrange for you to visit two further home-grown companies, Kea Aerospace in Christchurch, and Aerosearch at the Tawhaki Aerospace facility at Kaitorete. s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Contacts

Name	Telephone	First contact
Gavin Birrell, National Strategic Coordinator for Maritime Security	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Josh Bullivant, Policy Lead Maritime Security		

Annex 1 – List of Maritime Security Advice since January 2025

Briefings	
OC Number	Title
OC250201	RESTRICTED Maritime Security Briefing 2025 You received an in-person Maritime Security briefing in June 2025, from the sector's intelligence analyst, and analysts from the National Assessments Bureau and New Zealand Defence Intelligence.
OC250895	RESTRICTED Resilience and Security of New Zealand's Critical Underwater Infrastructure and Improvement Options Withheld in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv), further information is withheld under s 6(a) and 6(c). You also received an in-person briefing on this topic in September 2025.
Aides Memoire	
OC Number	Title
OC250358	Observing the Indo-Pacific Regional Information Sharing Platform Regional Exercise
OC250490	Visit to Restore Lab
OC250991	Opening Starboard Maritime Intelligence's New Office
OC251082	Meeting with Dean Veverka on Critical Underwater Infrastructure

Annex 2 – CUI Options Update

Annex 2 Withheld in full under s 9(2)(f)(iv)

RELEASED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

RESTRICTED

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

RELEASED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

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RESTRICTED



4 April 2025

OC2500201

Hon James Meager

Action required by:

Associate Minister of Transport (Lead Minister for Maritime Security)

Cc Hon Chris Bishop

Minister of Transport

Wednesday, 2 April 2025

MARITIME SECURITY BRIEFING FOR INCOMING MINISTER

Purpose

Brief you on maritime security issues, existing capability gaps and growing risks.

Key points

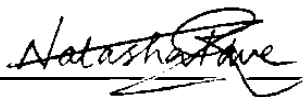
- The sea is important to New Zealanders, economically, environmentally, and culturally. Our area of interest covers 1/12th of the globe, so our management of it has critical domestic and international impacts.
- s 6(a), s 6(c)
- The sector has developed a Maritime Security Strategy (the Strategy) to respond to these threats. As the Lead Minister for Maritime Security, you are responsible for the Strategy's implementation. This is a National Security function, distinguished from Maritime New Zealand's responsibilities (eg port security).
- The Strategy sets out three key investments in People, Systems and Tools. Two of these have been implemented. We recommend you discuss these investments with officials, as we will soon seek your direction on next steps for the third and final Tools investment.
- Our approach throughout these investments has been to partner with New Zealand companies for them to deliver world-class solutions to our security challenges. We can arrange for you to visit some of these companies, should you wish.
- On 1 July 2025 the Ministry of Transport (Ministry) will become the Capability Owner of the second Strategy investment: the Data Fusion System (which falls under the System investment). This will create some ongoing obligations for the Ministry as the contract owner, and for you as the Minister accountable for the Budget Appropriation. Officials consider this to be low-risk and will advise you when it is completed.

RESTRICTED

Recommendations

We recommend you:

- 1 s 6(a), s 6(c)
- 2 **Discuss** next steps on a potential maritime security tools Budget bid with officials.
- 3 **Indicate** if you would be interested in visiting New Zealand companies delivering maritime security solutions. Yes / No



Natasha Rave
Acting Deputy Chief Executive, Policy

2 / April / 2025

Hon James Meager
Associate Minister of Transport
(Lead Minister Maritime Security)

..... / /

Minister's office to complete:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Approved | ☐ Declined |
| ☐ Seen by Minister | ☐ Not seen by Minister |
| ☐ Overtaken by events | |

Comments

Contacts

Name	Telephone	First contact
Natasha Rave, Acting Deputy Chief Executive, Policy Group	s 9(2)(a)	
Gavin Birrell, National Strategic Coordinator for Maritime Security		✓
Josh Bullivant, Policy Lead Maritime Security		

MARITIME SECURITY BRIEFING FOR INCOMING MINISTER

Background

- 1 You are Lead Minister for Maritime Security. Figure 1 depicts your role within the National Resilience System. You will be primarily supported in your role by:
 - 1.1 the Ministry of Transport (the Ministry) through its role as chair of the Maritime Security Oversight Committee (MSOC/the Committee) and its role as the Strategic Coordination Agency¹ for Maritime Security within the National Resilience System, and
 - 1.2 the Committee and its 11 maritime security agencies, which incorporates governance, policy, intelligence, and operational coordination functions for the sector.²

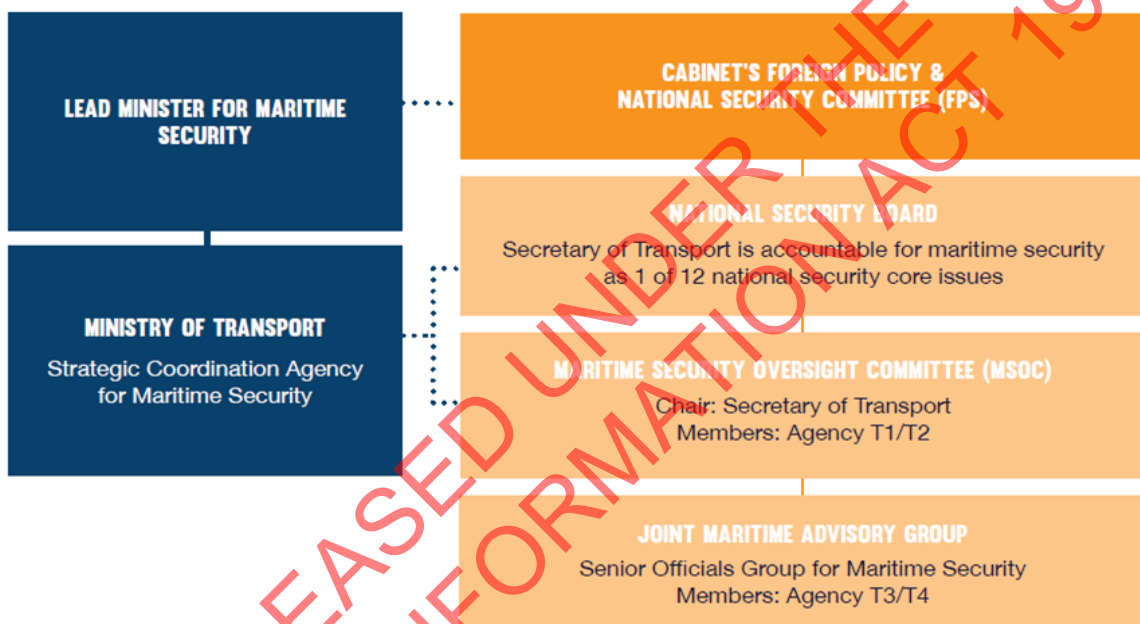


Fig 1: Maritime Security Governance

The sea is important to New Zealand

- 2 Securing our maritime area is important because the sea is important to us. With approximately 99% of our freight carried by sea, 99% of our international internet traffic travelling by undersea cable, and multiple economic opportunities³ available in our waters, our significant **maritime economy** depends on effective maritime security⁴. Our marine **environment** provides a source of recreation, supports over 65,000 species, regulates our climate and offers opportunities for expanded carbon capture. It is important **culturally** to New Zealanders, holding a central place in the history of our arrival here, our way of life and sense of identity.

¹ The National Security Strategy designates a Strategic Coordination Agency for each of the 12 core issues. These agencies deliver a strategic approach to each issue. The Ministry leads maritime security policy and implementation of the Maritime Security Strategy.

² Ministry of Transport, Maritime New Zealand, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Customs Service, New Zealand Defence Force, New Zealand Police, Ministry for Primary Industries, Department of Conservation.

³ The mineral deposits in New Zealand's maritime area are estimated to be potentially worth up to \$500 billion.

⁴ At 40 million square kilometres, New Zealand's maritime area of interest is 1/12th of the globe.

The Maritime Security Strategy guides the maritime security sector

- 3 To recognise the sea's importance, and to protect it against growing maritime security pressures, the Committee created the Maritime Security Strategy (the Strategy, summarised in Annex 1). The Strategy retains single agency responsibilities for specific aspects of maritime security (eg, Customs retains responsibility for stopping the entry of prohibited imports, such as narcotics), but introduced a common approach, coordinated investment and effective resource prioritisation to deliver a whole far greater than the sum of its parts.
- 4 The Strategy was approved by Cabinet in 2019 and refreshed by the Lead Minister for Maritime Security in 2024. The United Nations' International Maritime Organization has adopted the Strategy as the international exemplar.

Implementing the Strategy

- 5 The Strategy identified capability gaps in three areas: People, Systems, and Tools.

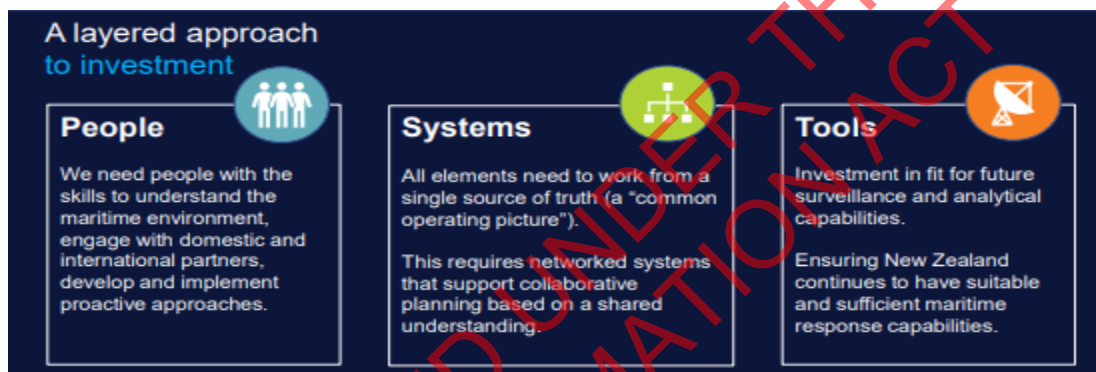


Fig 2: Maritime Security Strategy's investment approach

- 6 **People:** This investment was funded in Budget 2023, with a three-person Secretariat⁵ based in the Ministry and a twelve-person National Maritime Coordination Centre⁶ based at Headquarters Joint Forces in Trentham, Wellington.
- 7 **Systems:** This investment comprises the Budget 2024-funded Data Fusion System (DFS) (which provides automated, world class anomaly-detection), and joining the European Union-created Indo-Pacific Regional Information Sharing platform (IORIS), which connects us securely to over 25 maritime countries (refer Annex 4 for further information on the use of IORIS). We have partnered with New Zealand companies from the outset, with them developing world-class solutions to our security problems. Their solutions are now being exported widely. Budget appropriation for the DFS will move from Vote Defence Force to Vote Transport by 1 July 2025.⁷ This transfer includes contract management responsibilities for the Ministry, and you will become accountable for the Appropriation. This transfer is low-risk and officials will advise you when it is completed.

8 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

⁵ Provides the National Strategic Coordinator, governance support, implementation of the Strategy and policy development.

⁶ Responsible for the provision of All-of-Government Maritime Domain Awareness and coordination of maritime security assets.

⁷ The Public Finance Act 1989 requires that the Ministry of Defence can only procure on behalf of Defence, so this transfer to the Ministry of Transport was included as part of the DFS project.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

The sector has continued to work proactively with New Zealand companies developing world-class solutions to our security problems (eg Wanaka-based Restore Lab which is researching how to reduce space-based surveillance false alarm rates). We can discuss opportunities for you to visit some of these companies.

s 6(a), s 6(c)

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10

11 The impact of these illegal activities flows into our communities, damaging wellbeing, resilience, and social cohesion. The supply of illicit drugs by organised crime feeds addiction and mental health issues and drives increases in other crimes, such as violence, burglary, and theft to fund addiction. In Q4 2024, the social harm attributable to methamphetamine alone equated to an estimated weekly cost of \$37.8 million.⁹

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s 6(a), s 6(c)

Officials are preparing an Underwater Infrastructure Threat Assessment and Options Briefing

13 The Minister for National Security and Intelligence received an introductory briefing on maritime security (June 2024, OC240394 refers) and directed that we prepare a briefing on how we secure our underwater infrastructure. We have commissioned a threat assessment and will brief you on the outcomes of the assessment in July.

s 6(a), s 6(c)

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⁹ National Drugs in Wastewater Testing Programme - Quarter 4, 2024.

¹⁰ Subject to Cabinet approval of a Defence Capability Plan option in 2025.

15

s 6(a), s 6(c)

It is not just about investment

16 The maritime security sector has other actions underway to try and address gaps, including through the following policy interventions:

i.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

ii.

17

s 6(a), s 6(c)

he MSOC Secretariat led the

development of the *Guide to the Use of Autonomous Surface Vessels in New Zealand Waters*.

Working across government, we rapidly developed a one-stop information source for partners to easily navigate our multi-agency regulations.¹¹ This approach upholds the law without discouraging appropriate innovation and economic opportunity. We understand this remains a world-first.

18

The sector has been working closely with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet as it leads the National Risk and Resilience Framework refresh. Aligning with this system-level approach to risk management, the sector is now developing a Maritime Security Risk Framework to inform the Committee's oversight and management of maritime security threats at the sector-level.

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s 6(a), s 6(c)

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s 9(2)(f)(iv)

For example, joining the IORIS

platform, which has given New Zealand unique, secure, information exchange capabilities with 25 maritime countries (see Annex 4), and supporting agreement negotiations such as Vietnam's Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement.

21

We will keep you informed about other work underway by sector agencies, including:

i.

Supporting partners to develop their maritime security, eg Solomon Islands and Fiji, where the MSOC Secretariat will assist in the drafting of their maritime security strategies.

ii.

Engaging the Public, which recognises the important role that all New Zealanders play in maritime security and includes agency information campaigns and the publication of a *Guide to New Zealand's Maritime Security Arrangements*.

¹¹ This guidance summarised the statutory responsibilities of eight agencies including three international instruments, fourteen Acts of Parliament, and eight separate regulations.

¹² Economically, our ability to act as an Antarctic gateway through port visits to Lyttelton and flights in and out of Christchurch brings significant regional (\$329 million per annum / 3276 jobs) and national (\$560 million per annum / 5937 jobs) benefits.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Annex 1 – Maritime Security Strategy Overview

OVERVIEW OF THE MARITIME SECURITY STRATEGY

The vision and approach that secures New Zealand's maritime security interests.

The Vision

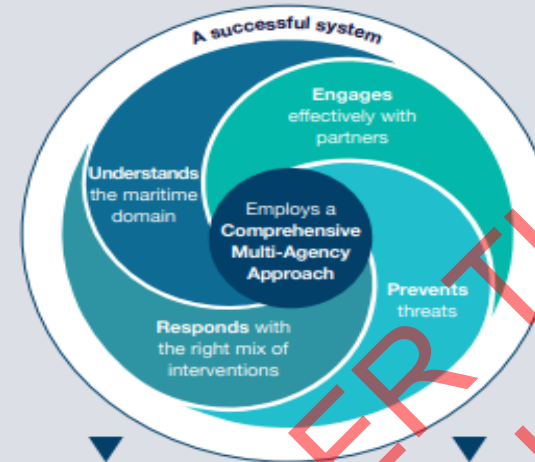
A maritime security sector that secures New Zealand's significant maritime economic, cultural and environmental interests, is better able to deter adversaries, reduce harm to New Zealand communities and exert effective kaitiakitanga (guardianship) of the sea.

The Approach

The maritime security sector's contribution to national security is guided by four interlocking pillars: Understand, Engage, Prevent, Respond.

These pillars describe how an efficient and effective system goes about achieving maritime security.

The pillars are underpinned by two supporting principles: The comprehensive multi-agency approach and kaitiakitanga.



Kaitiakitanga
New Zealand's stewardship and protection of our maritime domain for future generations.

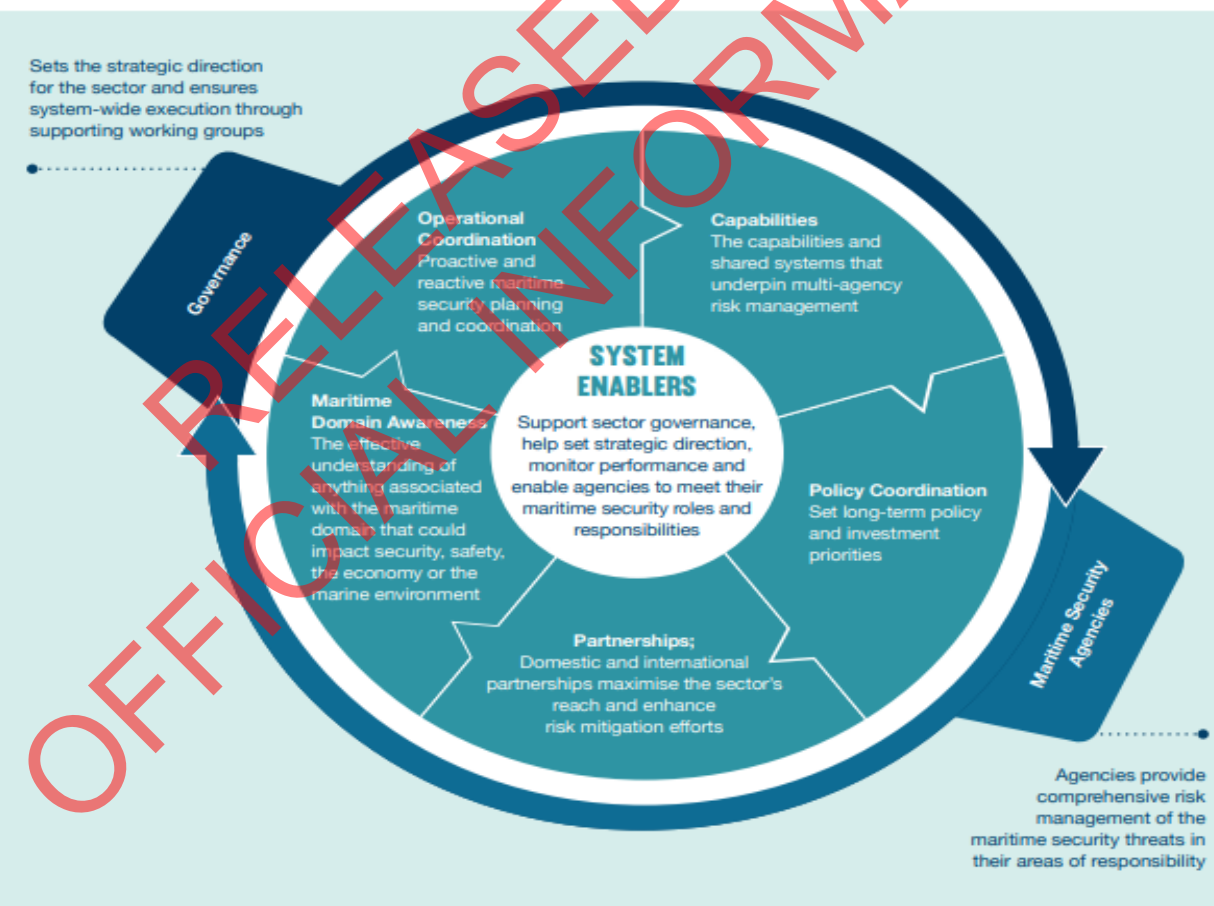
Charted Course to 2029



THE FUTURE MARITIME SECURITY SYSTEM

ACHIEVED BY

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES



Priority 1

Enable the comprehensive multi-agency response

- Minister of Transport is the Lead Minister
- Ministry of Transport is the lead maritime security policy and strategic coordination agency
- Sufficient policy coordination, assessment, communications and campaign planning capacity and capability.

Achieved: 2023

Priority 2

Establish sector planning and assessment expectations

- A biennial Maritime Security Assessment that identifies emerging threats and opportunities
- An annual Prevention and Response Campaign Plan that sets an integrated approach to the deployment of resources.

Priority: 2024

Priority 3

Coordinated investment across the sector

- Determine the approach to investing in the right mix of people, systems and tools to achieve best effect.

Priority: 2024-2029

A LAYERED APPROACH TO INVESTMENT

People

We need people with the skills to understand the maritime environment, engage with domestic and international partners, develop and implement proactive approaches.

Systems

All elements need to work from a single point of truth (a "common operating picture"). This requires networked systems that support collaborative planning based on a shared understanding.

Tools

Investment in fit for the future surveillance and analytical capabilities. Ensuring New Zealand continues to have suitable and sufficient maritime response capabilities.

MARITIME SECURITY STRATEGY 2024

Guardianship of Aotearoa
New Zealand's Maritime Waters

Te Kaitiakitanga o Tangaroa

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This table is provided as a guide and is likely to evolve as lessons are identified during real world issues and government sponsored exercises. Suggestions for amendment will be considered by MSOC for occasional Strategy amendments.

	 THREAT / INTEREST	 POLICY / STRATEGY		 INTELLIGENCE		 OPERATIONAL DELIVERY	
		LEAD	SUPPORT	LEAD	SUPPORT	LEAD	SUPPORT
SECTOR GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION	Maritime Security	Ministry of Transport	MSOC Agencies	NMCC	MSOC Agencies	Maritime Security Agencies	NMCC
MARITIME SECURITY THREATS AND INTERESTS	Prohibited imports and exports	NZ Customs	NZ Police, NZIC, MFAT, DPMC, MOD	NZ Customs	NZIC, NZ Police, NDIB, MBIE, NZDF, MNZ, GNZ, NMCC, ITOC	NZ Customs	NZ Police, NMCC, MNZ, ITOC
	Prevention of a maritime mass arrival	MBIE (INZ)	DPMC, MOD, NZDF, MFAT, NZ Customs, NZIC, Police, MOH	MBIE	NZIC, MFAT, NZ Police, NZ Customs, NZDF, GNZ, NMCC, MOH	MBIE (INZ)	MFAT, NZDF, NZ Customs, NZ Police, NMCC, RCCNZ, MNZ
	Response to a maritime mass arrival in New Zealand	MBIE (INZ)	DPMC, MOD, NZDF, MFAT, NZ Customs, NZIC, MOH	MBIE	NZIC, MFAT, NZ Police, NZ Customs, NZDF, GNZ, NMCC, MOH	MBIE (INZ)	NZDF, NZ Customs, NZ Police, NMCC, RCCNZ, MOD; Health, MPI, MOJ, Corrections, MSD, Oranga Tamariki, MFAT, MNZ
	Biosecurity	MPI	DPMC, MOD, MFAT, MFE, MNZ	MPI	NZIC, NZ Police, NZ Customs, NZDF, GNZ, NMCC, MNZ	MPI	NZDF, NZ Police, EPA, MNZ, NMCC, MNZ
	Illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing	MPI	DPMC, MOD, MFAT, MFE	MPI	NZIC, NZ Police, NZ Customs, NZDF, GNZ	MPI	NZDF, MNZ, NMCC
	Illegal or poorly regulated exploitation of non-living resources	MFE	MBIE, MFAT, MOD, EPA, NZ Police, MNZ	EPA	NMCC, MFAT, MBIE, GNZ, NZ Police	EPA	NMCC, NZ Police, NZDF, MNZ, local authorities
	Threats to protected species	DOC	NZ Police, MFAT, MFE, MOD	DOC	NMCC, MFAT, NZ Police, MPI	DOC	NMCC, NZ Police, NZDF
	Illegal activity in protected areas	DOC	NZ Police, MFAT, MFE, MOD, MPI, MOT	DOC	NMCC, MFAT, NZ Police, MPI, MNZ	DOC	NMCC, NZDF, NZ Police, MPI, MNZ
	Illegal interference of maritime infrastructure	MBIE	NZ Police, MFE, MFAT, DPMC, MOD, MNZ	NZ Police	NMCC, NZIC, MNZ, MBIE	NZ Police	NMCC, NZDF, NZ Police, MNZ, NZ Customs
	Piracy, robbery, violence in international waters	MOT	MFAT, NZ Police, NZDF, MOD, MNZ	NZIC	NZ Police, DPMC, NZ Customs, NZDF, MPI	NZDF	NZ Police, NMCC
	Maritime crime	MOJ	NZDF, DPMC, MFAT, MOD, MNZ, NZ Police	NZ Police	NZ Police, DPMC, NZ Customs, MPI	NZ Police	NZDF, NZ Customs, NMCC
	Security threats to ports or NZ flagged vessels	MOT	MNZ, NZ Police, NZDF, NZIC, DPMC, MOD	MNZ	NZ Police, NZIC, NZDF, NZ Police, NMCC	MNZ	NZDF, NZ Police, NZ Customs, NMCC
	Illegal marine pollution	MOT	MNZ, MBIE, DOC, MPI, NZ Police, MFE	MNZ	EPA, NMCC, NZ Police, NZDF, DOC, MPI	MNZ	EPA, NMCC, NZ Police, NZDF, DOC, MPI, local authorities
	Maritime safety and emergencies (including oil response)	MOT	DPMC, NEMA, MOD, NZDF, MFAT, MFE, FENZ, MBIE	MNZ	MPI, MBIE, EPA, RCCNZ, NMCC, GNZ, FENZ	MNZ	NZDF, EPA, RCCNZ, MPI, NEMA, Emergency Task-Force (MFAT), local authorities, FENZ
	Maritime search and rescue	MOT	NZSAR Secretariat, MNZ, NZ SAR Council, NZDF, MFAT, MFE, NZ Police, MOD	MNZ	RCCNZ, NMCC, NZDF	RCCNZ	NZDF, NZ Police, MNZ, NMCC, local authorities
	Defence of New Zealand's sovereignty and territorial integrity	MOD	NZ Police, NZDF, NZIC, DPMC, MFAT, MOD	NZDF	NZIC, DPMC, MFAT, GNZ	NZDF	NZ Customs, NMCC, NZ Police
	Promotion and support of the maritime rules based order	MFAT	DPMC, MOD, MFE, MPI, NZ Customs, MNZ	NZIC	NZDF, MFAT, DPMC, NZ Customs, MNZ, NMCC	Maritime Security Agencies	NMCC, HQJFNZ
	South Pacific	MFAT	DPMC, MOD, MFE, MPI, NZ Customs, NZ Police, MOT	NZIC	NZDF, NZ Police, DPMC, MPI, NZ Customs, NMCC	Maritime Security Agencies	RCCNZ, HQJFNZ, Emergency Task-Force (MFAT), NMCC
	Southern Ocean	MFAT	DPMC, MOD, MFE, MPI, NZ Customs, Antarctic NZ, NZ Police	NZIC	MPI, NZDF, Antarctic NZ, NMCC	Maritime Security Agencies	RCCNZ, HQJFNZ, NMCC

POLICY LEAD

The Agency responsible for administering the most relevant legislation and providing policy advice to the Executive Branch.

INTELLIGENCE LEAD

The Agency responsible for ensuring that the National Security System and lead policy agency is across relevant threats, hazards and levels of risk.

OPERATIONAL LEAD

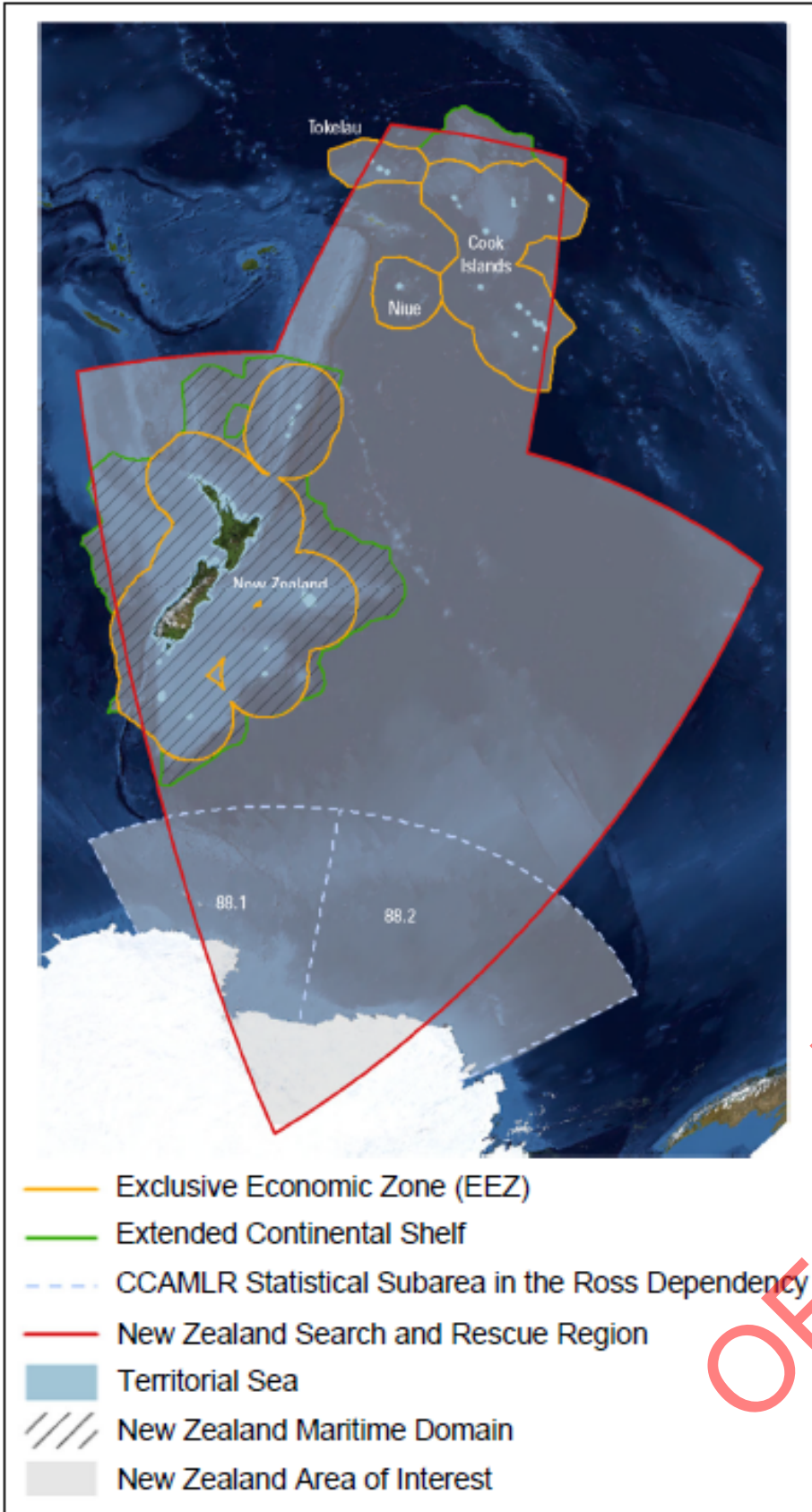
The main agency responsible for leading and coordinating the operational (on the ground action) response.

Annex 2 Withheld in full under 6(a) and 6(c)

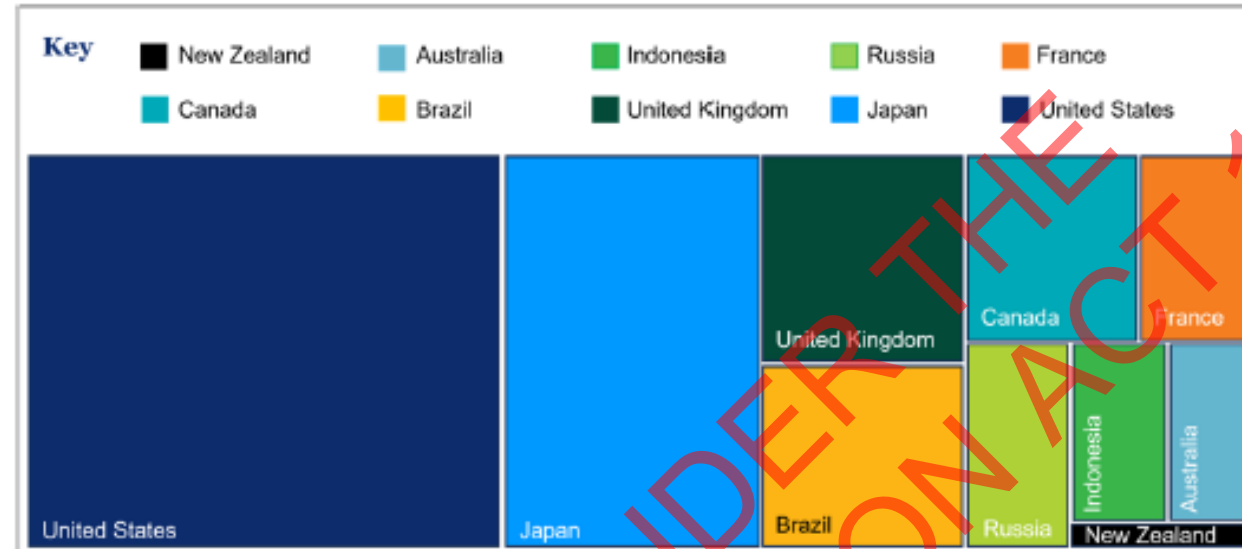
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OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

Annex 3 - Understanding the New Zealand Maritime Domain and Area of Interest

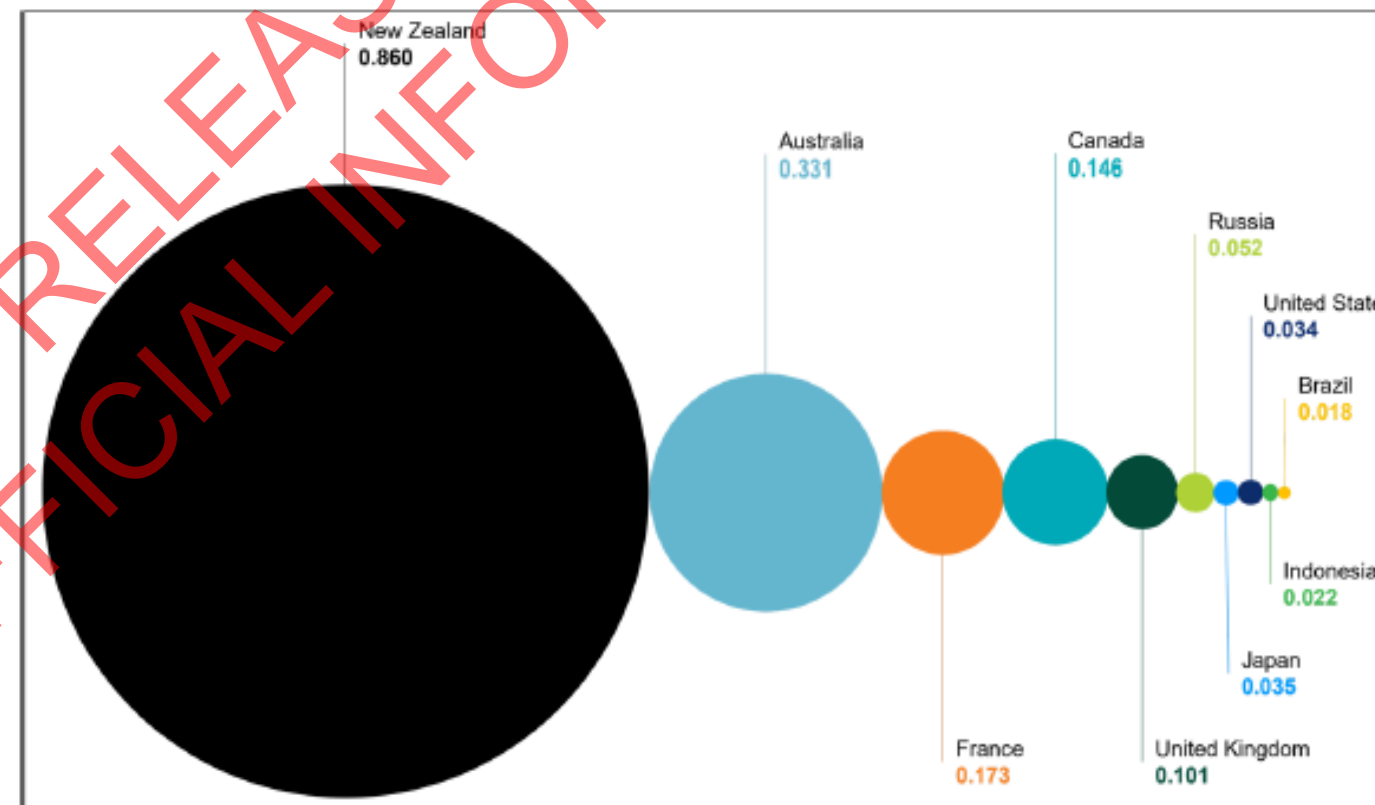
Our area of interest covers over 40,000,000km². This is the equivalent of 1/12th of the globe and is 10 times the size of the South China Sea.



When considering other significant global players with large maritime areas, compared to these nations, we have the lowest GDP per square kilometre of EEZ.



In addition to the above, using the same significant global players, we also have the lowest population density per square kilometre of EEZ, where there is one New Zealander per 0.860km².



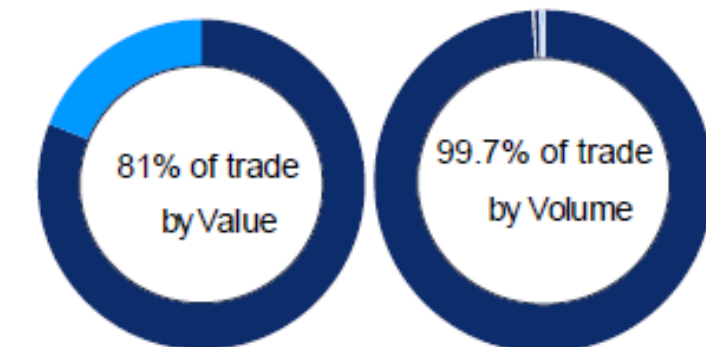
Total Maritime Economic value = \$7 Billion

- This includes 38,546 wage and salary earners.
- \$2.8 billion is indirectly contributed to the New Zealand Economy



- Shipping (\$2.08B – 49.6%)
- Fisheries and Aquaculture (\$1.02B – 24.2%)
- Offshore Minerals (\$660M – 15.8%)
- Marine Services (\$300M – 7.2%)
- Marine Tourism and Recreation (\$120M – 2.9%)
- Government and Defence (\$12.6M – 0.3%)

New Zealand relies on the sea to trade and communicate



NZ Exports by Sea

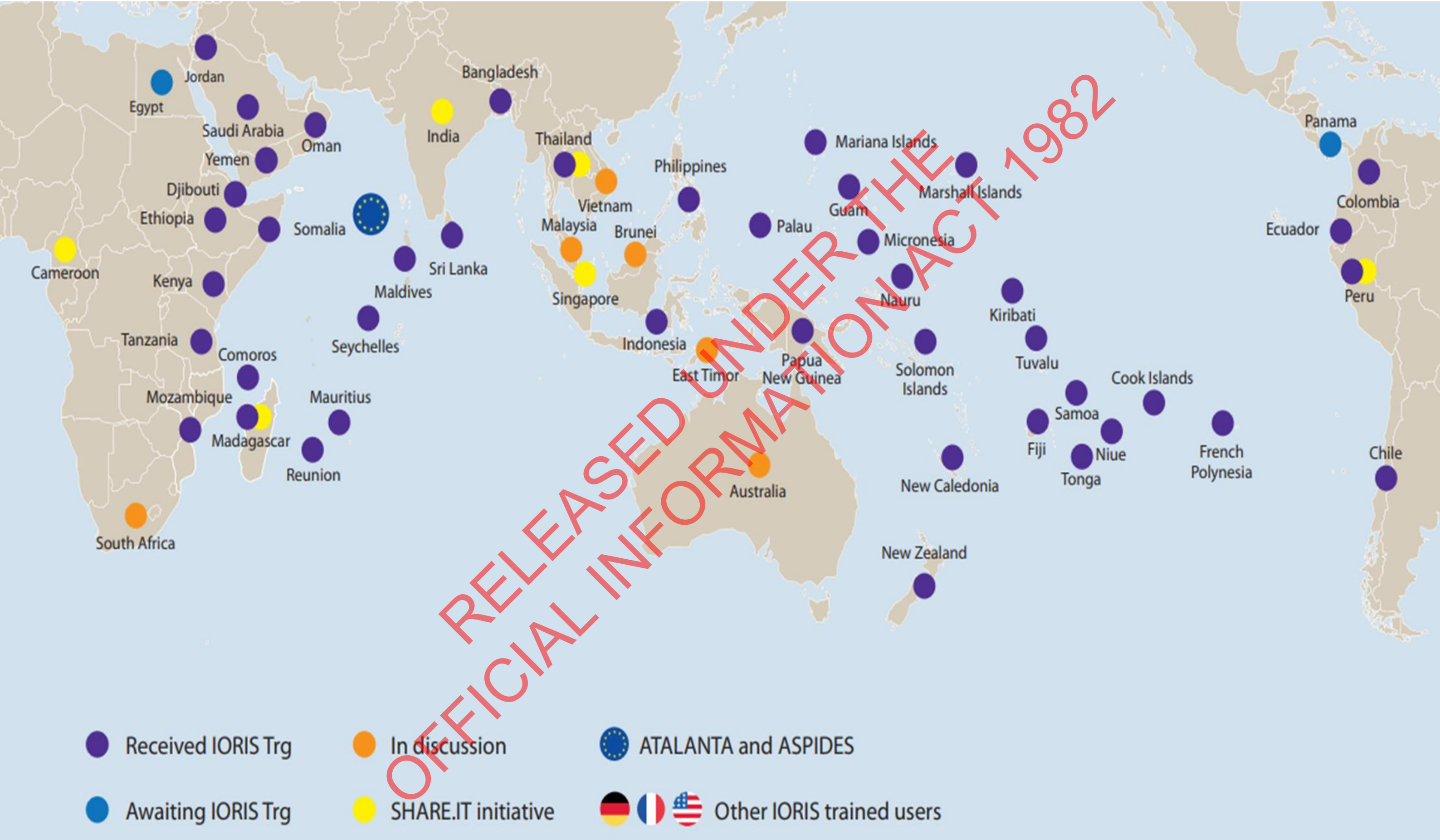
\$65.7 billion 39.4 million tonnes

NZ Imports by Sea

\$70.7 billion 22.7 million tonnes

99.8% of NZ International Internet Data transported by submarine cable

Annex 4 – Countries Using IORIS



RESTRICTED



7 October 2025

OC250895

Hon James Meager

Action required by:

Associate Minister of Transport

Tuesday, 21 October 2025

RESILIENCE AND SECURITY OF NEW ZEALAND'S CRITICAL UNDERWATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS

Withheld in full under s 9(2)(f)(iv), Further information withheld under s 6(a) and 6(c)

RELEASED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

RESTRICTED

**AIDE MEMOIRE**

30 April 2025

OC250358

Hon James Meager**Associate Minister of Transport (Lead Minister Maritime Security)****AIDE MEMOIRE: OBSERVING THE INDO-PACIFIC REGIONAL INFORMATION SHARING PLATFORM REGIONAL EXERCISE****Purpose**

- 1 Provide background information to support your observation of a maritime security-based regional exercise in your office on Wednesday 7 May 12:30pm - 1:00pm.

New Zealand uses the European Union's (EU) information sharing platform for maritime security

- 2 In June 2024 the Ministry of Transport, representing the 11 agencies of the Maritime Security Oversight Committee (MSOC), joined the EU-funded project Critical Maritime Routes (CRIMARIO) to gain access to their Indo-Pacific Regional Information Sharing (IORIS) platform (fact sheets on CRIMARIO and IORIS are enclosed). This is a non-aligned, secure, web-based maritime coordination and information sharing tool. Over 90 agencies from 25 countries in the Indo-Pacific already use this platform. Users are shown in Annex 1.

3 s 6(a), s 6(c)

4

What is the regional exercise programme (REGEX)?

- 5 REGEX is a virtual tabletop exercise with CRIMARIO staff preparing multiple scenarios that regional maritime countries use to improve regional maritime safety and security cooperation. Scenarios could include a search and rescue mission occurring on or near a territorial boundary (shown overleaf) or suspected criminal activity transiting from one country to another.

What is your involvement in the REGEX?

- 6 The REGEX will be displayed on your TV screen and officials in attendance will explain how the scenario works and can answer any questions you have about the IORIS platform and how maritime security agencies benefit from using it. Officials attending will be:

- 6.1 Gavin Birrell, National Strategic Coordinator Maritime Security, MSOC Secretariat.
- 6.2 Karl Shearsby, Senior Maritime Operations Officer, National Maritime Coordination Centre.

His Excellency Lawrence Meredith, EU Ambassador to New Zealand, will also be attending as CRIMARIO is an EU-led initiative

7 Ambassador Meredith's biography is provided in Annex 2.

We propose preparing a social media update for you to consider posting, and to be shared by the EU delegation and CRIMARIO team on their social media pages

- 8 This post could include a picture of you observing the REGEX with the Ambassador and be captioned "As Lead Minister Maritime Security it was great to witness the Indo-Pacific Regional Information Sharing (IORIS) platform in use by our maritime safety and security agencies today for Pacific Trident – a regional exercise practising multiple maritime scenarios with our neighbours, [insert countries involved that day]. This collaboration improves our ability to monitor and coordinate, to bring safer, more secure seas".

What does New Zealand get out of it?

- 9 In bringing all regional maritime countries together, CRIMARIO has presented us an opportunity to interact with partners and practice managing incidents together so that if a real event happens, we will know:
 - how to communicate with each other
 - who to communicate with
 - what to do, and
 - what each of us can contribute to a regional response.

Is this New Zealand's first time joining a CRIMARIO-led REGEX?

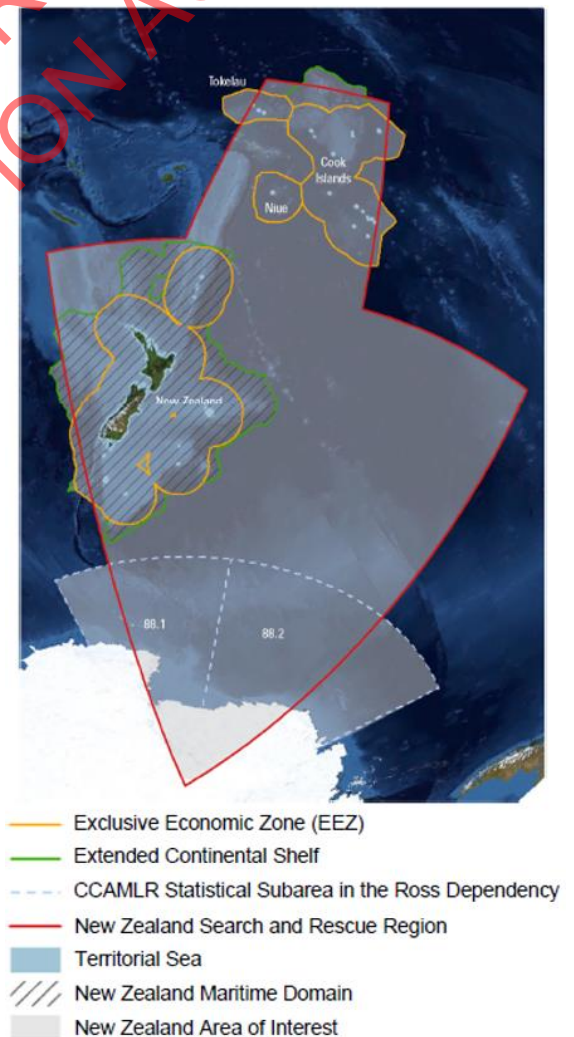
- 10 No, we joined two in 2024 and will join another that is planned for later in 2025.

Are there any other activities organised by CRIMARIO?

- 11 Yes, they also run a series called Exercise Sisypus, which is designed for internal country use. We have used this series to increase our own agencies' use of IORIS.

Other IORIS developments

- 12 CRIMARIO is preparing for the release of Version 4 of IORIS. This will include "IORIS Lite" which will give easy access on mobile phones, with very little training required. This will be particularly helpful for overseas deployed New Zealand staff (eg, Immigration Liaison Officers working with regional maritime countries to lower the likelihood of a mass arrival to New Zealand).



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s 9(2)(f)(iv)

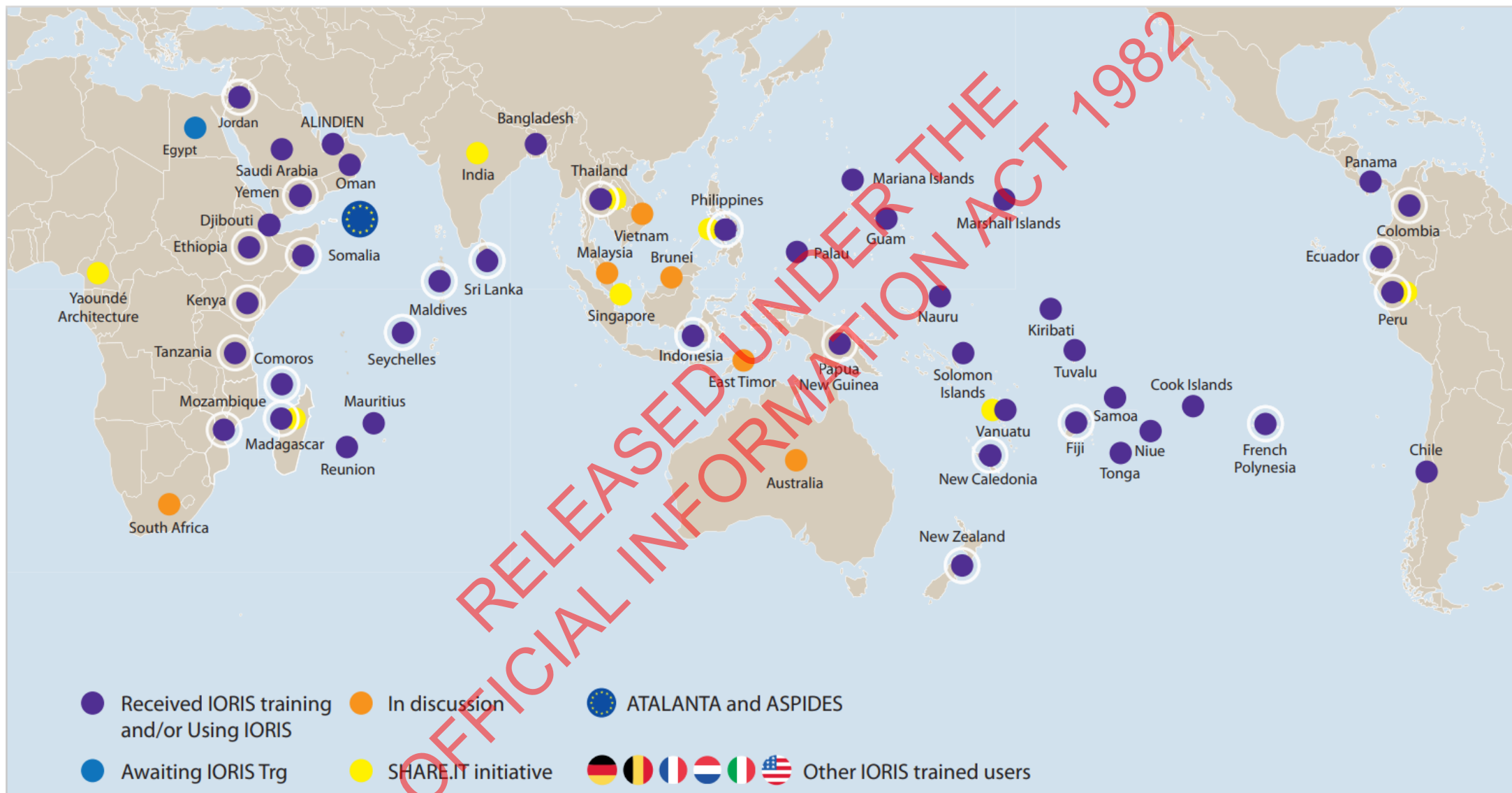
14

s 6(a), s 6(c)

Contacts

Name	Telephone	First contact
Gavin Birrell, National Strategic Coordinator for Maritime Security	s 9(2)(a)	
Josh Bullivant, Policy Lead Maritime Security		✓

ANNEX 1: Partner nations using IORIS



Annex 2: Ambassador Lawrence Meredith Biography

H.E. Mr Lawrence Meredith arrived in New Zealand in January 2023 as the European Union Ambassador. He has built a career in international relations and development cooperation. With a strong foundation in modern languages, holding a First Class Honours B.A. in Russian and French from The Queen's College, Oxford, Meredith is multilingual with proficiency in English, French, Russian, Spanish, German, and Italian.

Starting his career in 1993, Lawrence Meredith focused on economic and development cooperation with nations formerly part of the Soviet Union. He was involved in technical assistance programmes aimed at supporting independent media, human rights, and rural development, fostering democratic values and social progress.

In 2000, Lawrence shifted his focus to the European Union's external relations sector, focusing on global partnerships and program management within the former USSR & Balkans Directorate and subsequently for Training & Youth within the DG Education.

His trajectory within the European Commission is marked by leadership positions, including serving as Assistant to the Director-General of DG Enlargement. As Head of Unit for Policy & Strategy, he led efforts in shaping the EU's enlargement strategy.

From 2015 to 2023, Lawrence Meredith served as the Director for Neighbourhood East & Institution Building at DG NEAR, managing relations and cooperation with Eastern Partnership countries. He also initiated the Young European Ambassadors programme, significantly enhancing the EU's engagement with youth across the region. Lawrence enjoys biking, birdwatching, and supporting Bradford City.



Enclosures:

CRIMARIO Factsheet
IORIS Factsheet

Please note these were not provided to the Minister as part of OC260021, and are therefore not in scope of this request.

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**AIDE MEMOIRE**

5 June 2025

OC250490

Hon James Meager**Associate Minister of Transport (Lead Minister Maritime Security)****AIDE MEMOIRE: VISIT TO RESTORE LAB****Summary**

- 1 You were briefed on your Maritime Security responsibilities on 7 April 2025 (OC250201 refers). You indicated an interest in visiting some of the New Zealand companies delivering world-class solutions to our maritime security problems. Wānaka-based Restore Lab is one such company. This aide memoire provides information to support your visit to Restore Lab on Wednesday 9 June.
- 2 The visit will have two parts: first, a visit to Lake Wānaka, where the Takahē Mission Concept¹ will be demonstrated, and, second, a visit to Wānaka Airport, where you will be shown Project Rongowai² and an airborne search and rescue capability flying on a Merlin Labs NZ aircraft. A run-sheet for your visit is at Enclosure 1.

3

s 6(a), s 6(c)

Restore Lab – key facts

- 4 Restore Lab is a Wānaka-based research company focused on the development of new, advanced remote sensing methods and systems for terrestrial and maritime applications.

¹ Formation-flying spacecraft to detect very small vessels at sea.

² A partnership with NASA to collect climate data from commercial Air New Zealand aircraft.

- 5 The Director and CEO is Dr. Delwyn Moller who presented on the two offerings at our triennial maritime security symposium last year.
- 6 In 2018 Restore Lab was selected and funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to collaborate with the German Aerospace Centre (DLR) on mutual areas of research interest and it is from this that their two offerings have grown. They were given additional funding in 2024 to further their research in collaboration with Australian companies.

Takahē Mission Concept

- 7 The Takahē Mission concept involves formation-flying spacecraft to detect very small vessels at sea. This capability cancels the uniquely high false detection rate in New Zealand's waters, whereby wave-caps are mistaken for small craft. *Figure 1* at right depicts the concept of these platforms in action.

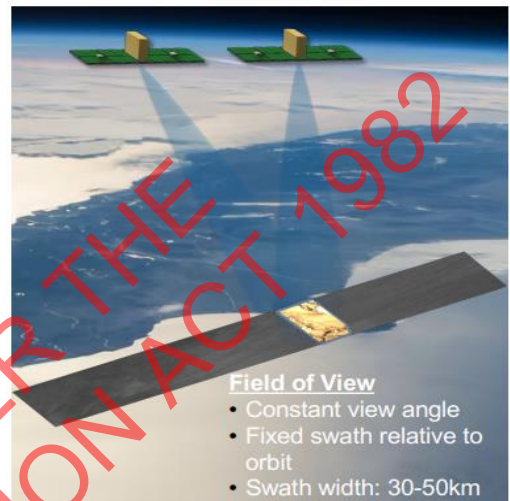


Fig. 1: Takahē Mission Concept spacecraft in formation flight

- 8 This capability would improve maritime domain awareness which impacts all aspects of our maritime security and safety. Relevant to your search and rescue responsibilities, Coastguard has used its regular sessions on Lake Wānaka to support this trial.
- 9 The Takahē Mission has been proven as a cost-effective solution that reduces the false alarm rate problem. This is a world-first.

Project Rongowai

- 10 Project Rongowai's benefits go beyond maritime security, as it supports scientific and environmental research, is a potential global export opportunity, and could support our foreign relations.

Research

- 11 Restore Lab is partnering with the United States' National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Air New Zealand to fit monitoring equipment on regular Air New Zealand Q300 flights under Project Rongowai (meaning 'sensing water'). This equipment gathers data in-flight (using NASA's Global Navigation Satellite System and GPS signals), which can be used to predict severe storms, unusual coastal conditions, and monitor climate change indicators such as drought, flooding, and coastline erosion. *Figure 2* shows the areas monitored by routine flights.

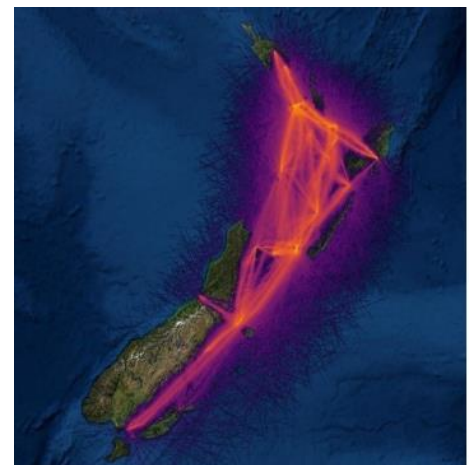


Fig. 1: Areas monitored by Project Rongowai sensors

- 12 The data captured so far is being used in research. You may wish to discuss with Restore Lab how Government can support

integration of this data into government forecasting and response systems.

- 13 Whilst at Wānaka Airport to view Project Rongowai there is an opportunity to view a Merlin Labs plane which uses a Restore Lab integrated imaging radar fitted to a Cessna 206. This capability can support rapid response relief efforts by delivering all weather day/night imagery in near real time.

s 6(a), s 6(c)

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- 15 This capability is also a potential export opportunity because it uses globally available transportation to house the sensors, meaning it can be repeated worldwide.

Restore Lab offers benefits across your Youth portfolio

- 16 Relevant to your Youth portfolio, Restore Lab supports an advanced physics project for high school students to build low-cost sensors for environmental monitoring. Last year one participant placed in the top four of the Prime Minister's Space Prize, and this year the project was expanded to include 12 students from Mount Aspiring College.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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s 6(a), s 6(c)

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Contacts

Name	Telephone	First contact
Gavin Birrell, National Strategic Coordinator for Maritime Security	s 9(2)(a)	
Josh Bullivant, Policy Lead Maritime Security		✓

**AIDE MEMOIRE**

6 November 2025

OC250991

Hon James Meager
Associate Minister of Transport

AIDE MEMOIRE: STARBOARD MARITIME INTELLIGENCE OFFICE OPENING**Summary**

- 1 You are attending Starboard Maritime Intelligence's new Wellington office opening on 13 November as the Lead Minister for Maritime Security and as the Minister responsible for the Data Fusion System (DFS) contract with Starboard.
- 2 The Minister for Customs and Associate Minister of Defence will also be in attendance. Only the Prime Minister will speak, and he will conduct the opening. 'If asked' talking points are in Annex A.
- 3 A list of attendees is in Annex B and the biographies of key Starboard staff and directors are in Annex C.

Background

- 4 Starboard Maritime Intelligence (Starboard) is a New Zealand private sector maritime intelligence company delivering a cloud-based Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) product. Their product is world class, with our European Union maritime security partners judging it to be the best vessel anomaly detection platform currently available in the world.
- 5 Starboard was successfully commercialised in 2022 as an offshoot of the MBIE created Regional Research Institution Xerra (Xerra was created under Stephen Joyce in 2017).
- 6 Its second capital raise was in September 2025 which was oversubscribed, raising \$23M to drive their next global growth stage.
- 7 Starboard has been named Wellington's *Fastest Growing Tech Business* in the Deloitte Fast 50.
- 8 Starboard won the New Zealand All of Government DFS contract in 2024, outbidding 24 global offerings. This was funded by Budget 24 and is managed by the Ministry of Transport on behalf of all eleven MSOC agencies. This comprises:
 - 8.1 A user-friendly front end that provides 'analytical smarts' focused on detecting anomalous vessel behaviour.

- 8.2 A classified data lake: ‘the Government Data Store’ where all maritime security agencies put their correctly tagged classified data for rapid, future access by all agencies. Having our data separate to Starboard’s proprietary system means that should we ever change providers; our data will not be ‘trapped.’

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s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Starboard key facts

- 10 Starboard employs 60 staff across New Zealand, Australia, and the United States. The company recorded \$6.2 million annual recurring revenue in FY25 (a 240% year-on-year increase).

Starboard helps deliver New Zealand’s maritime security

- 11 Prior to the Budget 2024 investment in the Data Fusion System (DFS), a lack of adequate MDA (for example, our previous inability to track unalerted people, cargo, and pest movements) impacted multiple national security core issues beyond Maritime Security, including Border Security, TSOC, and Pacific Resilience and Security.
- 12 The DFS project was led by the Ministry of Defence on behalf of MSOC and reached full operational release in June 2025 (three months early and under budget), giving the maritime security sector a better understanding of our maritime area. Agencies now have access to common resources for hundreds of analysts and experts across government and receive automated analysis and 24x7 alerts of anomalous or unwelcome activity.

New Zealand Government Partnering with Starboard

s 9(2)(b)(ii)

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Its New Zealand context makes it well suited to the Pacific

- 14 This New Zealand context to Starboard’s creation means that it is particularly suited to countries with a similar large maritime area low population problem such as Pacific countries. This is why the United States and Australia selected it as the primary MDA system for the Forum Fisheries Agency and for all Pacific Islands Forum countries fisheries agencies in 2023.
- 15 MSOC is working to adapt that fisheries model to support Pacific countries counter TSOC, including arranging funding for Starboard subscriptions and training for the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre and seven Pacific Island Countries. This will allow

Customs to leverage Starboard with our Pacific partners to target TSOC as part of Operation KIWA¹.

s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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s 6(a), s 6(c)

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Further opportunities

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s 6(a), s 6(c), s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Order of proceedings

20 The office opening ceremony will run in the following order:

¹ A Customs / NZDF created operation to improve counter-TSOC patrolling in the South Pacific.

Time	Action
7:30 am	Guests arrive
7:45 am	PM arrives, greeted by Trent Fulcher, CEO Starboard
7:50 am	Escorted inside. Standing room only.
8:00 am	MC: Welcome and karakia. Acknowledge Prime Minister, Ministers, Board Chair, dignitaries, partners, and staff. Brief outline of programme
8:10 am	Remarks: Jonty Kelt - Board Chair
8:15 am	Remarks: Trent Fulcher – CEO Introduces PM
8:20 am	Remarks: PM
8:30 am	Formal opening: plaque unveiling. Photo opportunity
8:35 am	Product demo
8:45 am	Media: Stand-up
9:15 am	PM departs

Contacts

Name	Telephone	First contact
Natasha Rave, Manager, Resilience and Security Team	s 9(2)(a)	
Gavin Birrell, National Strategic Coordinator Maritime Security, Maritime Security Oversight Committee Secretariat		✓

Annex A – If asked talking points

- Starboard is turning the dial on maritime security threats in New Zealand and globally by using cutting-edge technology to alert enforcement agencies to harms that would otherwise impact New Zealanders.
- With 99.7% of our overseas internet coming by submarine cable and 30% of the North Island's power at times coming through the Cook Strait power cable, using Starboard is a great improvement to New Zealand's security.
- Starboard is the backbone of the Maritime Security Strategy's system investment – its world-leading vessel anomaly detection technology is allowing multiple efficiencies to be identified by agencies almost daily.

Media

- Stuff NZME and RNZ have been invited to cover the opening.
 - On 10 October 2025, NBR reported that venture capital firm Soul Capital exited its funding of Starboard because their values were no longer aligned. If asked about this, we suggest using the following lines:
 - *I am aware of the story in NBR*
 - *This is a contractual matter between Soul Capital and Starboard. Soul's exit was a decision for them to make.*
 - *The Government is not reconsidering its contract with Starboard.*
 - RNZ reporter Phil Pennington has also been reporting on New Zealand's subsea cable security. He recently agreed to withdraw an OIA request on what we are doing to protect our CUI, as we informed him that we have no new information at this time and that a releasable version of our first CUI Threat Assessment would be made available shortly. ^{s 9(2)(f)(iv)}
- ^{s 9(2)(g)(i)}
- On 4 November 2025 *The Post* reported that Tauranga based drone manufacturer Syos plans to integrate Starboard into its drones. A visit to Syos in Tauranga by you is being explored by your office.

² The cost of the capability is \$84K p/a OPEX.

Annex B – Attendees

Diplomatic Corps

- Daniel Sloper - Australian High Commissioner
- Commander Mike Proudman Royal Navy – UK Defence Adviser

Public Sector CEOs

- Ruth Fairhall, Ministry of Transport
- Christine Stevenson, Customs
- Kirstie Hewlett, MNZ (tbc)
- Air Marshall Tony Davies, Chief of Defence Force (tbc)
- Rear Admiral Mat Williams, Deputy Chief of Defence (tbc)

Other Notable Public Sector Guests

- Air Commodore Shaun Sexton, Chief of Defence Intelligence (tbc)

s 6(a), s 6(c)



Wellington City

- Mayor Andrew Little

Industry

- John Campbell, Board Chair NZ Defence Industry Association
- Jude Rushmore, Syos Aerospace
- Kris Crosgrove, Head of Infrastructure Google Cloud NZ

Annex C - Starboard Biographies

Image	Name	Title, Company short Bio
	Trent Fulcher	Trent Fulcher: Trent Fulcher is the CEO & Director of Starboard Maritime Intelligence. Starboard is a real-time maritime intelligence platform used by governments, defence agencies, and commercial infrastructure providers around the world. With a background in international strategy, data, and commercial growth, Trent has led the global expansion of advanced technologies across New Zealand, Europe, and the United States. He brings deep experience at the intersection of trade, security, and innovation, turning data into operational insight. At Starboard, he's leading the company's growth in ocean governance and defence, infrastructure protection, and strategic decision-making at sea.
	Jonty Kelt	Jonty Kelt: Jonty Kelt is the Board Chair of Starboard Maritime Intelligence. He is the Founder of Fantail Ventures, a venture capital business investing in innovative early-stage companies in the digital assets and enterprise software sectors. He currently serves in governance roles with Starboard, digital assets security provider Zenrock Labs, asset management software provider Caruso, and financial data provider Valocity. He is also Chair of the New Zealand Dementia Prevention Trust and on the Board of Governors at Kings College. Previously, he helped lead the global commercial business of Palantir Technologies and worked in executive roles for Google and DoubleClick. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and a Bachelor of Commerce in Finance and Marketing from Otago University.
	Craig Mawdsley	Craig Mawdsley: Craig Mawdsley is a Director at Starboard Maritime Intelligence. He is a partner at Altered Capital, a venture capital and reinvestment stage fund manager focused on private growth companies pursuing strategies in technology, healthcare, and financials. Altered Capital specialises in companies that need capital to support their ambitions for expansion, innovation, and acquisitions. Previously, Craig co-led the Private Investments

		division of the McPike Global Family Office, launching its first fund in 2015, and managing over US\$2B in assets. He held senior positions throughout the MGFO group of companies from 2005 and prior to that practiced as a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand. He holds a Bachelor of Laws (First Class Honours) and a Bachelor of Social Sciences from the University of Waikato.
	Dr. Christopher Laing	Christopher Laing: Dr Christopher Laing is Chief Technology and Innovation Officer at Starboard Maritime Intelligence. Christopher has extensive experience leading technology, data, and AI teams at major New Zealand technology companies, including serving as Chief Product and Technology Officer at Qrious and Head of Xero AI. He has also contributed to industry governance as a board member of NZTech and an executive council member of the AI Forum NZ. He holds a degree in law and a PhD in applied mathematics from the University of Otago
	Brendon Wright	Starboard Maritime Intelligence Chief Financial Officer
	Mathew Brown	Starboard Maritime Intelligence Chief Revenue Officer Driving Starboard's commercial strategy across allied markets – helping government agencies, defence partners, and critical infrastructure providers adopt real-time maritime intelligence at scale. Operating across Five Eyes jurisdictions, our platform uses real-time satellite intelligence to surface risks that matter. Focusing on security around sub-sea cables, critical maritime infrastructure, defence capabilities and maritime security interests.

**AIDE MEMOIRE**

28 November 2025

OC251082

Hon James Meager
Associate Minister of Transport

AIDE MEMOIRE: MEETING WITH DEAN VEVERKA ON CRITICAL UNDERWATER INFRASTRUCTURE**Summary**

- 1 You are meeting Dean Veverka online on Monday, 1 December, to discuss New Zealand's approach to protecting Critical Underwater Infrastructure (CUI).
- 2 Dean is the Chief Technical Officer and Vice President Operations at Southern Cross Cables Ltd (Southern Cross). He is also Chair of the global peak industry body, the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC). Whilst an Australian citizen, Dean is New Zealand-based and works for a New Zealand company, and his position gives us some international influence.
- 3 Background information on Southern Cross Cables Ltd is at appendix 1.

We recently provided you with CUI advice

- 4 We briefed you in October on CUI, making eight recommendations to improve New Zealand's CUI regime (OC250895 refers). s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Topics that you may wish to raise

Future investments

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s 9(2)(b)(ii)

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Topics that will be raised by Dean Veverka

Align with ICPC best practice guidelines on submarine cable resilience

- 11 Our CUI 'deep dive' used ICPC best practice to guide the development of our recommendations. s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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11.1.

11.2

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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Contacts

Name	Telephone	First contact
Gavin Birrell, National Strategic Coordinator Maritime Security, Maritime Security Oversight Committee Secretariat	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Josh Bullivant, Policy Lead Maritime Security, Maritime Security Oversight Committee Secretariat		

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Appendix 1: Southern Cross Background Information

Background

The Southern Cross Cable Network (SCCN) is a trans-Pacific submarine fibre-optic cable system providing international telecommunications connectivity between Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tokelau, Kiribati, Hawaii, and the United States West Coast.

Operational since November 2000, the network comprises approximately 30,500KM of cable, across nine landing stations.

Ownership

Owned and operated by Bermuda-registered Southern Cross Cables Limited, a consortium historically including major stakeholders such as Spark New Zealand (50%), Singtel Optus (40%), and Verizon Business (10%).

Upgrades

Successive upgrades, including integration of 40G and higher technologies, have enabled it to handle a substantial share of trans-Pacific internet traffic, underscoring its role as a backbone for data exchange between Oceania and global networks.

Notable achievements include recent demonstrations of cutting-edge transmission capabilities, such as the world's first 1 Tb/s wavelength transmission across the Pacific in collaboration with Ciena, contributing to overall network capacities exceeding 100 Tb/s when accounting for extensions like Southern Cross NEXT.

s 9(2)(b)(i)



Next Steps

Ongoing expansions, such as the planned SX Tasman Express cable, aim to further bolster intra-regional connectivity.

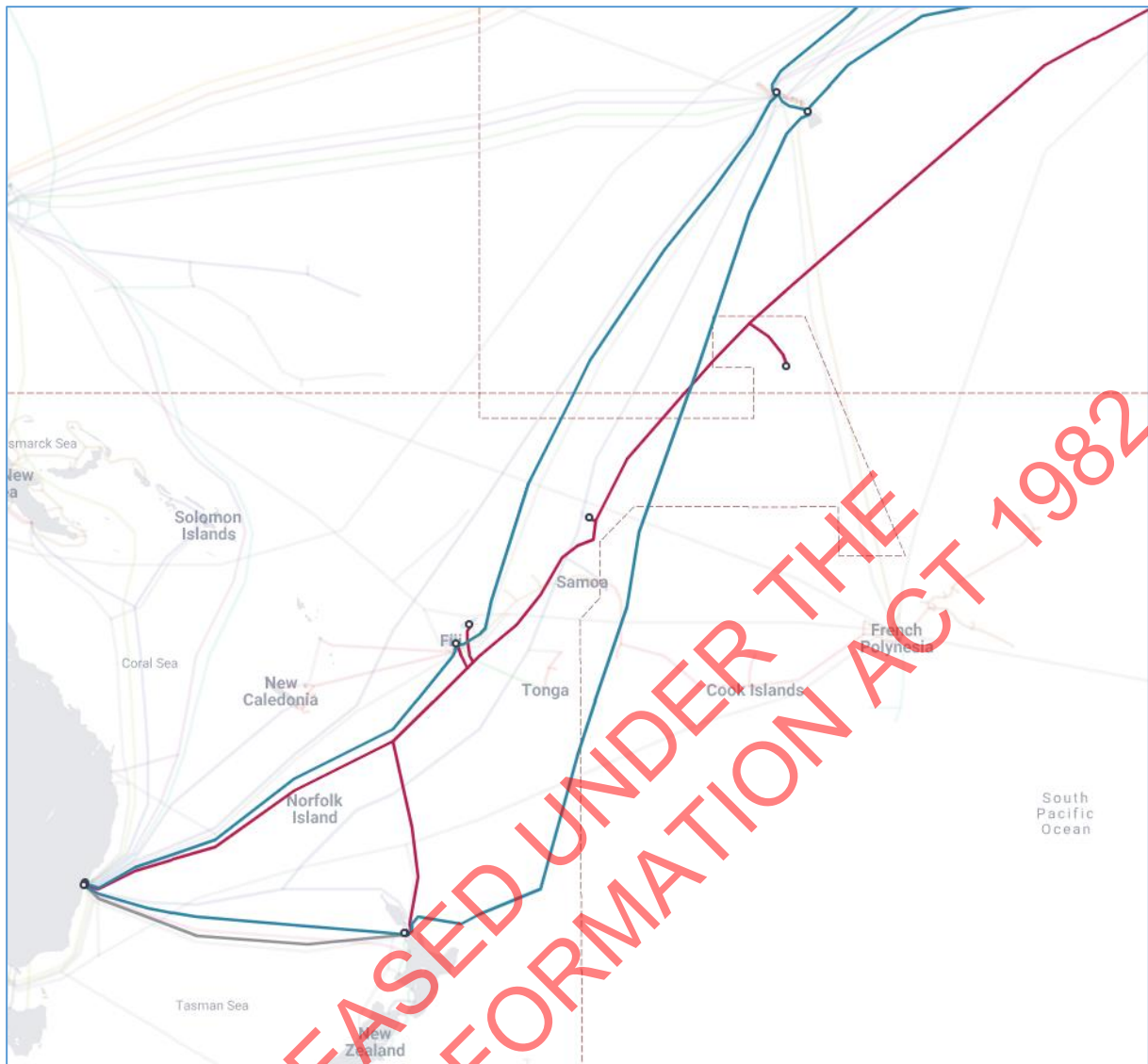


Fig 1: Map showing Southern Cross Cable Network (blue) (original cable), Southern Cross Next (red) and the proposed Southern Cross Tasman Express (grey) proposed cables

Appendix 2 withheld under s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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Transport Portfolio Weekly Report

Week commencing Monday 2 March 2026

Recipient:

Hon Chris Bishop, Minister of Transport

Minister's comments:

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Actions from transport officials meeting

Ongoing actions from transport officials meeting		
Officials meeting date	Action	Due date
Wednesday 11 February	s 9(2)(f)(iv)	Wednesday 4 March
Wednesday 25 February	s 9(2)(f)(iv)	

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1. Priority updates and decisions required

Revenue

Project: Revenue Bill	
s 9(2)(f)(iv)	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Project: RUC Transition	
Project Status: We are meeting the Expert Panel on Thursday 12 March and 2 April to discuss the themes and issues from responses to the Road User Charges Request for Information including: • panel views on the themes/issues arising from the RFI, • the key risks and opportunities identified, including implications for transition planning, and • potential pathways to accelerate market involvement in the RUC system.	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Project: Time of Use Charging	
Project Status: We are progressing the development of the draft regulations and have been working through associated operational details with NZTA. s 9(2)(f)(iv)	
s 9(2)(f)(iv)	
Associated Papers	
s 9(2)(f)(iv)	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Project: Tolling Proposals

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

We seek your approval to update an output plan deliverable

Associated Papers

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
Agree to change to s 9(2)(f)(iv) the Output Plan deliverable s 9(2)(f)(iv)	Yes / No
	Yes / No

Project: NZTA Funding Review	
Project Status: There are no substantive updates this week.	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

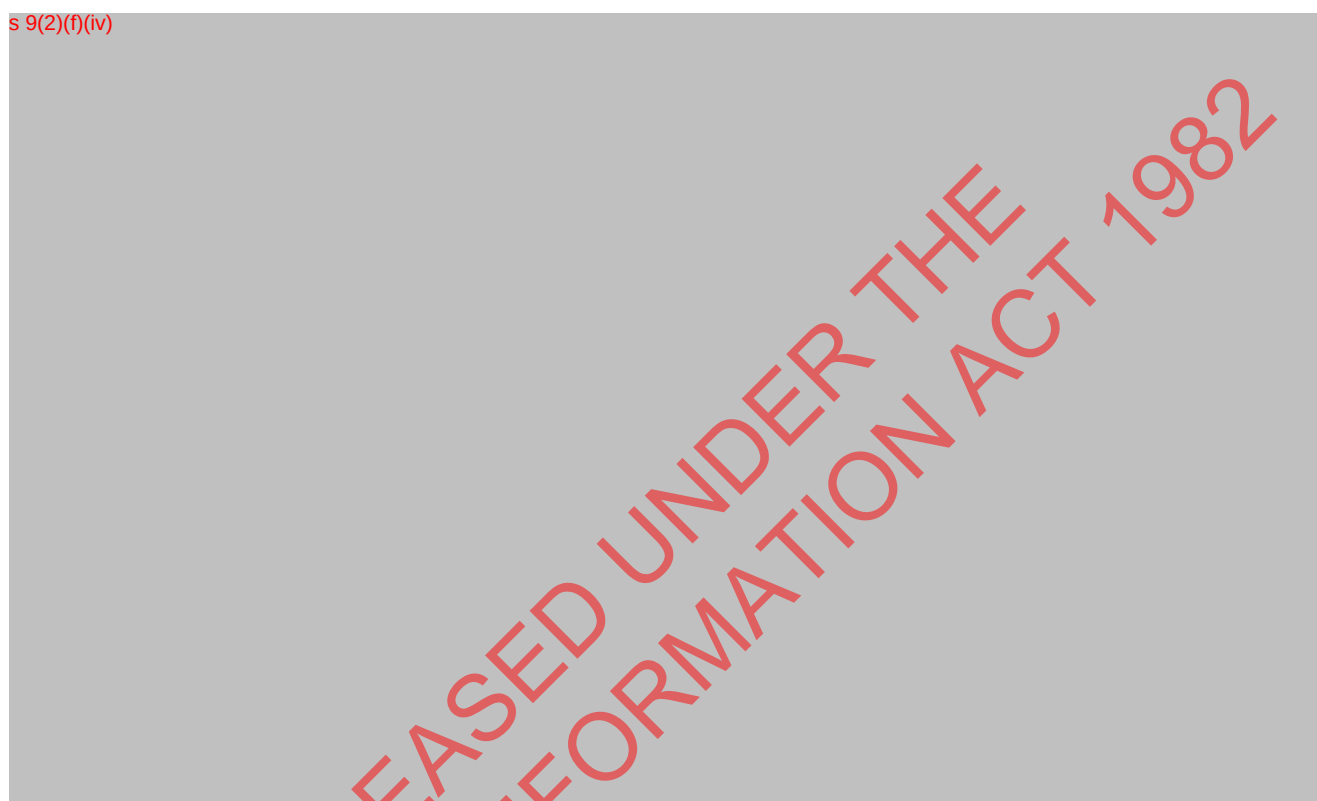
s 9(2)(i)

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Project: Waitematā Harbour Connections	
Project Status: There are no substantive updates this week. We will discuss content for the mid-year Cabinet paper with you in late March.	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Investment

s 9(2)(f)(iv)



Project: Government Policy Statement (GPS) 2027	
Project Status: We have provided you with a draft GPS 2027 and are awaiting your feedback. We have received NZTA's updated 10-year forecast and will provide updated expenditure and revenue advice on Wednesday 11 March s 9(2)(f)(iv) We are continuing to work with NZTA and AECOM to understand any changes NZTA have made in the February update.	
Associated papers	
Briefing: Update on GPS 2027 Expenditure Scenario and Revenue This briefing will build on previous advice and discussions, NZTA's updated 10-year forecast (due 27 February), and our proposed investment principles. It will outline how you can set GPS 2027 activity classes and raise revenue.	Date: Wednesday 11 March 2026
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Project: Major Transport Projects Pipeline (MTPP)	
Project Status: We have provided you a draft MTPP Cabinet paper. It will need updating after you have taken Budget decisions.	
Associated papers	
Cabinet Paper: Major Transport Projects Pipeline This paper seeks Cabinet endorsement of the sequencing of the Roads of National Significance programme and major public transport projects.	To Minister: Complete To lodge: TBC To Committee: TBC
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Land Transport Rules Reform

Project: Rules Reform programme updates	
s 9(2)(f)(iv)	
Decisions required	
None this week	Confirmed / Denied
	N/A

Project: Heavy Vehicle Productivity	
Project Status: Public consultation has started on a set of preferred rule changes to streamline heavy vehicle regulation for the period 25 February through till 25 March 2026 (OC260008 refers).	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Project: Lane Usage and Traffic Control Device Changes

Project Status: Public consultation has started on a set of proposals to improve lane usage for the period 25 February through till 25 March 2026 (OC260011 refers).

You have asked for advice on the possibility of using flashing lights (rather than signs) to indicate when cars could use bus lanes, and whether this is or could be included in the package of proposals relating to traffic control devices in this workstream. This proposal is not included in the proposed traffic control device rule changes, all of which have already been consulted on in 2019. As a new proposal, this additional change would involve new policy analysis and consultation to progress, so prioritising this as part of your current Rules Reform programme would involve trade-offs and delay other current priorities. However, we have added this idea to our register of issues that we will consider as we develop advice on prioritising future work programmes.

Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Antisocial Road Use Legislation Amendment Bill

Project: Antisocial Road Use Legislation Amendment Bill (ASRU Bill)

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Safety

Project: Road Safety Penalties Review

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Associated papers

Cabinet Paper: Updating Road Safety Penalties

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Project: Graduated Driver Licensing System (GDLS)	
Project Status: You agreed to circulate the draft Cabinet paper and draft Rule and Regulations for ministerial consultation this week. We are continuing to work with PCO on finalising the Rule.	
Associated papers	
Cabinet Paper: Land Transport (Driver Licensing) Amendment Rule 2026 This Cabinet paper seeks approval to submit the Amendment Rule and associated Regulations to the Executive Council for approval.	s 9(2)(f)(iv)
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Auckland

Project: Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill	
Project Status: The Transport and Infrastructure Committee will consider their draft Commentary on the Bill on Thursday 5 March. s 9(2)(g)(i) s 9(2)(f)(iv)	
Auckland Council has announced the interim transport Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) board that will be in place for the six-month transition period, following enactment of the Bill. This board is responsible for managing the transition of Auckland Transport's functions to Auckland Council as well as continuing Auckland Transport's current functions until such time that they transfer to Auckland Council. The interim board will be chaired by Andrew Ritchie, a current director of Auckland Transport and previously president of the Bus and Coach Association of New Zealand and chief executive of Ritchies Transport Holdings. The remaining members of the board will be Rob Clarke, Dale Dillicar, Miriam Dean KC, and Adrienne Young-Cooper. s 9(2)(g)(i)	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week.	N/A

Project: Auckland Level Crossing Removals	
Project Status: There are no substantive updates this week.	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Environment

Project: 2026 Review of the Clean Vehicle Standard

Project Status: On 27 February, we met with the Motor Industry Association (MIA) to hear its views on the Stage 1 review. The MIA supports retaining the Standard to lower CO2 emissions but with settings recalibrated to better reflect domestic market conditions, consumer affordability, and realistic vehicle availability. It considers this offers the most credible and durable pathway to lowering fleet emissions, while maintaining market stability and competitive neutrality. It supports applying the Standard to both new vehicles and used vehicle imports, as excluding used imports would distort competition and slow emission reductions.

The MIA thinks removal of the Standard could:

- Disadvantage importers and distributors who have made substantial compliance and portfolio investments under the current requirements.
- Weaken the policy signal for the fleet to transition to lower and zero emission vehicles.
- Reduce New Zealand importers and distributors' influence in securing supply of low- and zero-emission vehicles from global manufacturers, potentially affecting how many of those vehicles are supplied.
- Distort market competition toward higher-emission vehicles.
- Increase reliance on the ETS to reduce fleet emissions, when evidence suggests it is unlikely, in isolation, to materially influence vehicle purchasing decisions.
- Slow the rate at which older, less efficient vehicles are replaced in the fleet, delaying aggregate emissions reductions.
- Introduce regulatory instability and planning uncertainty in a market characterised by long product lead times and advance volume commitments.

We have now completed the stakeholder engagement and are finalising our analysis in light of the feedback. Once our modelling of the CO2 impact of the Standard is completed, the Ministry for the Environment will assess the impact its removal would have on the sufficiency of the Second Emissions Reduction Plan to meet the Second Emissions Budget and the impact on the Third Emissions Budget.

The Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association (VIA) is concerned that the 26 January 2026 Weekly Report did not accurately represent its position and wishes to see this clarified. It considers (changes in *red*) that "used vehicles are already built, and a CO2-at-import standard *significantly* affects supply, price, and turnover (*leading to fleet emissions remaining high*) and has no impact on global emissions outcomes".

Associated papers

Briefing: Outcome of the First Principles Review of the Clean Vehicle Standard

This briefing will report on the outcomes of the first principles review of the Standard. It will seek your decision to either retain or abolish the Standard. If our recommendation is to retain the scheme, it will also include our recommended key features for a revised Standard.

Date: April 2026 (TBC)

Cabinet Paper: Outcome of the First Principles Review of the Clean Vehicle Standard

This paper will seek Cabinet's agreement to your recommendations on the future of the Standard.

To Minister: April 2026 (TBC)

To lodge: TBC

To Committee: TBC

Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week	N/A

Project: Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure	
Project Status: As significant progress has been made within the Supercharging EV Infrastructure policy work programme, the related Taskforce and Stakeholder Reference Groups have agreed to wind up following meetings this month. The policy work has helped to remove barriers to EV charging (including changes to the Electricity Industry Participation Code to make connecting to networks faster and easier). As we move into the implementation and monitoring phase, we will continue to work with MBIE, MfE, the Electricity Authority and Commerce Commission to provide quarterly written updates to industry on the EV work programme for the next year. Electricity Networks Aotearoa will shortly release its <i>North Island Journey Charging Project</i> report. A key finding is that only 615 additional 50 kW journey chargers are needed nationwide by 2030 (443 in the North Island and 172 in the South Island). We note that the report is limited to light EV journey charging on or near state highways and does not consider the demand for destination charging. Destination charging is done at places where people will be parked for an extended period, such as attractions and shopping centres. We will report back to you as required once the report is available to us.	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week.	N/A

Total Mobility

Project: Total Mobility Review	
Project Status: On 26 February, we facilitated the second public consultation session online with around 30 attendees, including two New Zealand Sign Language interpreters. We once again answered questions and received comments on the Total Mobility proposals, which included people sharing their experience of using Total Mobility, and ride hail services. We have received 233 submissions on the Total Mobility proposals through the online survey.	
Decisions required	Confirmed / Denied
None this week.	N/A

Electricity Networks Aotearoa (ENA) presented the draft findings of its report to MoT representatives alongside other key stakeholders on 27 Feb 2026. The final reports were publicly released on 9 March 2026. ENA has since advised MoT that, in the time between the 27 Feb and 9 March, there was a change to the charging needs at Greymouth – and therefore the overall national additional chargers needed was changed from 615 to 609. The final reports can be found on the ENA website here: <https://www.ena.org.nz/our-work/resources/ev-journey-charging-in-aotearoa-what-the-data-shows>.

National Infrastructure Funding and Financing Limited (NIFF) and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) will also be involved in quarterly written updates to industry on the EV work programme for the next year.

City Rail Link

Project: City Rail Link (CRL)

Project Status: Below is a summary of the latest monthly report from City Rail Link Limited (CRL), covering January 2026:

- The total project budget remains \$5.644 billion.

- s 9(2)(b)(ii)

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- Urban realm works continue to progress: Waitematā Station Plaza is now complete and open, and Karanga-a-Hape precinct is on track for a late-February opening.

- s 9(2)(b)(ii)

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Associated papers

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Decisions required

None this week.

Confirmed / Denied

N/A

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1.1 Key Legislative Milestones

This table sets out key legislative milestones for Bills you are leading or developing.

Minister Bishop

Name of Bill	Policy Approval	LEG	Introduction	SC report back	Enactment
Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill This Bill seeks to improve the transport system in Auckland by strengthening transport governance and planning arrangements.	Complete	Complete	Complete	16 March	s 9(2)(f)(iv), s 9(2)(h)
Antisocial Road Use Legislation Amendment Bill This Bill comprises a suite of new measures to deter anti-social road use behaviour (such as fleeing drivers and illegal street racing) by giving Police and the courts greater powers and strengthening offences and penalties.	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	
Land Transport (Revenue) Amendment Bill: Land Transport Management (Tolling) Amendment This Bill changes the tolling legislative framework to enable wider use of tolling and to optimise cost recovery from new and existing schemes. Road User Charges Amendment Giving effect to Cabinet decisions to modernise the road user charges system and prepare it for the entry of all light vehicles (removal of license display requirements and better enabling new eRUC industry entrants). It will not legislate a transition date.	Tolling: Complete RUC: Complete	Complete	Complete		

Name of Bill	Policy Approval	LEG	Introduction	SC report back	Enactment
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s 9(2)(f)(iv), s 9(2)(h)

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Name of Bill	Policy Approval	LEG	Introduction	SC report back	Enactment
s 9(2)(f)(iv), s 9(2)(h)					

Minister Meager

Name of Bill	Policy Approval	LEG	Introduction	SC report back	Enactment
Regulatory Systems (Transport) Amendment Bill (RSTA) The RSTA Bill is an omnibus Bill that amends a range of transport, aviation and maritime legislation to improve effectiveness and efficiency, modernise settings and reduce the risk of regulatory failure of the transport regulatory system.	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	s 9(2)(f)(iv), s 9(2)(h)

2. Updates on other matters

Upcoming publication of the social cost of road crashes and injuries June 2025 update

The Ministry is releasing its routine annual update of the social cost of road crashes and injuries on the Ministry's website by the end of March 2026.

The social cost of road crashes measures the total monetary (e.g. medical treatments and legal costs) and non-monetary (e.g. loss of life and life quality) costs associated with road crashes. These estimates are primarily used in cost-benefit analysis to assess the impacts of investments on road safety outcomes.

We update the estimates annually to reflect the latest data and price levels. Cost inflation since the 12 months to June 2025 has led to an increase in the updated average social cost per injury of around 4–5% and per crash of 5–8%.

Meeting with VIA on Vehicle Exhaust Emission standards for heavy vehicles

The VIA wrote to you in December 2025 raising their concerns about the impact of exhaust emission standards on heavy vehicle availability and price. You responded to the VIA in December, and officials met with Chief Executive Greig Epps and other VIA representatives to discuss on 23 February 2026. Officials and the VIA agreed that vehicle exhaust emissions standards work will remain on the work programme, but that the Clean Vehicle Standard review will continue to be the first focus area for officials.

Enhancing the cyber security of New Zealand's critical infrastructure system

On 23 February, Cabinet approved the New Zealand Cyber Security Strategy 2026–2030. Cabinet also approved the release of a discussion document, *Enhancing the Cyber Security of Critical Infrastructure*, which asks submitters to consider which infrastructure services are most critical to our economy and communities and should be safeguarded against harm. The Ministry was very involved in the development of the discussion document, and we have reached out to our stakeholders and offered dedicated consultation sessions.

These documents outline New Zealand's proposed approach to critical infrastructure, including in transport, and communications and data.

- Transport: this includes aspects of the road, rail, aviation, and maritime transport networks that could be disrupted by cyber incidents (e.g. the operation and maintenance of airport and maritime ports).
- Communications and data: this includes the connection of domestic and international submarine cables to land based telecommunications networks.

The discussion document is open for public consultation until 19 April. We will update you on any outcomes relevant to your transport portfolio.

Second Freight Advisory Council Meeting

On 26 February, we hosted the second Freight Advisory Council meeting. The Council discussed pressure points that may emerge in the freight and supply chain systems as the economy improves, with a focus on productivity, data, and workforce issues. The meeting also included a session with the Infrastructure Commission on the key findings of its recently published National Infrastructure Plan. The next Freight Advisory Council meeting is scheduled for late May 2026.

3. Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive meetings and engagements

Meeting Date	Meeting	Details
Wednesday 4 March 3.30pm – 6pm	Fenwick Forum	MoT Officials Attending: Ruth Fairhall Siobhan Routledge Other Attendees: The Aotearoa Circle
Wednesday 4 March 6.00pm – 9.00pm	Australian Railway Association Dinner (ARA)	MoT Officials Attending: Brad Ward David Wood Other Attendees: ARA Board Invited stakeholders
Thursday 5 March 11.30am – 12.30pm	Ports CEOs meeting	MoT Officials Attending: Ruth Fairhall Helen Duignan Other Attendees: Peter Brunt, Maritime NZ Ian Bonnar, Independent Chair, Port CEO's Group
Thursday 5 March Day visit	Visit to Ruakura Superhub (inland port)	MoT Officials Attending: Ruth Fairhall Marian Willberg

3.1 Upcoming Select Committee attendance

Meeting Date	Committee	Details
Thursday 12 March 9.00 am (TBC)	Transport and Infrastructure Select Committee Land Transport (Revenue) Amendment Bill Departmental Report presentation	Officials Attending: Ministry of Transport Jamie Kendrick – Principal Adviser, Revenue Louise Hornabrook – Manager, Road User Charges Transition Matt Skinner – Road User Charges Transition Lead Aimee Bell – Principal Solicitor Chris Roblett – Principal Solicitor Jonathan Petterson – Principal Adviser, RUC Transition Hugo Beale – Adviser, Revenue NZTA Anaru Silao – Manager, Revenue and Investment Access: Private

4. Other upcoming Ministry of Transport Cabinet papers

Authorising Third Party Access to Driver Licence Photographs for Register Maintenance and Licence Card Production
s 9(2)(f)(iv)

5. Other upcoming Ministry of Transport briefings and aides memoire

Note: Papers we propose to be included in your weekend bag will be submitted by close of business Wednesday.

Due to Office	Title
Wednesday 4 March 2026	Vote Transport: Budget 2026 and Estimates Update The purpose of this briefing is to: - Seek your agreement to submit Technical Budget initiatives through Budget 2026 - Seek your agreement to the approach for obtaining sign-off for the 2025/26 Supplementary Estimates Appropriations and 2026/27 Estimates of Appropriations - Provide a brief update on the performance measures which will be included in the Estimates documents.

6. Ministerial and Departmental Official Information Act Requests

Ministerial Official Information Act requests

Due date to Minister's Office	Due date to requester	Requester	Summary of request
2/03/2026	9/03/2026	s 9(2)(a)	Seeking all documents contained in the reply to WPQ 978 (2026)
2/03/2026	9/03/2026		Seeking all documents contained in the reply to WPQ 719 (2026)
13/03/2026	20/03/2026		Seeking three briefings and two Weekly Reports

6.1 Departmental Official Information Act requests

Due Date to Requester	Requester	Summary of request
5/03/2026	s 9(2)(a)	Seeking Ministry discussions with the Privacy Commission about Oral Fluid testing
5/03/2026		Seeking modelling on Graduated Drivers Licencing
5/03/2026		Seeking correspondence on Emergency Ocean Response Capability
9/03/2026		Seeking information related to the EV Charging Concessionary Loans Scheme
11/03/2026		Seeking analysis on THC-specific crash risk in relation to oral fluid testing
17/03/2026		Seeking information on GPS 2027
17/03/2026		Seeking information on the Clean Vehicle Standard
24/03/2026		Seeking information regarding vehicle regulatory classification and quadricycles
24/03/2026		Seeking information regarding digital driver licensing
26/03/2026		Seeking information related to the current round of TAIC Board appointments

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Transport Agency Weekly Reports



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Departmental Updates

Hope Bypass geotechnical investigations

Geotechnical investigations associated with the Hope Bypass are scheduled to begin from mid-March 2026. These works are for assessment and detailed design purposes only and do not signal any change to current funding or construction decisions. Activity will be visible in parts of the Richmond area and along SH6, with some short-term noise and minor traffic management, including shoulder closures. Communications will be limited to affected landowners and a traffic bulletin to manage local impacts, with no broader public or media activity planned.

Ngauranga to Petone Shared Path (Te Ara Tupua) opening

s 9(2)(g)(i)

Unset bitumen on SH1/SH4

NZTA is coordinating the response to an incident involving unset bitumen dropped by a truck travelling from the central North Island to Wellington, affecting multiple regions. The incident occurred very early on Wednesday 25 February while conditions were dark. NZTA is reviewing all available information from the affected state highway networks and is also utilising any information the public can provide to help identify the cause.

Contractors have removed material where practicable, and current network safety impacts are assessed as low. s 9(2)(h) There has been media coverage of the incident, and NZTA has responded to media enquiries, with interest largely focused on impacts to freight operators, including truck and tyre damage.

Timaru Showgrounds – SH1/Grants Road intersection update

Following our advice of 11 February (MIN-5086 refers), funding streams from Kānoa and the Timaru Showgrounds Developer (\$4.15m combined) are now secure. Timaru District Council has signed the Regional Infrastructure Funding agreement and will on-pass funding to NZTA.

Physical works to rebuild and extend the SH1/Grants Road intersection have commenced, with major construction progress expected by the end of June 2026, subject to weather.

School Speed Management Rollout

The programme remains on track for overall delivery by 1 July. Five additional schools have become compliant this week, bringing the total to 109 schools now implemented and activated.

Delivery is underway in the West Coast and Taranaki. Otago is scheduled to commence next week, followed by the Bay of Plenty the following week. Delivery programmes have been adjusted to support weather event recovery in affected northern regions and improve logistics in the south. There remains a small delay to West Coast completion which is being actively managed.

Post-implementation issues are being actively tracked and resolved. With delivery now exceeding 100 schools, work is underway to embed effective and efficient maintenance and operational processes. As delivery volumes increase, public engagement is also increasing, with any site-specific concerns being managed locally with support from regional communications teams.

260 15 109 136 42% 48%

#Schools #Excluded #Compliant #Remaining %Implemented % Complete

Delivery Plan

Region	Schools	Compliant & Live	Awaiting Activation	Remaining	Complete	Excluded
Central	68	20		44	35%	4
Manawātū-Whanganui	29	3		24	17%	2
Hawke's Bay	9	1		7	22%	1
Taranaki	22	12		9	59%	1
Gisborne	8	4		4	50%	
Central and Southern SI	64	26		34	47%	4
Canterbury	24	5		16	33%	3
Southland	15	14			100%	1
Otago	16			16	0%	
West Coast	9	7		2	78%	
Waikato BOP	69	16		50	28%	3
Bay of Plenty	22	4		16	27%	2
Waikato	47	12		34	28%	1
Wellington Top of SI	20	10		7	65%	3
Nelson	3	1		1	67%	1
Tasman	6	3		2	67%	1
Wellington	6	5			100%	1
Marlborough	5	1		4	20%	
Auckland / Northland	39	37		1	97%	1
Northland	35	34			100%	1
Auckland	4	3		1	75%	
Total	260	109		136	48%	15

One million followers across our social media channels

NZTA has reached one million social media followers across its 21 channels. Facebook accounts for the majority of this audience, with just under 700,000 followers across 10 channels.

So far in the 2025/26 year, we've maintained a growth rate of 17% over 12 months. To put that into context, experts consider a healthy follower growth rate to be between 4-8%.

Our rapid growth is a great signal that we're providing the public with effective and useful travel advice, with meaningful information about our infrastructure work, and with engaging content about road safety through our road rules education.

Regulatory Updates

s 9(2)(b)(ii)

Update on driver licensing rectification actions

As part of ongoing rectification actions following allegations of fraud, bribery and corruption in the driver licensing system, s 6(c)

This follows the completion of on-road testing in late 2025 for 319 people who obtained a licence through one of five Driver Testing Officers dismissed from Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ) Highbrook. s 6(c)

VTNZ has ceased offering practical driver licence testing at its Highbrook branch in October 2025. Other services at the site, including Warrant of Fitness and Certificate of Fitness inspections, remain available.

Summary of papers sent Briefings sent to Minister of Transport

Due to Office	Title
Wednesday 25 February 2026	BRI-3517 Visit to Melling Site Office with Minister Watts Provides information on the Melling project to support the site visit with Minister Watts.
Friday 27 February 2026	BRI-3525 Palmerston North Integrated Transport Initiative (PNITI) Provides further information on the Palmerston North Integrated Transport Initiative and plans for SH56 and SH57.

Upcoming briefings to Minister of Transport

Due to Office	Title
Wednesday 4 March 2026	BRI-3518 Ashburton Bridge Sod Turning Provides information about the second Ashburton Bridge to support attendance at the sod turning event.
Thursday 5 March 2026	BRI-3522 Waikato Regional Briefing (Hamilton and Coromandel) Provides regional transport information to support upcoming engagements in Hamilton and Coromandel.
Friday 13 March 2026	BRI-3533 Waihoehoe Road Upgrade sod turning event Provides information about the Waihoehoe Road Upgrade to support attendance at the sod turning event.
Thursday 19 March 2026	BRI-3523 Otago (Wanaka) Regional Briefing Provides regional transport information to support upcoming engagements in the Wanaka area.
Thursday 26 March 2026	BRI-3524 Nelson Regional Briefing Provides regional transport information to support upcoming engagements in Nelson.

Upcoming OIA requests for potential consultation

Reference and Requester	Request	Due date to the Office
OIA-21247 s 9(2)(a)	Request for all advice, reports, contracts, and correspondence on mega-project delivery, including Oxford Global Projects and governance issues since 2023.	Monday 16 March 2026
OIA-21255 s 9(2)(a)	Request for national statistics on limited licences, including approvals, revocations, and conditions, for media reporting.	Tuesday 17 March 2026
OIA-21253 NZ Vulnerable Road User Trust	Request for historical road safety education and awareness funding data, including regional breakdowns and prioritisation criteria.	Tuesday 17 March 2026
OIA-21260 Motorcycle Advocacy Group NZ	Request for documentation on digital driver licences, integrated enforcement systems, data governance, privacy controls, and future transport identity roadmaps from 2022 to present.	Tuesday 17 March 2026
OIA-21286 s 9(2)(a)	Request for Nelson and Tasman speeding infringement and drink driving statistics, including enforcement methods and year on year comparison.	Thursday 19 March 2026
OIA-21289 Member of public	Request for the unredacted business cases for Petone to Grenada project and detailed justification for all withholding grounds. Also requests iwi engagement and historic meeting records for the project.	Thursday 19 March 2026
OIA-21303 s 9(2)(a)	Request for design, tunnel, bridge, and consent drawings for the SH1 Wellington Improvements project.	Friday 20 March 2026
OIA-21295 Member of public	Request for all correspondence and documents relating to eRUC provider applications and procurement since 2020.	Friday 20 March 2026
OIA-21296 E tū Union	Request for contractor, contract value, and staffing data for cleaning, security, and catering services for NZTA properties.	Friday 20 March 2026
OIA-21314 Member of public	Request for the number of public relations and communications staff employed by NZTA each year, from 2021 to 2025.	Friday 20 March 2026
OIA-21320 Member of public	Request for the financial contribution amounts for Te Huia paid by NZTA, Waikato Regional Council and Waikato District Council.	Monday 23 March 2026
OIA-21328 s 9(2)(a)	Request for information on National Land Transport Programme funding for the Otago region. Requestor wishes to compare this with funding provided through the Queenstown package.	Monday 23 March 2026

Upcoming NZTA media items

Date of release	Subject
Friday 6 March 2026	Lower North Island – State Highway 2 Wairarapa road rebuilds A sit-down interview is planned with the Wairarapa Times-Age on Thursday 5 March 2026 outlining planned road rebuilds for SH2 Carterton and Clareville starting in late March 2026. A media release will be issued to all media the following day.
Week commencing 9 March 2026	Central North Island – State Highway 35 recovery progress A media statement is planned to highlight progress on repair and recovery work on SH35, focussing on the finalisation of designs for a new retaining wall at the Waikura slip as construction gets underway. This is expected to follow a Ministerial release when the affected state highway sections reopen 24/7.
Week commencing 9 March 2026	Central North Island – Hawke’s Bay Expressway media site visits Invitations will be sent to s 9(2)(a) (The Breeze Hawke’s Bay) and s 9(2)(a) (Hawke’s Bay Today) to visit the site and see progress on the Hawke’s Bay Expressway project.
Week commencing 9 March 2026	Central North Island – Ōtaki to north of Levin (Ō2NL) progress An editorial is planned for Roundabout magazine highlighting progress on the Ō2NL project, similar in style to the recent SH2 Hawke’s Bay Expressway progress editorial.
Week commencing 9 March 2026	Central North Island – State Highway 2 Tangoio works A traffic bulletin is planned ahead of works to stabilise a retaining wall above the Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve, north of Napier.
Week commencing 9 March 2026 (TBC)	Lower North Island – State Highway 1 Wellington RoNS engagement summary Subject to reviews and approvals, a targeted statement will be sent to RNZ, The Post, The Local and NZ Herald, who have previously requested updates on themes and outcomes from community engagement undertaken in late 2025.
Week commencing 9 March 2026 (TBC)	Lower North Island – Speed reviews (Marlborough and Wairarapa/Upper Hutt) Media releases are planned for the completion of speed reviews in both regions.
Late March 2026	Lower North Island – State Highway 2 Kaitoke average speed safety cameras Early stages of construction and installation of average speed safety cameras are due to begin. A media release outlining the planned works will be issued.

Appendix 1: Capital projects planned for construction

Data as at 26 February 2026

Projects >\$2M scheduled to start construction between January and June 2026:

Project Name	Approx. Project Value	Contract award status	Construction scheduled to start	Status and any updates
RoNS SH1 Belfast to Pegasus & Woodend BP – early works	\$10.5m	Awarded	Quarry Lakes Reclamation March 2026 \$8.8m	On track – First of two early works packages (Kaiapoi Bridge Strengthening) underway). Second package for Quarry Lakes Reclamation now awarded.
RoRS Waihoehoe Road Upgrade – main works	s 9(2)(b)(ii)	s 9(2)(g)(i)		The main works contract award has been delayed while several matters identified during the procurement process are negotiated and cleared. Main contract works will start either at the conclusion of enabling works (April/May) or potentially earlier depending on closing out the tender matters and outstanding approvals.
RoNS Hawkes Bay Expressway – Multiple contracts				(Midblock and Tuataekuri : Construction underway.)
End of Life SH36 Hauraki Stream Culvert				

Project Name	Approx. Project Value	Contract award status	Construction scheduled to start	Status and any updates
RoRS Ashburton Second Bridge	s 9(2)(b)(ii)	s 9(2)(g)(i)		
SH3 Waitara to Bell Block – De Havilland Drive Roundabout				
ANO – Auckland Harbour Lane Control System	\$6-8m	Awarded	April 2026	On track
SH73 Candys Bend resilience project	s 9(2)(b)(ii)	s 9(2)(g)(i)		
SH1 Katiki resilience project				
s 9(2)(g)(i)				
SH50 Ngaruroro River (Fernhill) Bridge Strengthening				
End of Life SH27 Ohinekaia Stream Bridge				
RoNS Cambridge to Piarere “Enabling works”				
Marsden Commercial Vehicle Safety Centre				

Projects >\$2M scheduled to start construction between July and December 2026:

Project Name	App. Project Value	Contract award status	Construction scheduled to start	Status and any updates
RoRS SH76 Brougham Street – Package 2	\$152m*	Scheduled August 2026	s 9(2)(g)(i)	On track
Waikare Gorge	\$395m	s 9(2)(b)(ii)	s 9(2)(g)(i)	
RoNS Cambridge to Piarere				
RoRS Rolleston Access Improvements – Package 2	\$202m*		October 2026	Ahead of schedule; earlier award likely.
End of Life SH25 Pepe Stream Bridge Replacement	\$22m	Awarded	October 2026	On track
ANO – Constellation to Tristram SB Auxiliary Lane	s 9(2)(b)(ii)	s 9(2)(g)(i)		
SH6 Frankton to Kingston				
End of Life SH6 Coal creek overbridge				
SH1 Ocean Beach Resilience Project				
SH54 Roundabouts				
Ashhurst Shared Use Path		Scheduled October 2026	November 2026	On track

*Total approximate project value for Package 1 and Package 2 combined.

Associate Transport Portfolio Weekly Report

Week commencing Monday 2 March 2026

Recipient:

Hon James Meager Associate Minister of Transport

Minister's comments:

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Actions from transport officials meeting

Ongoing actions from Associate Transport officials meeting		
Officials meeting date	Action	Due date
3 March 2026	Provide further advice on drones rules	12pm 9 March
	Draft letter to Minister for Regulation, for discussion at next Officials meeting	12pm 10 March
	s 9(2)(f)(iv)	Friday 13 March
		Complete

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1 Portfolio priorities – Aviation

Regional Connectivity

Regional Connectivity
s 9(2)(f)(iv), s 9(2)(b)(ii)
Interlining
On 26 February, Kānoa contacted Air New Zealand, Qantas, Jetstar NZ, Air Chathams, Barrier Air, Sounds Air, Originair, Sunair, Golden Bay Air, and Stewart Island Flights, notifying them that applications are now open for funding to support interlining arrangements. Applications will close in approximately 8 weeks on 24 April.

International Connectivity

International Connectivity
s 9(2)(b)(ii)
Ohakea
We expect to finalise the funding agreement with Airways this week.
Airline Cooperation Agreements
There are no substantive updates this week.

Aviation workforce

Aviation Workforce Issues

There are no substantive updates this week.

Rules and operations

Rules and Operations

Part 91: General Operating and Flight Rules appendices

This project involves updating the rule structure and making minor changes to requirements for emergency equipment, survival equipment, and sensitive pressure altimeters, and enabling use of satellite voice communications technologies (SATVOICE). The CAA received six submissions on these proposed changes and is working through the feedback.

Part 115: Flight Examiner requirements

We will brief you by 16 March with a final rule for your approval and signature.

Part 139: Runway End Safety Areas (RESAs) & Arresting Systems (including Engineered Materials Arresting Systems, or EMAS)

This project is reviewing the requirements for RESAs and Arresting Systems (including EMAS). The CAA and Ministry have settled on a preferred option for testing with the sector. The CAA is now preparing consultation documents for release in April.

Programme

Last week, the CAA Board endorsed the proposed 2-year accelerated rules programme. The Ministry will brief you on the proposed programme this month.

Briefing: Revised Rule Part 115: Adventure Aviation Certification and Operations for your consideration

Date: Monday 16 March

Briefing: Approval of the proposed Civil Aviation Rules update programme

Date: Wednesday 18 March

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

1.1 Portfolio priorities – Maritime

Rules and operations

Maritime Levy Review
s 9(2)(f)(iv)

1.2 Portfolio priorities – Border security

Border security work programme

Border Security Report Back	
There are no substantive updates this week.	
Briefing: Report-back on Strengthening Border Security This briefing will include a draft report-back to responsible Ministers for your review.	Date: Wednesday 11 March

Maritime Legislation

Maritime Legislation Review
There are no substantive updates this week.

1.3 Portfolio priorities – Other

Land Transport Rules Reform

Light Vehicle (Warrant of Fitness/Certificate of Fitness A) Review

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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2 Updates on other matters

Chatham Islands Replacement Shipping Service

On 3 March, Ministry officials (Richard Cross, Cameron Elliott, and Bryan Field) met with the Chatham Islands Mayor (Greg Horlor), the Chatham Islands Enterprise Trust CEO and Chair (Bob Penter and Hamish Chisholm), representatives of the Chatham Islands Farmers group (Gary Cameron, Tony Anderson, and Delwyn Tuanui), Crown Infrastructure Delivery (Lizzy Thomas), and an officer from Chatham Islands Council (Klicky Peni) to provide an update on the Chatham Islands shipping service funding agreement. Ministry officials talked the stakeholders through the announcement of the signing of the funding agreement with 44 South Shipping and the key terms of that agreement. The Chatham Islands stakeholders were pleased that the agreement has now been signed. Landside infrastructure at the Waitangi wharf for staging livestock for export was also discussed at the meeting – the Trust CEO, Bob Penter, will take leadership of this work with support from Crown Infrastructure Delivery

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Green Shipping: options and next steps

On 26 February, the Ministry for the Environment provided a briefing to the Minister of Climate Change regarding maritime decarbonisation (green shipping). This briefing includes a high-level stocktake of actions that government could progress to support green shipping in New Zealand. The actions are drawn from Aotearoa Circle's Future Fit Shipping report, Concept Consulting's report on barriers in the regulatory system, and actions recommended by specific agencies. The Ministry contributed to this stocktake.

We anticipate that the Minister of Climate Change will wish to discuss transport-related actions with you. To support this discussion, we will provide you with advice on transport-related green shipping actions during the week of 23 March.

Enhancing the cyber security of New Zealand's critical infrastructure system

On 23 February, Cabinet approved the *New Zealand Cyber Security Strategy 2026-2030*. Cabinet also approved the release of a discussion document "*Enhancing the Cyber Security of Critical Infrastructure*" which asks submitters to consider which infrastructure services are most critical to our economy and communities and should be safeguarded against harm. Both the Strategy and the discussion document were launched on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website on 27 February. The Ministry and the Maritime Security Oversight Committee Secretariat have reached out to our stakeholders and offered dedicated consultation sessions, and we have been heavily involved in the process throughout.

These documents outline New Zealand's proposed approach to critical infrastructure, including in transport, and communications and data:

- Transport: this includes aspects of the road, rail, aviation, and maritime transport networks which could be disrupted by cyber incidents (e.g. the operation and maintenance of airport and maritime ports).
- Communications and data: this includes the connection of domestic and international submarine cables to land-based telecommunications networks.

The discussion document is open for public consultation until 19 April. We will update you on any outcomes which involve the maritime security, aviation, and maritime aspects of your portfolio.

Maritime New Zealand Authority Appointment Round

Advertising for the Maritime New Zealand Board will open on 9 March and close on 23 March. This follows the recent resignation of a board member and an agreement to hold an additional appointment round as described in OC251101. The main priority is to find an experienced Director who can further enhance the Board's overall financial capability.

Budget 2026

There are no substantive updates this week.

On-time performance (OTP) reporting

The Ministry published the January OTP report this week. Last week, the Ministry issued a correction to the December report, to fix three graphs which accidentally left off December 2025 data.

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3 Upcoming Associate Minister of Transport meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting	Details
Thursday 5 March 11.00 – 11.30am	Meet with Port Company CEs	Briefing Due: Monday 2 March Officials Attending: Ruth Fairhall Helen Duignan
Monday 9 March 9.00 – 9.30am	Speak at EngNZ Transportation Group 70 th Anniversary conference	Briefing Due: Monday 23 February Officials Attending: N/A
Monday 9 March 3.15 – 4.15pm	Aerowork visit	Briefing Due: Thursday 5 March Officials Attending: N/A
Wednesday 11 March 12.00 – 12.30pm	Meet TAIC Chief Commissioner and CE	Briefing Due: Friday 6 March Officials Attending: David Wood Liz Anderson
Wednesday 11 March 12.30 – 1.15pm	Meet CAA Chair and CE	Briefing Due: Friday 6 March Officials Attending: David Wood Liz Anderson
Thursday 12 March 10.30 – 11.00am	Meet Cath O'Brien, BARNZ	Briefing Due: Monday 9 March Officials Attending: Carolina Durrant
Wednesday 25 March 6.00 – 7.30pm	Aviation Industry Association New Zealand Annual Parliamentary Event	Briefing Due: Wednesday 11 March Officials Attending: TBC

4 Other upcoming Ministry of Transport Cabinet papers

Authorising Third Party Access to Driver Licence Photographs for Register Maintenance and Licence Card Production

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Maritime New Zealand Authority Reappointment and Appointments

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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5 Other upcoming Ministry of Transport briefings and aides-memoire

Note: Papers we propose to be included in your weekend bag will be submitted by close of business Wednesday

Due to Office	Title
Week Commencing 2 March	s 6(a)
Week commencing 9 March	Board Appointments Forward View s 9(2)(f)(iv)
Monday 9 March	Draft Cabinet Paper- MNZ Board Appointments and Reappointment s 9(2)(f)(iv)
Tuesday 10 March	Update on the Aviation Indicator Framework This briefing will provide you with an update on the draft aviation indicator framework ahead of it being considered by the Aviation Council at its next meeting on 19 March.
Week commencing 16 March	Resilience and Security of NZ Critical Underwater Infrastructure Options This is a version of the critical underwater infrastructure briefing you received in October 2025. It is being revised for your presentation to the Minister for National Security and Intelligence.
Week commencing 23 March	Green Shipping: options and next steps We anticipate that the Minister of Climate Change will wish to discuss transport-related actions with you. To support this discussion, we will provide you with advice on transport-related green shipping actions during the week of 23 March.
Monday 23 March	s 9(2)(f)(iv)
Wednesday 25 March	Air Passenger Rights in Other Jurisdictions This briefing completes one of the actions from the Aviation Action Plan by providing advice about what other countries require airlines to disclose to passengers about their rights.

6 Ministerial correspondence and OIAs

Ministerial correspondence:

There are two Ministerial responses being drafted as of 3 March 2026.

Ministerial #	Topic
JMC-1288	RCCNZ
JMC-1307	Regional connectivity

Ministerial OIA requests:

Due date to Minister's Office	Due date to requester	Requester	Summary of request
25/02/2026	04/03/2026	s 9(2)(a)	VFR requirements

Departmental OIA requests

Due Date to Requester	Requester	Summary of request
24/03/2026	s 9(2)(a)	Seeking information regarding vehicle regulatory classification and quadricycles
24/03/2026	s 9(2)(a)	Seeking information regarding digital driver licensing
26/03/2026	s 9(2)(a)	Seeking information related to the current round of TAIC Board appointments

Transport Portfolio Agency Reports



Aviation Security Service
Kaiwhakamaru Rererangi



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1.A Key updates

Project: Class exemption allowing rocket launching from Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre

On 28 February 2026, the Director of Civil Aviation granted a class exemption from Civil Aviation Rule (CAR) 101, under section 322(1)(b) of Civil Aviation Act 2023. This exemption is under Part 101 Gyrogliders and Parasails, Unmanned Aircraft (including Balloons), Kites, and Rockets - Operating Rules.

The exemption allows the launching of rockets, by rocket operators, within 8 km of the Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre in Canterbury. This 8km restriction will ensure that the activity is contained within the Tāwhaki Special Use Airspace.

The exemption commenced on 1 March 2026 and expires on 1 March 2028.

A class exemption is a secondary legislation and is subject to be presented to the House within 20 working days of it being made. The Minister's office was notified of the exemption on 3 March 2026, with hard copies provided on 4 March 2026 so that presentation to the House could be arranged. Notice of the exemption is now available on CAA's website and a Gazette notice has been prepared.

Project: Rules update programme

Programme

Last week, the CAA Board endorsed the proposed 2-year accelerated rules programme. The Ministry will brief Minister Meager on the proposed programme during March 2026.

Part 91: General Operating and Flight Rules appendices

This project involves updating the rule structure and making minor changes to requirements for emergency equipment, survival equipment, and sensitive pressure altimeters, and enabling use of satellite voice communications technologies (SATVOICE). CAA received six submissions on these proposed changes; none require major changes to the proposals. CAA is now drafting the Director's Letter and goatskin for Minister Meager's signature.

Part 115: Flight Examiner requirements

CAA will brief Minister Meager by 16 March 2026 with a final rule for his approval and signature.

Part 139: Runway End Safety Areas (RESA) & Arresting Systems (including Engineered Materials Arresting Systems, or EMAS)

This project is reviewing the requirements for RESAs and Arresting Systems (including EMAS). CAA and the Ministry of Transport have settled on a preferred option for testing with the sector. CAA is now preparing consultation documents for release in April, which is a slight shift to accommodate Easter, but this has no downstream effect on the project completion schedule. CAA intends to use a Transport Instrument to prescribe requirements for arresting systems.

Project: Safe Haven website goes live

Project Status: A new initiative, Safe Haven ([Safe Haven | Together for Safety](#)), has been launched to provide New Zealand's pilots and air traffic controllers with a confidential space where they can seek advice about health conditions that may affect their ability to safely fly or operate.

Specially trained Medical Examiners in Safe Haven (MESHs), delegated by the Director of Civil Aviation, will provide confidential support, referrals, and make decisions on a participants' ability to continue working or flying. The initiative is designed to build trust, reduce fear of loss of licence or career, and encourage aviation professionals to engage with healthcare early.

Safe Haven is a co-funded collaboration between CAA and the New Zealand Air Line Pilots' Association, with wider aviation sector support.

The programme is governed by an independent Safe Haven Trust Board, ensuring it operates confidentially and with separation from CAA's regulatory functions. Disclosure of information is only made to CAA in exceptional circumstances, where there is a significant risk to aviation safety.

Project: Auckland Integrated Terminal 'Flip Project' – Closure of Customs' Premium Lane

Project Status: Customs currently offers a paid premium service for international passengers departing from Auckland International Airport, through an established multi-party arrangement. CAA does not operate a comparable paid service but does offer a pathway that supports the facilitation of priority passengers.

On 16 February 2026, Customs announced the closure of its priority service. This decision reflects the operational complexity presented when planning the reversal of the departures processing sequence, with Aviation Security Service (AvSec) screening moving ahead of Customs processing.

Airlines have indicated that they will raise concerns about closure of the Customs' premium lane with the Minister of Customs shortly.

CAA is working with the airport and Customs to assess whether an operationally viable option for maintaining a priority pathway could be developed through the implementation of the Flip Project.

Project: AvSec airport queue reports

Project Status: CAA reports queues at aviation screening monthly and otherwise by exception only.

Over the past weekend, queues occurred during the afternoon peak at the Auckland International Airport screening point. These were caused by unexpected passenger presentation and the addition of flights to the schedule over the peak times.

CAA has increased screening capacity by opening additional lanes as well as use of additional Remote Image Screeners, and these measures have reduced the impact on passenger wait times.

CAA is working with Customs and the Airport to address the congestion caused by these flights being in the schedule.

1.B CAA Certifications report

Project: Certification timeliness improvements (aka 'Go to Green')

Project Status: The monthly certification timeliness report for January 2026 was provided in the weekly report for the week of 23 February.

2. Ministerial briefings received by the Minister's Office

The following aides-memoire, briefings and requests were provided to you in the seven-day period prior to 2 March 2026.

Date	Title
nil	

3. Communications and External Engagement

Media mentions

This covers the 5 days to 2 March 2026.

Date	Activity	Channel
24 February	ATCs could be as young as 18yrs	Newstalk ZB
26 February	Airlines: When Ōhakea will be available 24/7 for biggest aircraft	NZ Herald
26 February	News broadcasts featuring Ōhakea	Newstalk ZB 6am news; and 8am news; Mike Hosking Breakfast; Sean Plunket 9am; MoreFM 9am news
26 February	"Really beneficial": Govt greenlights Ōhakea as alternative runway for commercial flights	Newstalk ZB
28 February	Warning air traffic controllers on most-wanted list	Weekend Herald
28 February	Trainee gyrocopter pilot died during his maiden solo flight	Weekend Express
1 March	Acknowledgement for role in regional aviation	Business North

Media plan / Anticipated media

This covers the 7 days from 2 March 2026.

Date (planned)	Item	Description	Targeted media
TBC	Safe Haven / Together for Safety website	The Safe Haven website is now live at Safe Haven Together for Safety . This was a soft launch as small changes still need to be made to the website. A hard launch is planned in the next couple of weeks.	N/A
TBC	Upcoming court proceedings with s 9(2)(a)	s 9(2)(a) has advised CAA that he is taking legal action against a former CAA employee (name suppressed). The case is scheduled for April 2026 in s 9(2)(a) and he has requested CAA attendance. The matter may attract media interest given s 9(2)(a) previous 2021 case, in which the District Court criticised aspects of CAA's decision-making and medical assessments, and the CAA publicly accepted those findings. CAA is not a party to the April 2026 proceedings, but we are preparing media holding lines and will also prepare lines for the Minister. We do not anticipate any operational or legal impacts at this stage.	N/A
TBC	Wings over Whales and South Pacific Helicopters	Stuff has made inquiries regarding the professional licensing status of s 9(2)(a). s 9(2)(a) Wings over Whales and South Pacific Helicopters in Kaikoura. Given the nature of the requests, CAA will respond through its Official Information Act process.	Stuff

1 Upcoming Briefings to Associate Minister of Transport

Due to Office	Title
5 March	Water Safety New Zealand – meeting briefing Briefing to prepare you for your meeting with Water Safety New Zealand on 10 March.
18 March	s 9(2)(f)(iv)
19 March	

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2 Key updates

International SAR Coordination in Tonga

On 16 February 2026, Maritime NZ's Rescue Coordination Centre (RCCNZ) was formally requested by Tongan Police to assist with an overdue 38ft vessel, *Mysterious Wonder*, reported missing south of Tongatapu over 10 days ago.

RCCNZ assumed coordination of the search in close partnership with Tongan authorities. Drift modelling, survivability analysis, and maritime intelligence enquiries were undertaken immediately, as was liaison with other New Zealand government agencies. Maritime broadcasts were issued across the South Pacific, and commercial shipping was engaged and requested to report any sightings.

At RCCNZ's request, the New Zealand Defence Force diverted a Royal New Zealand Air Force P-8A Poseidon to conduct an aerial search covering approximately 16,000 square nautical miles. The vessel was located by the aircraft on 18 February with two persons visible on board, in the centre of where the drift modelling predicted it would be. *HMNZS Canterbury*, already operating in the wider region, was immediately tasked to effect rescue, while Tonga prepared a patrol vessel as contingency support (which was not required). The two rescued were returned to Tonga. Unfortunately, the rescued crew reported there had been a third person on board who chose to attempt to swim to land, but they were unable to be found and the search for them was suspended.

This operation highlights New Zealand's rapid-response capability and strong regional partnerships, demonstrating coordinated air, sea, and law enforcement collaboration in support of Pacific neighbours and the preservation of life at sea.



Mysterious wonder after being located

Update on the Port Health and Safety Leadership Group Meeting

The Port Health and Safety Leadership Group (the Leadership Group) met on 17 February in Wellington. You have been invited to attend the Leadership Group's upcoming meetings in either June or September, to be held in Tauranga and Auckland, respectively. The focus of this meeting was to reflect on the Leadership Group's successes and challenges from 2025, what worked well and what they would like to focus on in 2026. The group also welcomed two new members, Matt McDonald, Chief Executive of Port Nelson (replacing outgoing member Jon Moore, NorthPort) and Gavin McIntyre, Chief Executive of Three Islands Intermodal.

The Leadership Group reported a year of strong collaboration across unions, ports, and the regulator, with major progress on implementation of the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP), proactive Health Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 2015 inspections, and insights shared through our HSWA Regulatory Operations team. At the same time, members highlighted rising operational pressures: increasing volumes, serious near misses, and variable vessel standards leading to challenging working environments, and an ageing and skills short workforce. Challenges around overlapping duties, investment constraints, and sustaining the Port Industry Association's (PIA) member's capacity and engagement were recurring themes.

Looking ahead, the group agreed to support stronger communication with their sector partners sharing good stories about their work, strengthening worker engagement and championing a coordinated multiyear programme across all workstreams and externally led work (PIA and the unions).

3 Upcoming briefings copied to Associate Minister of Transport

Nil this week.

4 Upcoming Cabinet papers

Nil this week.

4.1 Other portfolio Cabinet papers with transport implications

Nil this week.



There are no substantive updates from TAIC this week.

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